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TO : Department of State
INFO : Amconsul SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS
FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO
SUBJECT : UCN-PQD Alliance Being Considered
REF :

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ANALYSIS BRANCH
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DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 1968
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FEB 5 1968

- Enclosed is a memorandum of conversation held on January 24 between John A. FERCH, American Consul in Santiago de los Caballeros, and José Miguel "Panchito" CASTILLO, an activist of the Unión Cívica Nacional (UCN) from San Francisco de Macorís.
- Castillo's remarks deal generally with the split in the UCN between (a) those opportunists who wish to climb on the PQD band wagon via an electoral alliance for the coming municipal elections, partly in self defense but also in the expectation of exploiting the PQD for UCN purposes and (b) the "purists" led by acting President Abel FERNANDEZ Simó who want to keep the UCN intact as a separate political entity. According to Castillo, the UCN (at least Castillo and those who feel as he does) believes in the need for constitutional continuity but favors the appointment of Wessin as Secretary of State for the Armed Forces in order to exert pressure on Balaguer to move to the right.

gm
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Enclosure:
Memorandum of Conversation

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by: :GCMitchell/JWWilson:df 1/30/68

Contents and Classification Approved by: DCM:FJDeLine

JWWilson

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: José Miguel (Panchito) CASTILLO, UCN activist,
San Francisco de Macorís
John A. FERCH, Consulate, Santiago de los
Caballeros

DATE AND PLACE: January 24, 1968 Consulate

SUBJECT: Probable Alliance of UCN and PQD

On January 24, 1968, Castillo visited the Consulate on a visa matter and was invited by Ferch to wait in his office. The following political conversation ensued.

The Coming UCN-PQD Alliance

Castillo claims that Unión Cívica Nacional (UCN) militants want an alliance with the Partido Quisqueyano Demócrata (PQD) during the forthcoming municipal elections. The militants see the alliance as a necessary tactic required by the growing campesino strength of the PQD. The militants see the PQD not as a true political party but as a vehicle created to affect the return of Wessin to the DR and to secure his appointment as Secretary of State for the Armed Forces. When these goals are attained, the UCN militants believe that the PQD will collapse as a party and the UCN can pick up the pieces.

The opposition to this plan, according to Castillo, comes from acting UCN president, Abel Fernández Simó, who wants the UCN to remain intact as a separate political entity. Castillo describes Fernández as an "honorable" man with an "inflexible" mind who does not realize that political situations change, and, to be successful, politicians must adapt to such changes.

The question mark for Castillo in this strategy is the recent announcement by Wessin of his presidential candidacy in 1970. If the PQD remains intact through 1970, Castillo realizes that this UCN strategy will have failed. However, regardless of that possibility he believes that the mass of UCN sympathizers will vote

PQD in 1968 and, therefore, the UCN has no practical choice but to follow the strategy.

With respect to the Balaguer Administration, Castillo said that the UCN both believes in the necessity of constitutional continuity and is largely satisfied with Balaguer as a president. However, he adds that Balaguer should be stricter with the left. While UCN militants want to be in a position to campaign successfully in 1970, Castillo claims that he personally is not wholly convinced that this is the right course for the country; it might be better for Balaguer to continue in office another four years.

The Campesinos

The duality of pro-Wessin and pro-Balaguer feelings held by Castillo, exists, he claims, in another form among the campesinos. The campesinos look to the military for protection and feel that the military can best provide this protection with Wessin as Secretary of State for the Armed Forces. The campesinos, again according to Castillo, are grateful for the stability that has been achieved by Balaguer and for his public works programs and want him to remain as President. They want both Balaguer and Wessin. They support the PQD not to achieve a change of government, but to place Wessin in charge of the armed forces. When questioned about whether the campesinos possess the political sophistication to make this type of analysis and vote for the PQD for such limited ends, Castillo replied with great assurance that they do.

A similar campesino duality of opinion exists, Castillo claims, regarding agrarian reform, the Church, and the Balaguer Administration. The campesinos listen to the Church and believe it supports Wessin; ergo they will support Wessin. The campesinos are satisfied with the Government's current agrarian reform efforts, despite the position recently taken by the Church. The campesinos like the Government's program because it is resettling rural "bums" and leaving land now cultivated to the hard workers. The Wessin issue, however, is more important than agrarian reform. The campesinos will oppose the Government in the municipal elections because the Church wants Wessin, not because the Church wants a more energetic land reform program.

The Military

A similar desire to have both Wessin and Balaguer reportedly is held by the military at all levels. Castillo claims to have good military contacts and said that, until the announcement of Wessin's candidacy for president, the military looked favorably at the PQD

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as a vehicle to secure the appointment of Wessin as Armed Forces chief. He claims that the military is loyal to Balaguer and would not want to be forced to choose between Balaguer and Wessin. The candidacy of Wessin is therefore an important development. Castillo said he has not talked with his contacts since the announcement and, consequently, is not certain how the military is thinking at the moment.

The Central Electoral Board (JCE)

Castillo claims that the JCE includes both partisan Reformistas and outright crooks. Several of the latter reportedly offered to smooth the way, for a price, for recognition of the UCN. Castillo asserts that the UCN refused and for this reason, together with the opposition of the Reformista JCE members, he doubts that the UCN will be recognized. Here he again reiterated that the UCN will ally itself with the PQD formally or informally, with or without Fernández, with or without recognition. Castillo offered no coherent answer as to why the JCE recognized the PQD. He suggested the fact of USG "recognition" but admitted that the JCE knew the PQD had merely registered as a foreign agent in the US and that the USG had taken no formal steps in support of the PQD.

Comment: Throughout the conversation Castillo brought forward reasoning so convoluted that Ferch repeatedly had to ask him to begin again. If anything can be concluded from his comments it is that: the UCN is split between Fernández (and possibly other "purists") and those who want to climb on the PQD band wagon; Castillo and those he may speak for want a government more strongly inclined to the right; they do not seek a change of administration at this time - either they are institutionalist (I find it hard to say "democrats") and therefore support the continuation of the current Administration, or they recognize Balaguer's strength and do not want to attack him directly; in the return of Wessin as Armed Forces chief they see a means of turning Balaguer to the right.

JAFerch:df

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