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ACTION ARA 16

INFO CIAE 00, DODE 00, GPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10, P 04,

RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, SAH 03, NIC 01, AID 28, PC 04, RSR 01,

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R 210010Z MAY 68
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5250
INFO AMCONSUL SAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 2550

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT THROWS DOWN GAUNTLET TO WESSINISTAS ET AL

REF: SD-2510 NC

SUMMARY: IN HIS ELECTION-EVE BROADCAST TO NATION (REFTEL), PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY LAUNCHED INTO DISCUSSION OF NATION'S TWO HOTTEST POLITICAL TOPICS AND LAID DOWN UNMISTAKEABLE CHALLENGES TO HIS INTRANSIGENT OPPOSITION ON BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT. STATED ONLY TWO SHADOWS BLOTED HIS INTENTION PROVIDE ELECTIONS THAT WOULD REFLECT POPULAR WILL "WITH SAME PURITY" AS 1966 ELECTIONS DID -- SHADOWS CAST BY PRD ABSTENTIONISM

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AND PROSCRIPTION ON WESSIN'S RETURN. DENIED EXISTENCE
VALID REASONS FOR PRD STANCE, TRUE CAUSE FOR WHICH MUST BE
SOUGHT IN "ESSENTIALLYHCOMMUNIST" THESIS OF "POPULARI DIC-
TATORSHIP" (REMARKS ON PRD REPORTED FULLY IN SD-2529).

1. RE WESSIN, WHOSE CASE HE HAD LAST MONTH PROMISED ADDRESS
IN "PROXIMATE" SPEECH AND WHO ON MAY 14 HAD IN TAPED BROAD-
CAST ATTACKED BALAGUER ON VARIOUS COUNTS AND HAD TOUCHED
PRESIDENT'S RAWEST NERVE BY INTIMATING PRESIDENT AND/OR HIS
GOVERNMENT GUILTY WIDESPREAD FISCAL DISHONESTY, AR
SAID FOLLOWING: A. WESSIN WILL BE ALLOWED RETURN AT OPPOR-

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TUNE MOMENT AND IS SUFFICIENT TIME PARTICIPATE IN 1970 ELECTIONS. WESSIN'S OUSTER IN SEPTEMBER 1965 WAS DICTATED BY NATIONAL NEED FOR PACIFICATION; PRESIDENT STRONGLY IMPLIED WESSIN'S EXILE WAS ESSENTIALLY RESULT HIS LACK OF COURAGE IN THAT HE DID NOT RESIST IT AT TIME. (THIS REMARK HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON POLITICAL AND OTHER FIGURES HERE, SOME OF WHOM CONSIDER BALAGUER MADE SERIOUS ERROR -- WHICH COULD BACKFIRE AT ANY TIME -- BY INTIMATING THERE MAY BE EXCEPTIONS TO GENERAL PRECEPT THAT MILITARY OWE CONSTANT SUBSERVIENCE TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITY).

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B. BALAGUER THEN SEEMED FURTHER TO POSTPONE WESSIN'S RETURN BY LINKING HIS CASE DIRECTLY WITH THAT OF CAAMANO, WHOM HE SUMMARILY SEPARATED FROM ARMED FORCES, AND APPEARED SERIOUSLY TO QUESTION WESSIN'S MUCH CHERISHED CONCEPT OF LOYALTY BY REQUIRING HIM (AND CAAMANO) TO SWEAR OBEDIENCE TO LAWS AND CONSTITUTION AND PLEDGE THEIR "STRICT RESPECT" FOR PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. HIS GOVERNMENT ENJOYS SUFFICIENT POPULAR SUPPORT AND INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY IMPLEMENT SUCH REQUIREMENT WITH SLIGHTEST TROUBLE, PRESIDENT CONFIDENTLY ASSERTED. ENDED THIS PORTION SPEECH STATING "LET THEM (WESSIN AND CAAMANO) COME, WITH WHATEVER AUREOLA THEY WISH," SO THAT PEOPLE MAY KNOW THEM FOR WHAT THEY ARE AND MEASURE THEM ACCORDING CONTRIBU-
TION THEY MIGHT MAKE TO DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT. (BY SEPARATING CAAMANO FROM ARMED FORCES PRESIDENT, AMONG OTHER THINGS, SATISFIED WIDESPREAD SENTIMENT FOR SUCH ACTION WITH-
IN MILITARY AND ELSEWHERE AND AT SAME TIME REMOVED CAAMANO FROM REACHES OF THOSE WHO WISHED HIM TRIED FOR DESERTION AND TREASON.)

