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TO : Department of State

INFO : Amconsulate SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS

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BUREAU OF  
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 10 1968

FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

RS/AN  
ANALYSIS BRANCH  
DATE: SEP 8 1968

SUBJECT : Weekly Political Review No. 25 (August 30 - Sept. 5, 1968)

REF :

NAN  
RM/k. Filer  
9/13/68  
22/2/68

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INTRODUCTION

Labor troubles dominated the week's news in Santo Domingo. Traffic on the capital's streets began to return to normal levels by Wednesday (September 4) after President Balaguer announced a settlement of the 3 day taxi drivers' strike, worked out during a 4-hour meeting with union leaders, representatives of automotive spare parts importers and insurance companies (Item 1). In other labor news this week, CASC was prevented from holding its scheduled demonstration on September 1 (Item 2) to protest the government's prolongation of the austerity law. The mixed police-military patrols which began covering the city August 31 were withdrawn on the evening of September 4. Both the frustrated CASC demonstration and the taxi strike were marked by scattered violence and police made numerous arrests, including some union leaders and two high PRD officials (Item 3). President Balaguer, for the second week in succession, told the press that the conduct of the National Police was much better than it had been during the

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See last page:hok:9 7 68:hok

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DCM:FJDevine J.J.S.

Clearances:

POL:JCHaahr

SEP 9 PM 2 55

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past two years. When questioned specifically about the conduct of policemen who wounded a young man whom they pursued into his own house, the President said there were "reproachable cases" which should be avoided. The President added that he thought the conduct of both the strikers and the police had been exemplary.

In other news this week (1) both El Caribe and Listin's director Rafael Herrera won SIP (Sociedad Interamericana de Prensa) awards, Caribe for its service to the community and Herrera for his editorials; (2) a third Santo Domingo newspaper, rightist El Tiempo, celebrated its first anniversary of publication and was duly saluted by President Balaguer who also congratulated Listin and Caribe; (3) the President celebrated his 61st birthday and told the press he "felt older"; (4) Vice President Lora used the occasion of the President's birthday to reaffirm his "loyalty" to Balaguer's "political cause"; (5) the President announced that the government was studying various offers to finance the Valdesia Dam project and that it would be "at least two weeks" before any announcement; (6) an unidentified "Palace source" told El Caribe that the IDB was not interested in the project and that the contract would probably go to DOMES, a Dominican-Spanish consortium; (7) the Partido Democratico Obrero Campesino (PDOC) announced reorganizational efforts and said it would seek new recognition of the Central Electoral Board in October; (8) the GODR's Ambassador in Washington, Hector Garcia-Godoy, in a telegram to Listin's director Rafael Herrera, said he would "discourage" the idea of his running for President in 1970 (Item 4); (9) the hunger strike in La Victoria prison finally came to an end (Item 6); and (10) three more Haitian nationals sought political asylum, this time in the Embassy of Mexico (Item 5).

#### 1. Taxi Strike Settled After 3 Days

The 3-day long strike by Santo Domingo's taxi drivers (UNACHOSIN), which began on September 1, ended on September 3 after a 4-hour evening meeting between President Balaguer, taxi union leaders, representatives of automotive spare parts importers and insurance companies, and others. In announcing the end of the strike, the President said that a full understanding on all points at issue had been reached, including his agreement to ask for a study directed towards a possible modification of Article 4 of the austerity law to permit those companies showing profits in their operation to raise salaries of employees and workers. UNACHOSIN leaders characterized the meeting with Balaguer as "highly profitable" and said it was the first time a chauffeurs' organization had obtained "substantial" concessions from the government. Before the strike ended it had spread to Santiago and partially elsewhere.

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Despite some flareups of violence and arrests during the strike (a few stones and homemade bombs were thrown at some cars and buses, staples were liberally thrown into the streets and UASD students burned a truck and stoned other vehicles) President Balaguer praised both the police and the strikers for their conduct. He said the few incidents were minor in nature. (UNCL.)

COMMENT: The strike received the overt support of the PRSC, the various Communist parties and at the last minute of the PRD. Despite its belated support, the PRD nevertheless ended up as perhaps the primary beneficiary of this confrontation with the government. The party, maneuvering adroitly, seemingly brought the majority of the UNACHOSIN strike committee under its wing (although some Communists were involved). The union's legal adviser, Almanzor GONZALEZ Canahuat (elected PRD Secretary of Finances last February), reportedly was the most influential person behind the scenes in directing the strike committee. (CONF.)

