

ORIGIN/ACTION

ARA-10

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

Lat 2 Dom Rep

FOR RM USE ONLY

RM/R
1

REP

AF

ARA
1

EUR

FE

NEA
5

CU

INR

E
2

P

IO

L
9

FBO

AID

AGR
1

COM

FRB

INT
5

LAB

TAR

TR
5

XMB

AIR

ARMY
4

CIA

NAVY

OSD
20

USIA

NSA

20

FBI

NSC

5

5

6

A-59

NO.

CONFIDENTIAL

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : Amconsul SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS

FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 1969

SUBJECT: Weekly Political Review No. 8 (February 14-20, 1969)

REF :

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. UASD Presses Demand for Budget Increase
2. Recent Dominican Reaction to US/Peru Developments
3. PRSC President Supports Electoral Census
4. 1970 Election Speculation
5. Wessin Alleges GODR Persecution of PQD
6. Mayor Lluberes Reelected National District PR President

General

On the domestic front this week public and official attention focused on two days of student agitation at the Autonomous University (UASD) in support of UASD demands for a larger government subsidy (Item 1). The international focus of attention continued to be the US/IPC dispute with Peru and the tuna boat incident as well as CECLA-related developments (Item 2). Political party activities, as usual, provided the material for still other headlines: 1) PRSC President Caonabo JAVIER Castillo again called for an electoral census (Item 3); 2) Santo Domingo Mayor Guarionex LLUBERES Montás was reelected President of the National District Reformista Directorate (Item 6); 3) PQD President Elías WESSIN Y WESSIN, in an open letter to President Balaguer, charged that the government was systematically persecuting retired military personnel who are Wessin supporters (Item 5); and 4) the Democratic Conciliation Movement stated that the 1970 candidacy of Hector GARCIA GODOY would be announced no later than February 24 (Item 4). The

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-yr.intervals

FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

not automatically declassified

☐ In☐ Out

Drafted by: See last page

CONFIDENTIAL Contents and Classification Approved by:

DCM:FJDevine J.J.D.

Clearances: POL:JCHaahr

1969 FEB 26 AM 10 52

COPYFLO-PBR

FORM
4-62 DS-323

CONFIDENTIAL

PRD, deprived of its radio voice (the station which carries the program was off the air most of the week, apparently due to technical difficulties), had little to say this week.

In other news of interest this week 1) Victor HIDALGO Justo, one of the more controversial members of the Balaguer administration, was removed from his post as Director General of Mail and Telecommunications; he had resigned earlier as President of the PR's youth group, FAJURE; 2) apparently as a result of an arms cache discovered in the area, some Army and Air Force troops will be moved to San José de las Matas for further search operations; 3) the National Police arrested five men in connection with the recent attempt against the life of Police Captain LOPEZ Polanco and charged that MRLJ4 leader Amaury GERMAN Aristy offered each of the men RD\$2,000 to do the job (the MPD-linked Clandestine Revolutionary Commands, which previously took credit for the attack, denied that it had been planned by German Aristy); 4) Cirano CASTRO Fañas, who had sought but did not receive official asylum in the Mexican Embassy (WPR#7), left for Mexico after an agreement had been worked out between the Mexican Embassy and the GODR; and finally 5) the press speculated that Agriculture Secretary Fernando ALVAREZ Bogaert was a candidate to replace Hector Garcia Godoy as Dominican Ambassador in Washington. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

1. UASD Presses Demand for Budget Increase

This week brought renewed student agitation at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD) and new pressures from University authorities to force the GODR to increase its subsidy to the University by almost RD\$200,000 monthly. The University Consejo, alleging an insufficiency of funds amounting to over RD\$1 million a year, voted on February 18 to suspend the salaries of teaching and other personnel beginning March 1. Other services, including "educational credits" to about 810 students, daily meals in the cafeteria and transportation, will also be suspended. According to the Consejo's announcement, the measures will remain in effect until the University's demands are met. The move clearly seems designed to force the government's hand. The Claustro, the University's highest policy-making body, reportedly was scheduled to meet over the weekend.

The two days of student demonstrations (as this was being written on February 20, National Police units are still in position near the University but have been withdrawn from the immediate entrances to the grounds and the campus appeared to be relatively quiet) began on February 18 when several groups of students (reportedly totaling as many as several thousand), shouting and carrying signs

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Santo Domingo A-59
Page 3

demanding "medio millón", marched from the campus towards the downtown area before being dispersed by police. Until late the following day, police maintained large well-armed units around the University grounds, at times using tear gas to prevent students from leaving the campus. UASD authorities, who claim the entire "University family" is united in the budget fight, reportedly are negotiating with the police for release of those students detained (perhaps as many as 40).