2. IN ANOTHER PORTION SPEECH, BALAGUER REACTED WITH WHIPLASH SWIFTHNESS TO CHARGES OF ADMINISTRATIVE CORRUPTION ISSUED DAY

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BEFORE BY WESSIN AND THAT MORNING BY OLD BALAGUER FRIEND JOSE ERNESTO GARCIA AYBAR IN LISTIN DIARIO COLUMN. OBVIOUSLY STUNG TO QUICK BY COINCIDENTAL BROADSIDE BY ENEMY AND FRIEND.

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PRESIDENT CHALLENGED LATTER PRESENT PROOF OF CHARGES, PLEDGING WORD OF HONOR HE WOULD ACT SUMMARILY AGAINST ANY OFFICIAL HIS GOVERNMENT PROVEN CORRUPT. PRESIDENT ACKNOWLEDGED IMPOSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING FISCAL PURITY IN ANY ADMINISTRATION, BUT STATED HIS SINCERE BELIEF PUBLIC FUNDS ADMINISTERED NOW WITH AS MUCH HONESTY AS POSSIBLE IN DR. NOTED THAT FOR FIRST TIME IN NATION'S HISTORY BALANCE SHEET IS PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH

IN ALL OF NATION'S NEWSPAPERS. PLACED PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON HIS OWN CONSTANT AND STRICT PERSONAL WATCHFULNESS OVER ALL MATTERS INVOLVING PUBLIC FUNDS, STATING THAT WHILE DISHONEST OFFICIALS EXIST IN HIS, AS IN ANY GOVERNMENT, HE WOULD PREFER HAVE HAND CUT OFF RATHER THAN APPROVE ANY MATTER WHICH STAINED REPUTATION HIS GOVERNMENT AND CONCURRENTLY DISHONORED ALL DOMINICANS. CITED EXAMPLE INVOLVING DEAL FOR COPPER-MINING CONCESSIONS IN AZUA, WHICH HE SAID HE RECENTLY DISALLOWED --EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NO PROOF OF CORRUPTION--BECAUSE HE SUSPECTED DISHONESTY INVOLVED.

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3. IN DIRECT RESPONSE WESSIN CHARGE, PRESIDENT THEN OPENED POTENTIAL PANDORA'S BOX BY STATING HE HAD THAT DAY ORDERED SEC FINANCE CONDUCT "EXHAUSTIVE AUDIT" INTO USES OF PUBLIC FUNDS BY ALL ADMINISTRATIONS, INCLUDING HIS IN 1961, AFTER TRUJILLO ASSASSINATED. AMONG OTHER CATEGOREIS TO BE INVESTIGATED, PRESIDENT SAID, WERE FOLLOWING BASIC ONES:

(1) SECURITY FORCES, PARTICULARLY INCLUDING THEIR INTELLIGENCE SERVICES AND WESSIN'S FORMER ARMED FORCES TRAINING CENTER; (2) FUNDS CONTROLLED BY OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY; AND (3) RECEIPTS FROM FOREIGN LOANS AND INTERNAL REVENUES. WESSIN, PRESIDENT OBSERVED, HAS--PERHAPS UNWISELY--PLACED HIS FINGER ON BLEEDING AND PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE WOUND. AUDIT WILL DETERMINE WHETHER PREDECESSOR GOVERNMENTS SINCE 1961 HAVE ACTED AS HONESTLY AS PRESENT GOVERNMENT. RESULTS OF AUDIT WILL BE PUBLISHED AND GIVEN TO ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THOSE, WHOEVER THEY MAY BE, GUILTY OF DISHONESTY OR ILLEGAL ENRICHMENT. "WHEN BANDAGE REMOVED WE SHALL SEE HOW FAR AND TO WHOM BAD ODORS EMANTING FROM POSTULE REACH", PRESIDENT THUNDERED.

