

# AIRGRAM

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NO.

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

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FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
OCT 17 8 31 AM 1967

RS/AN  
ANALYSIS BRANCH

DATE: October 15, 1967

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#### MILITARY

Negative.

#### ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Negative.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL

11. Military Influence on Government Demanded

Downgraded at 12-year intervals, not automatically declassified.

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POLITICAL1. PRD Replies to Balaguer

A. After gestating a full week, the PRD's official response to President Balaguer's October 2 speech (Weeka 40) was delivered October 9 over the party's radio program. In an executive committee communiqué read by Secretary General José Francisco PEÑA GÓMEZ, and carried the next afternoon in El Nacional, the PRD mounted its strongest personal attack to date on the President and considerably broadened the "ideological" framework of its anti-Americanism.

B. Entitled "The Anti-Popular Dictatorship of Joaquin Balaguer", the first part of the communiqué reviewed the history of US involvement in the DR since 1916 and charged that the US, having cast aside both parties to the 1965 revolution, "each of whom, to a greater of lesser degree, had acquired in combat" the right to govern, sought and imposed another "Trujillista" solution to the Dominican problem by turning to Balaguer. The latter, who by his repressive actions is showing that he is sliding further and further down "Washington's slippery slope", is in turn acting to satisfy US policy "with the evident purpose of governing and of remaining in power with foreign support", the PRD charged. So long as this remains the "essence" of Balaguer's government the social changes required in the DR cannot possibly take place, the party stated. It warned that the government is not invulnerable (to revolution) simply because it is considered legal. This legality, which arose from the "turbid" 1966 elections, is being eroded by Balaguer's systematic violations of human rights and the constitution, the communiqué warned.

C. The balance of the communiqué largely restated Peña GÓMEZ' earlier criticism of the President's speech (Weeka 40, Item 3). It included another major PRD pitch to the Armed Forces, denied Bosch's "popular dictatorship" thesis is communistic, hit out at the "voracity of foreign monopolies", charged Balaguer with attempting to destroy the PRD, and asserted that the party would survive this effort to "shipwreck" it as it had all similar efforts in the past. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

D. Comment: We suspect, but have no evidence, that the PRD's reply, delivered a week after originally promised, was in some way coordinated with Juan BOSCH, who might well have been responsible for its broadened anti-US thrust. In any event, it was an ingenious political device clearly intended to maximize the PRD's appeal to all real or potential sectors of the opposition. By raising the prospect of the indefinite continuation of a government "imposed" by the US

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over both parties of the 1965 revolution, i.e., Constitutionals and anti-Constitutionals (the latter including Wessinistas, civicos, Imbertistas, etc.), the PRD once again turned to an issue (continuismo) that was used to great advantage by both left and right against the Triumvirate in late 1964-early 1965. And its further appeal to the Armed Forces, buttressed by an unusual offer over its radio program on October 13 to broadcast complaints of enlisted personnel who deem themselves "oppressed" (the program aired one such alleged complaint), would seem to indicate the beginning of a stepped-up campaign for military support, also reminiscent of the party's pre-revolutionary activities. (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. Other PRD Developments--National Council to Discuss Bosch's Thesis

A. A charge by Peña Gómez early this week that his home was under police surveillance and his life in danger promised sensational news to come, but was quickly upstaged by subsequent PRD developments, including the party's reply to Balaguer (Item 1). The party announced that it would on October 15 hold a meeting of its "expanded national council", including the executive committee, the political, consultative and disciplinary commissions, two representatives of each PRD bureau, and the party's legislative bloc, to discuss Bosch's popular dictatorship thesis and to take other decisions "designed to preserve the unity of our organization" (SD-809).

B. There were indications that this "unity" may be a bit more in jeopardy than the party has acknowledged. Peña Gómez had an unusual public tiff with Senator CASIMIRO Castro, the ostensible leader of the move to bury Bosch's thesis. In his capacity as party Press and Propaganda Secretary, and with direct responsibility for its radio program, Casimiro urged Peña Gómez to instruct the party to suspend all discussion of "popular dictatorship" until an official decision on Bosch's thesis was taken. Peña replied huffily that no one could silence him or the party and quit the radio program. Casimiro lamely responded that it had not been his intention to stifle expressions of private opinion, and Peña Gómez returned to the air October 13 with a strong blast at "US economic imperialism".