## 2. CASC Demonstration Frustrated

Although a CASC attempt to hold a demonstration in Enriquillo Park on September 1 to back up their demands for an end to the government's austerity law was prevented by police action, the Social-Christian labor organization has promised to fight on, not only for an end to austerity but to bring to public attention the "lack of trade union freedom" in the D.R. and the "Trujillista character of the government". CASC leaders announced this week that they plan to bring legal action against Police and Interior Secretary Federico Maximo SMESTER for "abuse of power" and for violating the Constitution. Secretary General Henry MOLINA also said CASC would enter an action before the International Labor Organization for violation by the GODR of the ILO's Article 87 which guarantees trade union freedom and right of association. Responding to newsmen's questions, President Balaguer dismissed the CASC charges and said that "absolute" trade union freedom exists in this country but that a demonstration which was prohibited in the interest of public order and of "guaranteeing the full execution of the austerity law" was something else. Secretary Smester also dismissed the CASC comments and said he did not want to contribute to their publicity. All of the union leaders and workers detained by police during a series of micro-meetings on September 1 were released on September 3. (UNCLASSIFIED)

COMMENT: Over the past two years, the local posture of CASC (which still counts some 55 local unions in addition to its campesino associations) has probably been more professional and reasonable than that of its parent, CLASC. Nevertheless, especially since the CLASC meeting in Santo Domingo last May, CASC has become more militantly anti-Balaguer and is engaged in

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an obvious attempt to fill the vacuum it sees developing in the Dominican labor movement.

The government's actions in preventing the scheduled demonstration undoubtedly suited the aims of the CASC leadership which had stated in advance that by defying the government and being arrested they would succeed in showing the "anti-labor" situation which prevails in the D.R. and demonstrating that they are in the vanguard of the fight for worker rights (as they see them). CASC can therefore be expected to continue to oppose the GODR on many issues, including austerity. (CONFIDENTIAL)

### 3. PRD Notes

The PRD, especially in Santo Domingo, was to a large extent preoccupied with the chauffeurs' strike (which it endorsed -- Item 1). However, attention was also claimed by a sensational courthouse vendetta in the capital (in which the brother of a murdered PRD leader killed the father of the alleged assassin), and by the murder of an ex-Frogman (Constitutionalist) in La Vega. Of even more direct concern to the party were the arrests or detentions of a number of high-ranking and other PRDers: (1) acting reportedly on a tip that "leaders of parties of the left" were to plan subversive acts -- allegedly including the murder of a Police lieutenant -- in connection with the planned CASC demonstration (Item 2), police raided a Santo Domingo house over the weekend and arrested six persons. Four were MPD leaders or militants and one a student of unknown affiliation (the Police said MPD Secretary General Maximiliano GOMEZ was due to chair the meeting), but one was Abraham BAUTISTA Alcántara, the PRD National Executive Committee's Secretary of Public and International Relations; (2) on Sunday the party's controversial Organization Secretary, "Rafa" GAMUNDI and another PRD leader, Gerineldo MANCEBO (SD-3565) were taken by Police without explanation from a jeep driven by PRD Sen. CASIMIRO Castro. They were released a few days later. (Police Chief Braulio ALVAREZ' subsequent explanation that Gamundi had "affairs pending" with the security service was rejected by party Secretary General PEÑA GÓMEZ, who termed it "wretched" and -- referring to this and to other PRD detentions -- said that the chauffeurs' strike could not be used as a legitimate excuse to arrest PRD leaders); (3) later the same day, police briefly detained PRD Press and Propaganda Secretary "Manny" ESPINAL, Secretary General Peña Gómez, and -- again -- Senator Casimiro Castro, when they were stopped while riding in the latter's jeep. (President Balaguer later called certain military and police excesses "reproachable", but in general extolled police conduct during the chauffeurs' strike; he said that Casimiro Castro, Peña Gómez and "Manny" Espinal had been briefly detained because they allegedly had been inciting to strike and threatening bus

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owners into joining the strike); (4) in Santiago, the PRD reported the Sept. 5 arrests of one local committee leader and the leader of the party's Labor Bureau in that city; police reportedly charged they had been throwing rocks.

The PRD radio program remained off the air again this week, due not to political maneuvering and pressures but to the party's preoccupation with the labor situation and to technical -- and financial -- delays in signing the new contract with Radio Pueblo (WPR #24). Finally, however, all was settled and near week's end it was announced that the program would sally forth on September 6 over the new station -- but at the same time and to be relayed by the same stations in the interior. (LOU)

COMMENT: PRD sources told an Embassy officer this week that Gamundi had earlier on the day of his arrest believed he had been followed to party headquarters, and had been taken from there by Casimiro in the belief that the police would not dare bother a Senator. As for "Manny" Espinal, he said that he and Peña Gómez had been at Espinal's house all morning, and had gone scarcely two blocks from it in Casimiro's vehicle when police patrolmen stopped them. He said they were released upon the intervention of a PN officer who, recognizing the PRD leaders, roundly berated the patrolmen who had detained them. Referring to the President's charge that he had been threatening bus owners, Espinal called it a "barbarity".