Some secondary schools students in Santo Domingo, Santiago and San Pedro de Macoris have been supporting the UASD position by staying away from classes and staging micrometings. At a press conference on February 20, the JRSC called on the government to cease its "intransigence" toward the UASD or face a general student strike.

At his mid-week news conference, President Balaguer said that the government's financial position would not permit any immediate increase in GODR support. The President said that "everyone" was demanding more money ("which is just because needs increase") but that it was not available. The President suggested that until a way is found "to create new taxes which are feasible", the University should cut its expenses. He said that "agitation" was counterproductive and that the only solution would come from "discussions and studies". He added that he had not had time to set a date for a meeting with UASD authorities which they requested last week.

Patricio BADIA Lara, President of the Chamber of Deputies, told the press that he considered the UASD demands "just" and said he would study the situation to see what measures could be introduced in the next session of Congress to benefit the country's universities, especially UASD. (Airgram in preparation) (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

Comment: In the light of the President's statements and the pledge of UASD authorities to maintain the budget struggle until their demands are met, it seems highly probable that further student demonstrations will take place with concomitant public-order problems. (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. Recent Dominican Reaction to US/Peru Developments

Developments surrounding the IPC case and the recent tuna boat incident received prominent and consistently heavy press coverage in

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Santo Domingo A-59
Page 4

in the form of wire service stories. In addition, in the two weeks since WPR#6, the following public reactions were noted (SD-471): (a) President Balaguer, comment^{ing} on PRD Senator CASIMIRO Castro's demands for nationalization of certain enterprises raised in relation to Peru's action on the IPC case, said he was "opposed to expropriation without previous compensation"; (b) Dominican Ambassador Ciro Amaury DARGAM (newly arrived in Lima) stated that his country respected Peru's position and would faithfully observe the principle of non-intervention; (c) Senator Casimiro thought the DR would have to reach the stage at which Peru now finds itself and advocated the "Dominicanization" of the Alcoa Exploration Co., the Central Romana Corporation and the Dominican Telephone Company, as well as similar treatment for other foreign firms "of similar mentality"; (d) the Social Christians' Caonabo JAVIER Castillo (just back from a visit to Venezuelan President ^{elect} ~~Caldera~~), in a televised interview expressed disapproval of military take-overs in general, but reserved judgment on the Peruvian military regime and said he thought the military there were acting from "nationalist sentiments"; (e) the communist PCD, which initially had condemned the Peru golpe, reversed itself to support the "nationalist" actions of the GOP; and (f) the Peruvian Embassy here released the text of General Velasco's February 6 speech-- it was carried in full or in part by most Santo Domingo newspapers.

The only press reaction tied specifically to the tuna boat seizure was by leftist/nationalist El Nacional, which editorialized against the alleged demand by some Washington legislators that the US Navy be used to protect the US fishing fleet and also front-paged an unattributed story reporting that "diplomatic circles" here saw the fishing boat incident as the result of deliberate "US strategic provocation".

In the most recent Peru-linked developments here Sen. Casimiro replied to President Balaguer's criticism of his earlier expropriation demands, saying there was no reason the GODR could not nationalize the firms he had specified, because indemnification did not need to be immediate, but could take place over a protracted period; the Senator stated that it was not the GODR's lack of funds but of "social sensibility" which created the problem, if indeed there was a problem. Casimiro's suggestion indirectly won at least partial endorsement from a Reformista source, when PR Deputy Manuel PEREZ Melo stated his belief that the Dominican Telephone Company should be nationalized "in the benefit of the people". El Nacional, continuing its campaign in favor of Peru, carried two articles by Hector DIAZ Polanco calling for an

CONFIDENTIAL

objective appraisal of the actions of "Peruvian Nationalism" and the abandonment of blind, across-the-board opposition to all military regimes.

As somewhat of a counterbalance, Listín Diario columnist Pedro Alvaro BOBADILLA attacked the allegedly destructive ultra-nationalism of Sen. Casimiro, who he said would frighten off any further foreign investment if his suggestions were implemented. (UNCLASSIFIED)

3. PRSC President Supports Electoral Census

PRSC President Caonabo JAVIER Castillo, in a radio interview and later in an appearance on the "You Be the Jury" television program, this week argued in favor of an electoral census "to guarantee the free exercise of voting". He said the PRSC had proposed a census in 1962 and 1966 but that the administrations in power had pleaded lack of both time and money. Javier maintained that the government could find the RD\$800,000 necessary for the project since it was investing millions of pesos in "sumptuous projects". Javier reiterated his opposition to the reelection of President Balaguer and repeated the willingness of the PRSC to head an "anti-reelection front". He refused to say whether his party would or would not participate in the 1970 elections, commenting only that the question would be decided at a national convention to be held at mid-year. Javier also refused to comment on the possibility that Hector Garcia Godoy would be the PRSC candidate if the party decided to participate.