C. PRD dissidents this week also contributed to the confusion with the first public acknowledgement by Industry and Commerce Secretary José A. BREA Peña that he is leading a movement to recapture the party from its radical element. A meeting of dissidents was scheduled for October 13 to attempt (once again) to establish the organizational basis for formally challenging the party's present leadership and the "popular dictatorship" thesis.

D. The week also included considerable embarrassment for Peña Gómez resulting from the publication by Listín Diário columnist Pedro Alvara BOBADILLA of a letter over Peña's signature requesting a financial contribution for the party from--of all places--the US-owned Central Romana Corporation, an important element in the PRD's "anti-

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imperialist" campaign. Peña hemmed and hawed, claiming forgery, misuse of party stationery, etc., but at week's end had not explained the letter away to the satisfaction of his detractors, who included PRSC Secretary General Caonabo JAVIER Castillo.

E. The municipal situation remained confused but had quieted down somewhat. Water service was back to sub-standard "normal", garbage was being collected at fairly regular intervals, and there was decreased sniping between the Mayor and the PRD. Party Political Committee chairman Manuel FERNANDEZ Mármol, in a surprisingly balanced statement over the PRD radio program, laid the municipal situation bare, blaming in equal parts his own party and the GODR for the messy state of city affairs.

F. And, finally, the Mayor announced that four AID technicians working with the municipality had been withdrawn. This was done, the Mayor said, because of his fears for their safety at the hands of disappointed job seekers who would have been employed under the USAID-financed urban improvement program had it been administered by the city rather than by the President's special commission. (Actually, the initiative had been AID's--AIDTO A-284). The Mayor later stated his intention to right municipal finances by firing those on the city payroll who "draw salaries without doing anything".

G. Comment: Rumors were heavy that Peña Gómez would resign at the October 15 meeting or at a subsequent "national assembly" scheduled loosely for October 29 or sometime thereafter. While this was less than certain, it did appear that the coming meeting, which is to be attended by representatives of considerable moderate or otherwise anti-"popular dictatorship" sentiment, might result in a "deep-freezing" of Bosch's thesis, at least for the time being. The party seemed, in fact, to have prepared for this via the title of its communiqué replying to Balaguer (Item 1). It would obviously not be necessary to create further confusion by clamoring for "popular dictatorship" if this could be avoided by the simple expedient of hammering at the "anti-popular dictatorship" of Balaguer. It is not at all sure, however, that the PRD radicals would allow themselves to be outvoted at the coming meeting. (CONFIDENTIAL)

### 3. Presidential Activities

A. In another heavily publicized week, President Balaguer, among other things: (1) inaugurated an enlisted man's mess at Fourth Brigade headquarters at San Isidro; (2) inaugurated two roads near José Contreras (Espaillat Province); (3) inaugurated a small electric power system and a road in El Seibo Province; (4) toured the city of El Seibo; (5) visited a coffee growers cooperative near Bani; (6) opened an international medical conference in Santo Domingo; (7) attended various diplomatic and social functions in the Capital; and (8) had a few choice remarks for the press.

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B. He said the military do not intervene in matters beyond their competence (Item 11); promised that sugar mills which ended the crop year in the black would "soon" pay out bonuses to their workers as provided by law; and said it would be "impossible" to return to active duty former police colonel Cesar Nicolás RAMÍREZ Alcántara, who was recently acquitted of murder charges on grounds he was "momentarily insane" at the time because of drunkenness (the decision has been appealed by both the Government prosecuting attorney and the murdered man's family). (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

C. Comment: The President seemed deliberately to be reacting to the impact of his October 2 speech (rumors of "assassination plots" were again being heard) by showing himself as much as possible to demonstrate to his machista compatriots that his opposition is a long way from frightening him into seclusion at the Palace. As illustrated by his appearance at one reception during the week, however, his aides have considerably augmented his security. (CONFIDENTIAL)

