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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA 16

INFO AID 28, NSA 02, CIAE 00, DODE 00, GPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSC 10,

P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, E 15, RSR 01, /127 W
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R 181615Z JAN 69
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6945
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
AMCONSUL SAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS
USCINCSO FOR POLAD
USCINCLANT FOR POLAD

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 182/1 SEC ONE OF TWO

SUBJECT: UPDATING OF MOST CURRENT POLITICAL ASSESSMENT
OF DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

REF: SD-A-868 AND SD-4536, 4001, 3568, 3410

SUMMARY.

1. / ASSESSMENT CONTAINED A-868 GENERALLY ACCURATE IN
PROJECTING SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN DEC. 8 AND DATE
THIS MESSAGE. NO MAJOR CONTINGENCY (AS SPECIFIED THAT
ASSESSMENT) AROSE TO MODIFY EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT THAT OVER THIS
SHORT-TERM PERIOD IT COULD SEE NO DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE THREAT
TO GOVERNMENT'S SURVIVAL. IN FACT, THIS HAS BEEN CALMEST
AND MOST TENSION-FREE YEAR'S END SINCE REVOLUTION.

2. SEVERAL "TACTICAL" PROBLEMS EXISTING EARLY DECEMBER
HAVE BEEN OVERCOME AND UNCERTAINTIES SURROUNDING STANDARD
YEAR-END POLITICAL FACTORS LARGELY DISSIPATED.

A. ALTHOUGH PAYMENT BACK WAGES TO EX-WORKERS AYUNTAMIENTO
PRODUCED PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS AND COMPLAINTS RE EXCESSIVE
DEDUCTIONS, MOST WORKERS NOW PAID AND THOSE WITH GRIEVANCES
GIVEN OPPORTUNITY PUT CLAIMS BEFORE ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE
ESTABLISHED BY MAYOR. THIS IRRITANT NOW SEEMS REMOVED AS
POLITICAL ISSUE.

B. PROBLEM CREATED BY GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT PAY

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TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS BONUS TO GOVERNMENT WORKERS REMAINED COMFORTABLY LOW-KEY DESPITE PRD AND SOME LABOR UNION FEDERATION EFFORTS EXPLOIT ISSUE. PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S APPROVAL OF LOANS AT REASONABLE REPAYMENT RATE IN LIEU GRATIS PAYMENT MONTH'S WAGES ACCEPTED BY WORKERS WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC OR OTHER CRITICISM.

C. PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S DEC. 30 MOVE TO RESHUFFLE CERTAIN HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL AND DISMANTLY PALACE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE HEADED BY COL. NEY TEJEDA ALVAREZ (WITH TEJEDA NAMED AMBASSADOR TO NICARAGUA) CARRIED WITH IT SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL AND MILITARY IMPLICATIONS AND STIRRED SANTO DOMINGO RUMOR MILL. WHILE LEFTIST/NATIONALIST NACIONAL AND AHORA (AND LORISTA ELEMENTS IN SANTIAGO) VIEWED PERSONNEL CHANGES AS DIRECT SLAP AT VICE PRESIDENT LORA, ON CLOSE EXAMINATION WE SAW NO VIABLE BASIS FOR SUCH INTERPRETATION ALTHOUGH ADMITTEDLY ON SURFACE CASE CAN BE MADE (SD-027).

D. DEMONSTRATED EASE WITH WHICH BALAGUER OUSTED TEJEDA (WITH SIMULTANEOUS TOP-LEVEL CHANGES IN NATIONAL POLICE AND POLICE SECRET SERVICE MOST PROBABLY INSTITUTED BY GEN. BRAULIO ALVAREZ), INDICATE PRESIDENT'S SKILL IN HANDLING POTENTIALLY TROUBLEMAKING ELEMENT, REASSERTING POSITION AND AUTHORITY AND DEMONSTRATING GOOD SENSE TIMING ESPECIALLY WITH WESSIN'S RETURN IMMINENT. REAL MOTIVE FOR TEJEDA'S OUSTER STILL OBSCURE BUT TWO BASIC THEORIES EXIST: (1) IT INTENDED IN PART AS WARNING TO COL. NEY NIVAR SEIJAS, COMMANDER FIRST BRIGADE, AGAINST TRANSLATING HIS--AND TEJEDA'S --REPORTED DISENCHANTMENT WITH GOVERNMENT INTO ACTION; OR (2) IT SHOULD BE SEEN IN ISOLATION FROM TEJEDA/NIVAR RELATIONSHIP AND AS MOVE DIRECTED ESSENTIALLY AGAINST TEJEDA ALONE. SOME EVIDENCE THIS LATTER THEORY VALID IN THAT NIVAR HIMSELF MAY HAVE INITIATED STEPS VIA PRESIDENT REMOVE TEJEDA (HDC-4347 REPORTS NIVAR'S SATISFACTION WITH BALAGUER'S ACTION) OR THAT BALAGUER (POSSIBLY WITH NIVAR'S SPURRING HIM ON) REACHED POINT WHERE HE WOULD NO LONGER TOLERATE TEJEDA'S ACTIONS WHICH HAD ASSUMED MORE INDEPENDENT AND SELF-INTERESTED PROPORTIONS IN RECENT MONTHS. (WE DO NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY NIVAR BLEW WHISTLE ON TEJEDA TO PROTECT HIMSELF OR TO COVER HIS OWN TRACKS). BALAGUER'S ACTION IN THIS INSTANCE PRODUCED POSITIVE PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION AND PRD AS WELL EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH MOVE, EVEN SPECULATING THAT THINGS MIGHT BE LOOKING UP.

