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INTRODUCTION

This week's most interesting political speculation, as was last week's, centered on the 1970 presidential elections, including the "movement" to launch the candidacy of Hector GARCIA GODOY and continued discussion of the issue of President Balaguer's reelection. Much of this speculation was prompted by the presence in Santo Domingo of both Garcia Godoy and Rafael MOLINA Ureña and by a television appearance by Raúl GONZALEZ, Secretary General of the Partido Reformista (Item 1). Gonzalez' comments on many difficult questions put to him on a television program prompted opposition party leaders Jose Francisco PEÑA Gómez and Caonabo JAVIER Castillo to issue statements about PRD and PRSC opposition (Item 2). The prospective return of PRD mentor Juan BOSCH (Item 4) added interest to the 1970 election talk. In other political party activity, the MPD and PCD engaged in a dispute over the MPD's suggestion that the "people" unite with anti-Trujillo industrialists to oppose the government. (Item 5)

In other news this week the local press prominently featured wire service reports as well as local comment and editorials on developments relating to U.S. Congressional moves to reduce AID and Alianza funds (SD-3750, SD-3770). The Conference of American Armies meeting

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in Rio also claimed its share of attention during the week. The local controversy centered around a reported statement by Dominican Army Chief of Staff General Juan PEREZ Guillén that if a majority of the Latin American delegates voted for the creation of an Inter-American Peace Force (FIP) the Dominican delegation would also be in favor. Later President Balaguer denied he had given instructions to General Pérez to support the creation of FIP and assured reporters that the question of the formation of such a force was not on the conference agenda (SD-3733, SD-3744).

In other news this week (1) both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, approved their operating budgets for 1969 which included a proposal to return salaries of Senators and Deputies to their former level of RD\$600 per month (as part of the GODR's austerity program salaries had been lowered to RD\$500 monthly) and to raise wages of other Congressional employees; (2) the Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo, Bishop Hugo POLANCO Brito, in a sermon during Virgen de Las Mercedes celebrations, urged a more equitable distribution of wealth so that there would be "fewer rich and fewer poor"; (3) Santiago's Bishop Roque ADAMES, in a circular directed to all church members in his diocese, also urged a better distribution of the country's wealth while fully supporting Pope Paul's ban on "mechanical or chemical contraceptives"; (4) the GODR announced that it had paid its back dues to the UN; (5) OAS Secretary-General Galo PLAZA arrived on September 27 for an official 3-day visit; (6) as thousands of children started back to school and thousands more stayed home, the annual controversy over lack of classrooms began anew; (7) and finally there was some concern over possible outbreaks of violence as the city's self-imposed September 30 deadline for paying dismissed municipal workers approached (Item 3). (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

1. Buildup for 1970 Underway

This week produced a variety of comment and controversy concerning the 1970 presidential elections including continued discussion of a possible Balaguer reelection campaign and the "movement" to launch the presidential candidacy of Hector Garcia Godoy. Speaking to the press, the Dominican Ambassador to the US termed as "speculation" the rumors about his possible candidacy in 1970. He said that he had no objection to becoming identified with and taking part in "some movement", but that to think about the presidency was something else and constituted a "second step". Adding to rumors that Rafael Molina Ureña was actively promoting Garcia Godoy's candidacy for 1970 (SD-3698), the recently-named Dominican Ambassador to Paris told the press that "a great political vacuum exists in the sectors of the progressive right and the liberal left" in the D.R. These rumors and Molina's contacts with certain PRD and dissident Reformista elements led PRD Secretary General Peña Gómez to charge that Molina was "enticing" unsuspecting PRDers for electoral objectives and to confirm that Molina "has been approaching PRD militants in search of an electoral movement for 1970". (Molina replied to Peña Gómez' criticism by saying that he had always been a perredeísta at heart.)