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4. REACTION TO ALL THIS WAS IMMEDIATE. FORMER COUNCIL OF STATE PRESIDENT BONNELLY SCHEDULED BROADCAST ON BALAGUER'S IMPLICATION HIS GOVERNMENT DISHONEST FOR NIGHT MAY 20. FORMER GNR PRESIDENT ANTONIO IMBERT CONFIDENTLY TOLD PRESS HE HAD NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. LISTIN DIARIO NOTED THAT PRESIDENT'S REPUTATION FOR "SCRUPULOUS PERSONAL FINANCIAL INTEGRITY" IS UNQUESTIONED (A COMMENT ECHOED BY OTHER PAPERS AND PRD'S PENA GOMEZ, AMONG OTHERS) BUT STRESSED URGENT NEED FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW TO CURB INFLUENCE-PEDDLING BY LESSER OFFICIALS. GARCIA AYBAR REPLIED TO PRESIDENT IN LONG LISTIN COLUMN NOTING PRESIDENT HIMSELF HAD CHARGED CORRUPTION IN HIS ADMINISTRATION, AND AGAIN REFERRED TO (BUT DID NOT NAME) THREE HIGH OFFICIALS WIDELY KNOWN FOR WHEELING AND DEALING (REASONABLE GUESS WOULD BE THAT HE HAD IN MIND ALIRO PAULINO, RAMON A. FONT BERNARD AND POLIBIO DIAZ), STATING PRESIDENT WELL KNOWS DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF THEIR AND OTHER CORRUPTION DOES NOT EXIST. STATED FOR THIS REASON HE WOULD NOT NAME NAMES BUT URGED PRESIDENT CLOSELY INVESTIGATE OFFICIALS WHOSE SHADY ACTIVITIES MATTER PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE.

5. ALONE IN ITS COMMENT WAS EL CARIBE, WHICH IN LONG MAY 17 EDITORIAL GENTLY SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT DROP WHOLE THING.

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FORGET ABOUT PAST, AND ADOPT LISTIN'S SUGGESTION ORDER PREVENT TO EXTENT POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN FUTURE. RIGHTIST EL TIEMPO JUMPED GLEEFULLY ON CARIBE, WONDERING ALOUD WHO PAPER MIGHT BE DEFENDING. (WHILE NO ONE HAS YET SAID IT OPENLY, IT HAS BEEN WIDELY COMMENTED AROUND TOWN FOR YEARS THAT CARIBE PUBLISHER GERMAN ORNES' BROTHER--AND VRD PRESIDENT--HORACIO ORNES BENEFITTED HANDSOMELY FROM HIS CABINET SERVICE IN TRIUMVIRATE IN MONTHS AFTER 1963 COUP).

6. COMMENT: (A) IT IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE FORETELL HOW MUCH FALLOUT THERE MIGHT BE FROM BALAGUER'S TEMPESTUOUS DECISION AUDIT ALL HIS PREDECESSORS FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES. AS LISTIN POINTED OUT, "MOST" CHIEFS OF STATE SINCE 1961, INCLUDING BALAGUER, ARE BELIEVED HAVE CONDUCTED THEMSELVES HONESTLY,

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BUT SAME CAN HARDLY BE SAID FOR HOST OF SECOND AND THIRD
LEVEL OFFICIALS ALL GOVERNMENTS. CONSPICUOUSLY MISSING FROM
LISTIN'S LISTING OF HONORABLE EXECUTIVES WAS ANTONIO IMBERT.
(B) IN ANY EVENT, BALAGUER'S DECISION HAS STIMULATED AS MUCH
IF NOT MORE TALK AND SPECULATION AS MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS
AND, WITH HELP OF BONNELLY ET AL, HAS FOCUSED MUCH PUBLIC
ATTENTION ON ISSUE THAT COULD, TO QUOTE PENA GOMEZ FROM ANOTHER
CONTEXT, "SHARPEN CONTRADICTIONS" BETWEEN PRO-AND ANTI-BALAGUER
SECTORS OF RIGHT. WITH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS OUT OF WAY,
80J73 91 0-J5 :J. PRESENT CORRUPTION ALREADY PROMISES AS MUCH
CONTROVERSY AS "REVOLUTIONARY" LEFT'S UNANIMOUS CLAIM
ELECTORATE HAS JUST "REPUDIATED" BALAGUER.

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