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3. BALAGUER/LORA RIFT, ALTHOUGH STILL MENTIONED PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, IS NOT AT THIS MOMENT DISTURBING ISSUE THAT IT WAS. WHILE IT STILL SIMMERS BELOW SURFACE (BUT WITH PERIODIC ERUPTIONS AS IN MID-JANUARY-SEE A-20) BALAGUER AND LORA HAVE RESUMED JOINT PUBLIC APPEARANCES, AND REPORTEDLY, WORKING RELATIONS AS WELL. CAS HAS INFO INDICATING THAT TWO IN FACT COLLABORATED JOINTLY ON DEC. 30 PERSONNEL CHANGES. UNDERLYING UNCERTAINTIES AND FRICTIONS RE ELECTION/REELECTION ISSUES PERSIST, HOWEVER, AND LORA PROMPTED ON JAN. 15 DENY HE ENGAGED IN "PERSONAL POLITICS" OR HAS "EXCESSIVE AMBITIONS" (ALTHOUGH CAREFULLY AVOIDING GIVING AWAY ANY OF HIS PREROGATIVES). (SEE A-20).

4. SD-4536 REPORTED INDICATIONS FROM CAS SOURCES THAT MPD, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CERTAIN ELEMENTS PRD, PQD AND UCN, LOOKING TO DECEMBER/JANUARY AS POSSIBLE TIME FRAME FOR MOVE AGAINST GOVERNMENT. THESE INDICATIONS HAVE NOW SUBSIDED MARKEDLY. OUR ASSESSMENT SD-4536 THEREFORE VALID (AND STILL VALID) ALTHOUGH WE EXPECT SEE MORE SUCH CONTACTS OF NATURE DESCRIBED AS EXTREME LEFT AND OTHER OPPOSITION ELEMENTS SEEK COMMON FOOTING FOR SOME ACTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT.

5. PERIOD SINCE DEC. 6 HAS PRODUCED NO VISIBLE CHANGE IN BALAGUER'S ESSENTIALLY GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH MILITARY. SECSTATE FOR ARMED FORCES, GENERAL ENRIQUE PEREZ Y PEREZ, BACK ON JOB AFTER ILLNESS BUT RUMORS MORE PERSISTENT HE WILL BE REPLACED IN NEAR FUTURE. NIVAR SEIJAS REMAINS COMFORTABLY ENTRENCHED AS COMMANDER FIRST BRIGADE; WE UNABLE OBTAIN CONFIRMATION (EXCEPT FROM NIVAR HIMSELF, WHOSE SELF-INTEREST EVIDENT) OF REPORTED OFFER TO HIM OF PROMOTION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL.

6. TWO SEPARATE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE ARISEN WHICH RELATE GOVERNMENT'S IMAGE AND PRESTIGE: A) PRESIDENT'S BRIEF TRIP TO PUERTO RICO ATTEND INAUGURATION GOV. FERRE WITH ATTENDANT FAVORABLE PUBLICITY HERE AND THERE UNDOUBTEDLY SERVED PRODUCE SHORT-TERM BENEFITS FOR BALAGUER; B) ON OTHER HAND, LEAK OF CIAP STAFF STUDY HER (SD-100), WITH

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INFO AID 28, NSA 02, CIAE 00, DODE 00, GPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NS 10,
P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, E 15, RSR 01, /127 W
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R 181615Z JAN 69
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6946
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
AMCONSUL SAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS
USCINCSO FOR POLAD
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PRESS STRESS ON UNFAVORABLE ASPECTS THAT STUDY AND
PRESIDENT'S AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS' DEFENSIVE
REACTION, GIVES OPPOSITION FRESH ISSUE WITH WHICH ATTACK
GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND COULD
HAVE LONGER-TERM UNFAVORABLE POLITICAL EFFECT.