The question of Garcia Godoy's candidacy also prompted Raul Gonzalez, Reformista Secretary General, to comment that Garcia Godoy stood "no chance" of being the PR's candidate in 1970, adding that the Ambassador had a "history of enmity towards the Reformista Party". The issue of Balaguer's reelection in 1970 again made news in connection with the above developments. Garcia Godoy himself made clear to the press that he believed that reelection should be "prohibited". During his television appearance PR Secretary General Gonzalez said that if Balaguer rejects the idea of being reelected in 1970, the party would have to look around "among the most acceptable candidates" among whom would be Vice President Lora. He also denied that government officials or PR party leaders are supporting the initiatives taken to promote the reelection of Balaguer and Lora.

Also this week Interior and Police Secretary Federico Máximo SMESTER rejected a request of unnamed Reformista party leaders to hold public demonstrations in support of the Balaguer reelection movement. Smester said it was the policy of his office to deny permission for all types of public demonstrations made by political parties "outside the electoral campaign period". (UNCLASSIFIED)

2. Opposition Comments on Gonzalez Charges

Both PRD Secretary General Jose Francisco Peña Gómez and PRSC President Caonabo Javier Castillo immediately answered Raul Gonzalez' charges, made on the television program "Sea Usted el Jurado", that the country's opposition parties were carrying out a "systematic campaign" against the government which he termed almost a whipping (pela). Javier answered, saying that "the little experience which the present official political leaders have with serious and moderate criticism cause them to confuse what is simply opposition with what they consider opprobrium". For his part Peña Gómez said, "only the government can give beatings in this country". Peña charged that the Reformistas were "employing the same methods of Trujillo, that is to say, crimes and violence", and added that the opposition has the duty to defend itself. (UNCLASSIFIED)

3. Mayor Waffles Ex-Municipal Workers' Pay

As September 30 approached (and with it the date when Mayor Guarionex LLUBERES had promised that all suspended or dismissed city workers would be given the back pay owed them -- WPR's 26 and 27), uncertainty continued to surround the issue and worker and PRD demands took on increased urgency. At midweek Mayor Lluberes announced that workers put on the city payroll on or after May 16 would receive no pay, as they had "rendered no services". This prompted a quick reaction from the now largely-defunct Municipal Workers' Union, which accused the Mayor of "wanting to cause bloodshed and an outbreak of violence in the capital". (SD-3756) A day later the Mayor appeared to back away somewhat from his first position, when he said those who "merit" being paid (i.e., who really have worked) would be paid, even if hired after May 16. Earlier the same day Peña Gómez told the workers he could allow the fired workers no more union meetings at party headquarters. He countered this apparent lack of party support, however,

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by telling the workers that the PRD would be fully behind whatever action they decided upon, and (reportedly) threatened "popular war" if the workers' demands were not met. (SD-3782) At week's end the Secretary of the Dominican Municipal League, Victor GOMEZ Bergés, said that a prolongation of the supposed "screening" of the municipal payroll would only deceive the workers, and that they should be paid beginning September 30. He added, however, that to receive pay for no work was, "even under the most revolutionary regime, an immorality", and that only those workers who actually performed services (before or after May 16) should be paid. Finally, Interior and Police Secretary Federico Máximo SMESTER, while supporting the Mayor (who knew "who should and who should not be paid") and announcing that the National Police would prevent any disorder by the dismissed workers, did say that "a hungry legion must be respected" and that all who worked should receive their pay. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

Comment: Although the situation contains plenty of "social dynamite", there is at present little indication that the PRD is willing to light the fuse. Peña Gómez' apparently inflammatory remarks (above) should be read in context (he was obviously in a tight spot at the time), and the party program has been relatively quiet on the issue. Several PRD sources assured an Embassy officer this week that the party would do nothing before the 30th, and that everyone was interested in finding a way out (two PRD Deputies even suggested a bipartisan Congressional delegation to negotiate a compromise with the Mayor). As the week ended, public and private opinion appeared increasingly to favor the workers and a mutually satisfactory solution. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

4. PRD Notes

As though loathe to pass more than one quiet week (WPR #27), the PRD was back in the news and party leaders -- and ex-PRDer -- were busily making statements and creating headlines.

