

AIRGRAM

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A-009

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TO : Department of State

INFO : Amconsul SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS

FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

SUBJECT : President Affirms that Neither Wessin nor Caamaño May Return to DR

REF : Santo Domingo A-673

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED 11 1967
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RS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH
DATE: July 9, 1967

1. In a July 2 press conference attended by members of the domestic and foreign press, President Balaguer reaffirmed that General Elías Wessin y Wessin would not be allowed to return to the DR at this time. The President began by qualifying as "pure fantasy" rumors which have circulated in the Puerto Rican press that sectors of the Dominican Armed Forces are planning to take over Cabo Caucedo Airport so that Wessin can enter the country. He then stated that, if Wessin did return to the DR, Caamaño would also be allowed to return, since under a democratic government he has an equal right to live in his country. He added, however, that the presence of either Wessin or Caamaño at this time would represent an obstacle to the nation's peace and tranquillity. Finally, the President said that if a "sufficiently conscientious and responsible movement of national opinion" were to call for Wessin's return, the government would obey that demand, but he qualified the groups which have thus far demanded his return (see reference airgram) as representatives of "minority opinions" who do not realize the seriousness of Wessin's presence.

2. Comment: The President's skillful linking of the return of Caamaño with that of Wessin should serve at least temporarily to quiet the groups which have been clamoring for Wessin's return, since those groups would certainly be opposed to having Caamaño back in the DR. At the same time, the return and subsequent assignment as Presidential Naval Adviser of former Armed Forces Minister Francisco Javier Rivera Caminero was

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Contents and Classification Approved by: DCM:FJDevine F.J.D.

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pushed into the background, President Balaguer making it quite clear that Rivera's return did not signify that Caamaño (who was ordered abroad at the same time as Rivera in January 1966) would now be allowed to return to the DR.

J.H.C.

CRIMMINS

by
F.J.D.

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