7. EX-GENERAL ELIAS WESSIN Y WESSIN'S RETURN TO THE DR
JAN. 12 (SD-099) WITHOUT INDICENT. INEVITABLE RUMORS
ABOUT POSSIBLE ATTEMPTS ON WESSIN'S LIFE AND/OR HIS
INVOLVEMENT IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT MOVES HAVE BEGUN AND, WE
EXPECT, WILL BE INTENSIFIED IN COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS.
WESSIN'S PRESENCE INTRODUCES NEW ELEMENT POLITICAL SCENE
AND WILL TEND HEIGHTEN POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AND POLITICAL
PRESSURES. TO DATE WESSIN HAS STRESSED PUBLICLY HIS
INTENTION WORK WITHIN CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM AND WE HAVE
HEARD PRIVATELY HE IS CONCERNED THAT PQD, AS RELATIVELY
NEW PARTY, WILL BE TARGET INFILTRATION BY EXTREME LEFT.

8. WE UNDERSTAND HECTOR GARCIA GODOY PLANS RESIGN AS
DOMINICAN AMBASSADOR TO US IN MARCH IN ORDER RETURN SANTO
DOMINGO THUS BEING ABLE ASSESS POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE ON SPOT.
OUR INFORMATION INDICATES HE HAS NOT YET MADE FINAL DECISION
ON HIS CANDIDACY FOR 1970 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

9. RESULTS BENIDORM CONFERENCE WITH JUAN BOSCH (SD-4504)



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TURNED OUT ABOUT AS ANTICIPATED A-868. PRD NATIONAL COMMISSION MET JAN. 14 AND APPROVED TEMPORARY INCORPORATION BENIDORM ACCORD INTO PARTY'S BASIC POLICY DOCUMENTS (ALONG WITH PROHIBITION AGAINST ELECTORAL ACTIVITY BY ANY PRDER PRIOR PARTY'S NATIONAL CONVENTION). DEFINITIVE INCORPORATION WILL BE UP TO NATIONAL CONVENTION. NATIONAL COMMISSION'S ACTION REPRESENTS COMPROMISE PLEASING NEITHER PRO-ELECTIONISTS NOR EXTREME RADICALS, LATTER WHICH OPPOSED BENIDORM ACCORD FOR ALLOWING POSSIBLE ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION AND BEING INSUFFICIENTLY "ADVANCED" IDEOLOGICALLY. FOR PRESENT, PARTY REMAINS HELD TOGETHER AND WE ESTIMATE ADOPTION BENIDORM ACCORD, ALTHOUGH SETTING STAGE FOR POSSIBLE FURTHER RADICALIZATION OF PARTY, PRESAGES NO DRAMATIC PRD SHIFT OVER NEAR TERM. RATHER, NEXT FEW MONTHS WILL PROBABLY SEE PERIOD OF RUMINATPON AND DIGESTION OF MORE "REVOLUTIONARY" AND "ANTI-IMPERIALIST" PARTY LINE, ACCOMPANIED BY INCREASING RESTIVENESS OF PRO-ELECTIONISTS, SOME OF WHOM MAY SLIP AWAY FROM PARTY IN SEARCH OF ACTION, ESPECIALLY IF GARCIA GODOY ANNOUNCES PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY.

10. ECONOMICALLY, BUSINESS FIRMS, BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL, COMPLETED VERY SUCCESSFUL FOURTH QUARTER. INDICATIONS ARE THAT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED SALES WERE AT RECORD LEVELS. HEAVY RAINS IN NORTHERN AREAS DR CAUSED BUT LIMITED DAMAGE AND FUTURE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF RAINS ESTIMATED AT SEVERAL TIMES LOSSES THROUGH FLOODING. SEASONAL HARVESTS GOOD, CONDITION AND VOLUME SUGAR CANE FOR HARVEST NOW BEGINNING APPEAR EXCELLENT, AND PROSPECTS ENHANCED FOR GOOD CROPS IN COMING MONTHS. IMPORT REQUIREMENTS IN CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SHOULD BE REDUCED IN COMING MONTHS. TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION PROSPECTS FOR EXPORT EARNINGS, SUBSTANTIAL FOREIGN INVESTMENTS PROGRAMMED, AND DECLINING NEED FOR FOOD IMPORTS, BALANCE PAYMENTS SHOULD PROVE MANAGEABLE IN 1969.

11. ON BASIS DEVELOPMENTS SINCE DEC 6, ASSESSMENT CONTAINED A-868 FOR PERIOD UP TO JUNE 1969 REMAINS UNCHANGED, I.E. BARRING NEGATIVE CONTINGENCIES, WE BELIEVE BALAGUER WILL BE CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING HIS POSITION. ASSESSMENT WILL OF COURSE BE REVIEWED AS NEW AND SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS OCCUR.

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CRIMMINS.

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