The most dramatic PRD news concerned party leaders Juan BOSCH, and his reported announcement (via Peña Gómez) that he would begin his one-month trip to Yugoslavia and Rumania October 3; and -- more importnat -- that he planned to return to the DR "very soon", sometime between the end of November and the first of 1969 (SD-3751). (Santiago's Informacion speculated on a Bosch arrival "next month".) Reaction to the Bosch announcement came quickly from ex-PRDer and now GODR Finance Secretary,

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Antonio MARTINEZ Francisco, who said it did not matter whether or not Bosch returned, since he was "burned out" politically. Questioned concerning Bosch's planned return, President Balaguer said that both the ex-President and Col. Francisco CAAMAÑO Denó might come back to the DR at any time with "full guarantees" (in Caamaño's case, provided the Constitutionalist leader devoted himself to "democratic and peaceful" activities --- SD-3765).

The party's Secretary General was much in evidence on the PRD radio program this week, with (a) an attack on Central Romana Corporation for failing to fulfill its sugar production commitment (WPR #27); (b) the announcement of Bosch's return (above) and the news that the Swedish Social Democrats planned to sponsor a November seminar in Santo Domingo for PRD leaders -- SD-3751; (c) criticism of Gen. Pérez Guillen's "unbelievable" statement concerning possible DR support for an OAS-created Inter-American Peace Force and (d) a special broadcast commemorating the 5th anniversary of the September 25 coup against the Bosch government, in which Peña Gómez dramatically contrasted the virtues of that regime against the alleged vices of the Balaguer Administration, blamed some present Reformistas ^{for} helping to plan the anti-Bosch golpe and appealed to the Dominican military to forget past bitterness and to "march together with us toward the conquest of a better destiny."

Peña Gómez made news off the air as well, when he (1) answered PR Secretary General Raul González' anti-opposition remarks by accusing the Reformistas of using Trujilloist methods (Item 2); (2) attacked Molina Urefia's alleged 1970 proseletyzing for Garcia-Godoy (Item 1); and (3) was once again identified as the object of a supposed assassination plot -- this time to be carried out near Santiago (Peña Gómez cancelled plans for the Cibao trip, purportedly for "party reasons"). (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

Comment: All PRD sources -- and many non-PRD as well -- this week appeared convinced that Bosch really planned to return to the DR in the near future. Their speculation concerning the reasons for this apparently sudden decision included (a) a possible approach to Bosch by representatives of both the Nixon and Humphrey camps; (b) a "deal" between Bosch and Balaguer that would allow the PRD leader to return if he promised (along with Balaguer) not to run for President; (c) Bosch's determination to stop Molina Urefia's alleged predatory inroads on the PRD; and (d) the ex-President's desire to build a strong electoral party for 1970, whether or not he himself ran for election. Regarding this last point, most moderate PRDers said they did not believe Bosch would seek reelection --- but this could easily have been wishful thinking. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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5. "The Best to the Campo" or "The Best to the Country Club"

The Movimiento Popular Dominicano (MPD) this week suggested that anti-trujillista military ally themselves with the "constitutionalists" in a united front against the government. However, this suggestion was qualified by the restriction that such an alliance must be organized by the proletariat and its party (obviously meaning the MPD), giving participation to the urban masses and proletariat. The constitutionalists have no other choice if they do not wish to be separated from the Armed Forces, the MPD said.

President Balaguer, when questioned by reporters about this call to solidarity against his government, scoffed at the idea, saying "such calls are always being made here". "The opposition lives on this kind of activity and it is perfectly normal in this country."

The Partido Comunista Dominicano, however, later severely criticized the MPD for a previous call for unity between the people and the anti-trujillista industrialists to fight the present administration. the PCD called it a significant change of direction, one which showed that the MPD slogan "the best to the campo" had become "the best to the Country Club". (UNCLASSIFIED)

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