Questioned about the recent references by PRSC affiliated youth groups to the late Colombian guerilla-priest Camilo Torres, Javier said that he (Javier) considered Torres' strategy of "going to the mountains" an error, but defended Torres as a person who "mistaken or not", died defending something in which he believed. Javier said he did not believe that Dominican youth should orient themselves in accordance with the attitudes of Torres but added that he recognized that the actions of Dominican youth are the consequences "of existing exploitation which drives them to desperation".

Javier announced that the PRSC was going through a process of reorganization and said that high party organs would meet next month in Azua (where the Social Christians won the 1968 municipal elections) to discuss the "political line" of the party. (UNCLASSIFIED)

CONFIDENTIAL

Santo Domingo A-59
Page 6

4. 1970 Election Speculation

President Balaguer commented this week that men of the quality of Ambassador Hector Garcia Godoy "are those which the country needs to direct its destinies". The President said that should Garcia Godoy run and win in 1970, "we will hand over power to him with the greatest approval". The President said that he had no official knowledge of a movement supporting Garcia Godoy's candidacy and added that the Dominican Ambassador had not yet resigned his post in Washington. Last week a group called the Democratic Conciliation Movement stated that Garcia Godoy's candidacy would be announced no later than February 24 and initiated its campaign by placing posters around town. The New York-based Partido Institucional Democrático this week ran large paid announcements in the press supporting Garcia Godoy for President in 1970.

In an article datelined Santiago and attributed to unnamed sources, El Nacional this week speculated that Vice President Lora's political strength in Reformista ranks was of such a magnitude that he could defeat the President in a convention vote. The article conceded, however, that despite his strength Lora might not challenge the President in order to prevent a weakening of the PR. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: Vice President Lora commented to Embassy officers this week that stories about a rift between him and President Balaguer were pure "invention". Another influential Reformista present believed that the pressures on Balaguer to speak out one way or another on his candidacy would begin to escalate at the PR's national assembly which may be held in early March. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

5. Wessin Alleges GODR Persecution of PQD

The local press this week printed substantial portions of an open letter dated February 16 to President Balaguer from PQD President Elías Wessin y Wessin in which Wessin charged that the GODR (specifically the Secretariat of the Armed Forces) was systematically persecuting retired military personnel who are supporting the ex-General. Wessin cited what appeared to be official, classified military reports concerning the activities of the PQD and certain retired members of the Armed Forces who are sympathetic to Wessin as proof of the PQD contention that the country's military institutions are being converted into "instruments of political power" in the hands of the Reformistas. Wessin said that despite repeated statements by Armed Forces Secretary PEREZ Y PEREZ that the military is apolitical, Pérez y Pérez himself "appears to be involved in politics in its least desirable forms". (UNCLASSIFIED)

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Santo Domingo A-
Page 7

6. Mayor Lluberes Reelected National District PR President

In what was reported to have been a heated assembly held on February 16, Santo Domingo Mayor Guarionex LLUBERES Montás was reelected President of the National District Directorate of the Partido Reformista (PR). According to the press, 12 persons were injured, none seriously, when a shot was fired and the crowd attempted to leave the building. Mayor Lluberes at first told the 3,568 delegates that he did not seek reelection to the post, but finally acceded to demands of "Guarionex again". The Mayor's slate was opposed without any visible success by one headed by Dr. Reynaldo MONTES de Oca, a civilian aide to President Balaguer. Mayor Lluberes denied assertions that the supporters of Dr. Montes were not permitted to enter the assembly. City Council President Rafael VIDAL Martínez was elected Vice President and Barón SUNCAR Mella, Secretary General. (A-56) (UNCLASSIFIED)

CRIMMINS

J.H.C.
by J.J.D.

Regular Distribution

Amembassy CARACAS
Amembassy PORT-AU-PRINCE
CG 72nd Bomb Wing
USCINCLANT
CINCLANTFLT
COMCARIBSEAFRON
CDR. NAV BAS GUAM
CGFMPLANT
CINCSO (7)
ACOS
COMSECONDFLT

Special Distribution

Amembassy LIMA

Contributors: LRFleischer; FAlberti; CSwezey

CONFIDENTIAL