#### 4. UCN and PQD Discuss Wessin

A. High officials of the reorganized Unión Cívica Nacional (UCN) and the Wessinista Partido Quisqueyano Demócrata (PQD) met in Santiago on October 8 to discuss possible UCN support for the return of former General Elías WESSIN y Wessin, presently in exile in Miami, and for his 1970 presidential candidacy. The meeting (which, surprisingly, was publicized) apparently resulted in a draw. The UCN group, led by acting party president Abel FERNANDEZ Simó, reiterated its support for the right of all involuntarily exiled Dominicans to return to their homeland, but stated the UCN would not go to elections with any military man as its candidate. It suggested instead that the PQD integrate with the UCN and support its 1970 candidate. The PQD demurred, and the meeting reportedly ended on this inconclusive note.

B. The meeting was apparently instigated by Elena Campagna de READ, former governor of Santiago Province during the Triumvirate period, and a leading proponent of close UCN-PQD ties. She was named to head the Santiago provincial committee of the UCN, which was reorganized at the meeting. Both Santiago's La Información and leftist-nationalist El Nacional carried news of the meeting, the latter commenting acidly that the only difference between the UCN and the PQD is that each wants Wessin as its candidate exclusively.

C. Coincident with the meeting was the local publication of an interview with Wessin in Miami as reported by the Miami Herald. The story indicated that Wessin has turned self-styled "social reformer", included an "I shall return" pledge by Wessin, and gave the impression he is patiently awaiting destiny's call. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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D. Comment: Notwithstanding constant UCN demurrers concerning Wessin, the involvement of high UCNers in the Wessin cause and the UCN's just as constant statements in support of his return have led to the understandable suspicion that the UCN is playing an opportunistic double game, i.e., that it is remaining on the "safe" side in case the Wessin movement flops, but that it is also carefully preparing to take advantage of it should it continue to grow. No one is seriously thinking of 1970 at this early date. (CONFIDENTIAL)

5. PRSC SecGen Terms Electoral Climate Better Than in 1966

Appearing on a TV interview program October 8, PRSC Secretary General Caonabo JAVIER stated that the political climate, although "no bed of roses", is better than during the period preceding the 1966 balloting (SD-799). In other comments on the 1968 municipal elections, Javier announced that the party would definitely participate (abstention is "momentary death" for a "revolutionary" party) and would run its own candidates. Javier, who the previous evening had participated in a televised discussion of "popular dictatorship" with former PRSC President and "soft-liner" Alfonso MORENO Martínez, also seized on the occasion to lambast again the Bosch thesis as an "attempt to square a circle". And, touching all the bases, he concluded with strong criticism of Balaguer for forgetting the "true problems" of the DR. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

6. Plans Progressing for Inter-American Political Science Conference at UASD

A. This week the Autonomous University (UASD) organizing committee for the Third Inter-American Political and Social Sciences Conference (Nov. 24 - Dec. 2, 1967) announced that the IDB has donated \$15,000 towards covering the expenses of the Conference (SD-785). The committee's press note also stated that in addition to invitations to universities throughout Latin America to send official delegations, individuals, universities and organizations from all over the world had been invited as observers with voice but no vote. A wide variety of Dominican political organizations (including four communist parties) were invited as observers. (UNCLASSIFIED)

B. Comment: With the cast of characters, both foreign and domestic (including heavy extreme-leftist representation on the organizing committee), and given the theme of Latin American political, economic and social integration, the conference promises to provide an opportunity for considerable extremist and nationalist political exploitation. It seems certain to create major political problems for the GODR, both locally and internationally. Already looming as potential trouble sources are (1) the extension of a formal invitation

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to the University of Havana; (2) the presence of local communist representatives on the always volatile UASD campus; and (3) the likelihood that Juan Bosch, even if not attending the Conference himself, would use this ready-made international forum for further expounding "popular dictatorship" and for a major blast at the GODR and the US. (CONFIDENTIAL)

7. GODR Moves to Reduce Cargo Handling Costs at Capital Port

A. The Secretariat of Finance, which has jurisdiction over the port of Santo Domingo, ordered a change in the system of work and pay for cargo handling this week. Under the new regulations, which took effect October 12, cargo handlers on the docks will be paid on a per-ton basis of \$4 for incoming and \$2 for outgoing cargo. Under the old system, workers were contracted through their unions on an hourly wage basis (RD\$ 1.40 straight time and RD\$ 2.15 for overtime). The government claims that it lost RD\$ 800,000 last year and RD\$ 300,000 thus far this year under the old system, since the workers stretch out the time required to do the job. The government collects as cargo handling charges from shippers, RD\$ 6 per ton for incoming and RD\$ 2.50 for outgoing cargo.

