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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

Pol 30-2 Dom Rep

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A-762

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : Amconsulate SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SEP 16 1 36 PM 1968
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
SEP 17 1968
RS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH

FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

DATE: September 15, 1968

SUBJECT : Renewed PQD Attacks on Balaguer Government

REF :

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

The PQD intensified its attacks on the government this week, opening the campaign on September 9, 1968, with the assertion that 18 officers and 5 enlisted men recently separated from the Armed Forces were expelled for political reasons, namely their PQD affiliations and friendship with General Elias Wessin y Wessin.

This was followed immediately by a paid political announcement in El Nacional. The ad, in the form of an open letter to President Balaguer from the members of the PQD Central Executive Committee, denounced the President for his refusal to meet PQD demands for Wessin y Wessin's return to the Dominican Republic. They pointed specifically to the President's "promise" to lift the restriction against Wessin y Wessin's re-entry if such were requested by a significant portion of the Dominican people. They argued that PQD party membership alone now constituted a significant portion of the population and hence Balaguer's only condition had been satisfied. The letter, viciously sarcastic in content, is enclosed in unofficial translation.

President Balaguer, speaking to reporters of El Nacional the following day, flatly denied any political motive in the separations. He claimed that military separations do not originate in the Executive Branch and noted that while there were different reasons in each case, none was politically motivated. The President added that he presumed that General Wessin y Wessin would not encourage any subversive plots against the government,

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-yr.intervals;
not automatically declassified

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

Drafted by: POL:JCHaahr:KJCroom:hok:eaf:9-12-68

Contents and Classification Approved by:

DCM:FJDevine F.J.D.

Clearances: POL:JCHaahr

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but admitted he did not know the General's intentions. The President's statement rather pointedly made no reference to the PQD open letter, nor to any possible relaxation of the restriction on General Wessin y Wessin's return to the Dominican Republic. END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

Comment:

The thrust of the PQD statement on the military personnel involved implied that those concerned had been separated from their respective services only a very short time ago. Included among the higher ranking officers mentioned by the PQD were Colonel Pedro Bartolomé BENOIT, Col. Marino Antonio POLANCO Tovar and Lt. Col. Granpolver MEDINA all of whose separation and/or retirement took place near the end of 1967. In the case of Lt. Col. Medina, the PQD's claim would appear to be based on fact. The Embassy cannot identify all of the persons concerned as being Wessinistas; it is entirely possible that some of them were separated for other than political reasons and that the PQD saw a good opportunity not only to use them as an issue but also to attempt to draw them into the PQD. On the other hand, Medina told El Nacional reporters that the government's action in dismissing the 23 was taken for political reasons, i.e. their "friendship" with Wessin y Wessin, and he left no doubt in the minds of his readers where his own sympathies were. END CONFIDENTIAL

F. J. Devine

DEVINE

Enclosure:

Newspaper excerpt of "Open Letter to the President of the Republic, etc."

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"OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC,
DR. JOAQUIN BALAGUER, IN THE THIRD YEAR OF FORCED
EXILE OF GENERAL ELIAS WESSIN Y WESSIN"

"Today marks the third year of the violent and unjust exile of General Elías Wessin y Wessin, the deed of some foreign forces who by this unjustified attack pleased a Dominican with more ambition for ephemeral power than for dignified nationalistic sentiment.

"Since then not a single day has passed in which the conscience of the country, deeply wounded by this injustice and outrage, has not demanded the lifting of the ominous prohibition that forbids entry into the country of the leader of the PQD.

"This petition, Mr. President, well analyzed, does not have an exclusively partisan meaning.

"Everyone knows that the violation of the rights of one citizen, constitutes a potential threat to the rights of all.

"In the harsh and undeserved expulsion of General Elías Wessin y Wessin, the prerogatives and guarantees that the common law accords to each and every Dominican were diminished.

"In view of the contempt of the judicial system that rules us, everyone could say with reason: today someone else, tomorrow it could be me.

"It is for this that the responsible organs of public opinion on more than one occasion, have shown their radical disagreement with the arbitrary ruling that keeps General Wessin y Wessin far from his native land.