Concerning the arrest of the PRD's International Relations Secretary in company with important MPD leaders, the party had been singularly quiet, both publicly and privately. Although Peña Gómez mentioned Bautista along with other detainees, there had thus far been no attempt to exploit this arrest of a national party leader, such as had been the case with the detention of "Rafa" Gamundi. In the past, intelligence sources had published reports of PRD cooperation with the extreme left, but this appeared to be the first "overt" (perforce) evidence of such collaboration. (CONFID.)

#### 4. Garcia-Godoy Discusses Possible Presidential Nomination

Listín this week carried a short interview with Dominican Ambassador to Washington Hector GARCIA-GODOY in which the former Provisional President reportedly said he would accept the nomination for the presidency if it were proposed to him by a movement he considered to be one of "national unity". Garcia-Godoy added, however, that he would discourage the idea of his candidacy, preferring to work within such a movement rather than from the presidency itself.

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Further expounding on his favorite theme of national unity, he said that it is time for the Dominican Republic to leave the stage of "caudillismo" and partisanism. The following day Listín published a telegram from the Ambassador in which he said that any Dominican citizen in full exercise of his rights could be nominated for president, but stressed again his own personal feeling that he would prefer to serve the country within a movement of national unity rather than in the presidency itself.

COMMENT: Reports persist in Santo Domingo that Garcia-Godoy will soon resign his diplomatic post to return here in order to build an organization before the 1970 elections. Rafael MARTÍNEZ Gonzalez, a former member of the PRSC Executive Committee, told an Embassy officer last week that he was planning a trip to Washington in the near future to talk to the Ambassador about his plans. Martínez said his conversations with Garcia-Godoy would be "unofficial" but that the PRSC was interested in the Ambassador's future. (LOU)

#### 5. Haitians in the News Again

The most recent attempt of Haitian exiles to claim political asylum here (WPR #21, #22) occurred late this week when three Haitian nationals -- Augustín LAFLEUR, Dominique ALEXANDER and Fauber JOSEPH -- presented themselves at the Embassy of Mexico, where they were received courteously, albeit noncommittally, by an Embassy functionary. As had become the usual procedure, the three were extensively -- and apparently promptly -- interviewed by leftist/nationalist El Nacional; they made the usual claims about their "desperate" state, said they were being followed by the spies of Duvalier, and alleged regret that "some" GODR officials had been influenced by the "persecutions of the Ton Ton Macoutes".

If the Haitian exiles were again making their by now customary statements, not to be outdone was the President of the National Council of Frontiers, Carlos SÁNCHEZ y Sánchez, who in commenting on the GODR's announced plans for a complete census of Haitian nationals living in the DR, repeated his well-known warnings against "biological conquest" and "Haitianization" of the country. Sánchez stated that the exodus of Haitians to the DR, combined with Duvalier's alleged attempts to cause a regression to Haiti's "old African culture" are transforming Haiti into a "dangerous neighbor". Other members of the Council spoke on methods to develop and repopulate the DR's frontier region, and ways to limit Haitian immigration. (LOU)

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COMMENT: This week's asylum attempt still does not appear to be part of a political plan, but is probably another effort to exploit what Haitians see as a "good thing" -- a way to get out of the DR quickly and cheaply. There appears to be no definite pattern to the exiles' choice of Embassy or political orientation; they are most likely acting from economic desperation, although leftist attempts to exploit their discontent cannot be discounted. In any case, the exiles are secure in the knowledge that their statements concerning persecution by Duvalier agents and intolerable conditions in the DR are sure to be sympathetically received by the opposition here. (LOU)

#### 6. La Victoria Hunger Strike Ends

The hunger strike of self-styled political prisoners at La Victoria (and their relatives in the offices of the Red Cross) finally ground to an end on August 31, after 39 days. Spokesmen for the strikers explained to reporters of El Nacional that the hunger strike was no longer "an element of fundamental pressure to force the government to concede liberty to political prisoners". They promised however to carry on their struggle with "other methods more efficacious in the present national situation". With thanks to Nacional for its support and a few parting shots at Procurator General, GOICO Morales, it was all over.

That is, almost over. A few days later prisoners at the San Luis prison in Santiago decided they too might adopt the hunger strike technique to win public attention and support for their grievances, namely better medical care for prisoners. But the strike, provoked by the death of one prisoner reportedly due to medical negligence, met with such unexpected cooperation on the part of judicial authorities that it was called off only two days later. Court spokesman Federico Augusto GARCIA-GODOY, while maintaining that the strike was really no hunger strike but only a focus of rebellion, nevertheless conceded that the lack of medical facilities at San Luis was "grave" and promised immediate improvement. (UNCLASSIFIED)

#### COMMENT:

It seems likely that despite the conclusion of the La Victoria group, the hunger strike as a method of pressure and protest is a phenomenon which we may expect to see employed with some frequency in the future. (LOU)

CRIMMINS

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