B. As might be expected, there was a general uproar from the port worker unions, in which all confederations and several federations joined. The Finance Secretariat's move caused the rival unions STAPI and POASI to meet together; they were joined by the National Port Workers Federation, an affiliate of ORIT member CONATRAL; CASC, which is a member of the Social Christian CLASC; and the Communist-dominated FOUPSA-CESITRADO. Their five-hour meeting resulted in an agreement not to strike (for fear new workers would be hired), to repudiate the change in work and payrolls, and to take legal action. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

C. Comment: The Secretariat's move was well timed, as both STAPI and POASI are largely inoperative due to internal strife (Week 36, Item 7). The decision to take legal action may play into the hands of the communists, since they usually have aggressive legal talent available and may be expected to provide that service in this case. Nevertheless, the Government undoubtedly has won the important first round. The shipping companies should also benefit, with sharply reduced turn-around times. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

8. FOUPSA-CESITRADO Loses Another Election

Anti-communist workers at the Telephone Company of Santo Domingo Union won an overwhelming victory over a Communist and FOUPSA-CESITRADO backed slate, 268 votes to 100. This is the latest in a succession of election losses suffered by FOUPSA-CESITRADO this year. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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9. Dispute Between CEA Officials Aired

A. Antonio MARTINEZ Francisco, Secretary of Finance and President ex-officio of the State Sugar Council (CEA) announced on October 5 that eleven of the twelve state sugar mills completed the 1966-67 crop year with a profit and that all mill workers should receive bonus allowances. CEA Executive Director Gaetán BUCHER reported that the announcement was "very inopportune," "premature," and "contrary to the facts." Martinez reacted with a sharp personal attack on Bucher, later echoed by former Secretary Without Portfolio Ramón CASTILLO.

B. After an October 6 emergency session (Martinez absent) the CEA board announced that CEA as a whole and most of its mills finished the crop year with a profit but that as usual, about two months were needed to balance the books. It indicated that only workers of those mills with a profit would receive bonuses, according to the law.

C. President Balaguer at least temporarily silenced the dispute with a statement on October 7 that CEA had a favorable balance for the crop-year and was the organism to decide upon criteria for paying the bonus allowances. Meanwhile, Bucher confided to an Embassy officer that probably only six mills (unfortunately, not including Haina, the largest of the mills) had made a profit. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

10. Importation of Edible Oils Authorized

In order to avoid a shortage of edible oils during the next six months, President Balaguer this week authorized the Banco Agrícola exclusively to import edible oils and, in agreement with national producers, those raw products necessary to the production of oils by such producers, on the basis of foreign financing obtained by them or from their own holdings of foreign exchange. The Banco Agrícola was thus authorized to import U.S. soybean oil under PL 480. (UNCLASSIFIED)

MILITARY

Negative.

ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Negative.

PSYCHOLOGICAL11. Military Influence on Government Denied

The recent Lieuwen report for the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, which concerned the influence of the military on Hemisphere governments, and which listed the Dominican Republic

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among countries where the military exercised indirect influence over civil authority, was widely and adversely commented upon in local media and political circles. According to the press, the President commented that his government is "essentially civil, democratic and representative", that it works "in harmony with the Armed Forces, which are loyal and obedient", and that the Armed Forces are "apolitical". Armed Forces Secretary PEREZ y Pérez called the Senate report "absolutely false", adding that the "Dominican Armed Forces are absolutely obedient to civil power". The left-wing opposition, including the PRD, chided Lieuwen for glossing over the "true" situation here which, it claimed, is one of direct military influence in most aspects of national affairs. (UNCLASSIFIED)

*JAC*  
CRIMINS *by JAC*

CONTRIBUTORS: JYoule; AArenales; GMitchell; FAlberti; JBazan; RMashek

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