"In the context of these deplorable circumstances, it is more than evident Dr. Balaguer, that to speak of the full operation of democracy among us means, besides a cruel jest, a gratuitous offense against the good sense of the Dominican people.

"It is more dignified, for its bold and insolent sincerity that he who being a despot, declares himself to be one, than he, who being one, aspires to disguise his regime of force with declamatory oratory that obscures his veiled tyranny.

"Each time that we have gone to you, Mr. President, on behalf of our leader, you Dr. Balaguer, have either wrapped yourself in a cloak of contemptuous silence or have become angry, speaking forth in a manner hostile and offensive to the recognized honor of General Elías Wessin y Wessin.

"We have been told -- you have told us in public speeches -- that if an appreciable part of the nation asked you to permit the return of the general you would concede it.

"The PQD, inscribed and duly accepted by the Central Electoral Board, composed of more than hundreds of thousands of citizens, has fulfilled your condition. But you have not kept your promise.

"This pledge, among others, has fallen into the void and all our pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

"The idea is commonly popular, so that one hears in all corners of the country, that you fear the presence of General Elías Wessin y Wessin in this land.

"For ourselves, to tell the truth, we find it difficult to give credence to this widespread opinion.

"Why are you in fear of a citizen that at one time or another has declared that he will be your major supporter in maintaining the stability of the institutions?

"Aren't you the General in Chief of the Armed Forces, of whose firm loyalty to your regime you have given the people so many and often reiterated assurances?

"No, we do not accept the thesis that you are prevented by fear from upholding the substantive law of the nation, as you swore to do.

"That which one should fear is the methodical employment of arbitrariness, to substitute systematically caprice for the law, to systematize persecution, to tolerate abuses and leave unpunished the crimes sanctioned in the Penal Code.

"Of this it is necessary to be afraid, because those who fear much, have much to fear.

"There exists a reciprocal influence, with respect to stability, between the institutions and their strict fulfillment.

"Think about this Dr. Balaguer, think about it as a learned man, as a jurist, as a politician of long and varied experience.

"It is common knowledge that General Elías Wessin y Wessin gave you his most cordial support to reach the heights of power.

"Do not oblige us now to think of you as was said of a public figure of France: "he seemed worthy of the Presidency until he got it."

"Once more, Mr. President, we ask you, in the name of right, in the name of democratic principles, to keep your promise that you made with the nation when you swore to uphold the Constitution, allowing General Elías Wessin y Wessin to return to this land.

"With our motto of DEMOCRATIC UNITY, JUSTICE, PEACE AND WORK, we salute you, the directing members of the Central Executive Committee of the Partido Quisqueyano Democrata (PQD)."

Dr. Arturo G. MUÑOZ Marte,
Vice President

Lic. Manuel E. MATOS Brea,
Vice President

Dr. Víctor

Dr. Víctor Chalas VALDEZ,
Vice President

Flerida Yabra de BERRY,
Vice President

Lic. Lorenzo VALDEZ Carrasco
Secretary of Organization

Alfonzo ACOSTA Feliz,
Secretary of Press and Propaganda

Lic. Francisco A. SALAZAR S.,
Secretary of Culture and Propaganda

Dr. Agustín Hung CUILLÓN
Secretary of Social Affairs

Luis E. LUPERÓN
Inspector General

Guillermo N. JIMENEZ,
Secretary General

Juan CHAVEZ,
Vice President

Dr. Alvaro LOGROÑO Battle,
Vice President

Dr. Milcíades HERRERA Báez,
Secretary of Records and
Correspondence

Dr. Humbertilio VALDEZ Sánchez,
Secretary of Finance

Dr. Manuel G. REYES Monsanto,
Secretary of Legal Affairs

Gustavo FRIAS,
Secretary of Labor Affairs

Dr. Gustavo E. RODRÍGUEZ B.,
Supervisor General

Héctor Francisco OSORIO,
Delegate

Julio César MONDESI
Delegate

Antonio DOMÍNGUEZ
Secretary of Campesino Affairs

Dr. Zenón CASTILLO de Aza,
Delegate

Alberto PÉREZ Prado,
Delegate

José Frank ALVAREZ Conde
Secretary of Juvenile Affairs