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TO : Department of State

DEPT PASS: Amembassy CARACAS
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Nov 5
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 Navy - COMNAVBASE GTMO

FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

DATE: November 3, 1969

SUBJECT: Weekly Political Review No. 42 (Oct. 24-30, 1969)

REF :

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1. Introduction

The broadly defined issue of "law and order" was the principal topic of conversation and comment in the D.R. this week. In a nation-wide radio/television address, President Balaguer accused the PRD of openly inciting to civil war and the military overthrow of the government, and he severely criticized the PQD as well for attacks against the GODR and incitations to the Dominican military. The President also reacted to a new upsurge in violence against individuals and to renewed general criticism of the National Police, criticism fueled by the police killing of a secondary school teacher. The President's speech was a strong one but did not seem to have the same calmative effect as have similar presidential pronouncements in the past. In the wake of the speech, student protests continued and police action was

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

☒ In ☐ Out

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such as to bring about something of an unprecedented display of solidarity among students of all three national universities. The events of the week contributed still more uncertainties to the general feeling of uneasiness and growing apprehension which has increasingly permeated the Dominican political scene ever since the topic of the 1970 elections became uppermost in local political activity. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

2. Balaguer Speaks to Nation

President Balaguer, reacting to recent events (in particular the upsurge in violence against individuals, police excesses and the increasingly harsh attacks on the GODR by opposition parties) spoke to the nation in a radio-television address on October 28. In his speech the President (a) prohibited the PRD ("or any other party seeking the overthrow of the government by violence") from holding outdoor political rallies, (b) reaffirmed the GODR's action in closing the PQD radio program, (c) ordered an "exhaustive" screening of the National Police to cull out undesirable elements, and (d) ordered the authorities, including the police, to review records of taxi drivers and to impound vehicles and revoke licenses of those who do not meet certain moral standards. Balaguer said that the moment had arrived when the government could no longer postpone taking a stand on the so-called "Dictatorship with Popular Support" and labeled statements made by PRD leaders in Santiago on October 26 as "an open call to civil disobedience and collective subversion". Balaguer said he "sincerely respects" Juan Bosch as a writer and sympathizes with many ideas of the PRD but would be shirking his duty were he to fold his arms in the face of the "subversive campaign unleashed on a national scale" by the protagonists of the "Popular Dictatorship" thesis. (SD-4220). On the issue of the PQD radio program, Balaguer said that if the PQD would accede to the "friendly" requirements of the Telecommunications Directorate to desist from spreading discontent in the military, the program would be reopened, in spite of the insults against him and other GODR authorities that would be forthcoming. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Press comment on the President's speech was generally laudatory except that El Caribe, Listín and El Nacional thought that Balaguer went too far in prohibiting outdoor rallies by the PRD which measure, they said, might prove counterproductive by encouraging further radicalization of that party. Reaction by opposition parties was predictably adverse, with most seeing Balaguer's action as another step in repression of the opposition. (SD-4247). (UNCLASSIFIED)

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3. PRD Faces Rally Ban

The party's Santiago rally to protest the Gualley shooting affair was held as scheduled on October 26 (WPR #41) and was attended by 6,000 - 10,000 persons. Secretary General PEÑA Gómez keynoted the meeting with a speech in which he praised the "correct" military and police of Santiago (the meeting was relatively orderly and security units did not interfere); reiterated his position that the PRD would not support just any golpe but would back "any revolutionary movement" aiming to alter the present situation; emphasized the necessity for a revolution divorced from foreign influence; and assured Santiago's landowning and entrepreneurial middle class that they had nothing to fear from "Dictatorship with Popular Support" (SD-4196). However, although Peña's speech was in context a rather moderate one, other speakers in the program (Jottin CURY, "Rafa" GAMUNDI, and company) presented demagogic harangues which whipped the crowd into an ugly mood and elicited shouts of "Balaguer assassin", and other anti-government slogans.

The allegedly subversive nature of the Santiago rally was too much for the GODR's strained tolerance, and at midweek President Balaguer took to the air to announce that the party had placed itself outside the law and that henceforth no more open-air meetings would be allowed the PRD (Item 2). The President later commented upon his speech to explain that his remarks were directed against the extremist wing of the PRD, and not the "moderates" who respected democracy and free elections; he emphasized, however, that the PRD would be allowed no more open-air meetings (including the one solicited in Santo Domingo for November 1), and stated that the ban would continue throughout the electoral period, unless the party "changed its attitude". In quick reaction to the presidential prohibition (a) Peña Gómez said that the President was attacking the PRD out of fear and terror, but that the party would never allow itself to be destroyed; (b) pro-electionist Manuel FERNANDEZ Mármol saw the President as frightened by the Santiago meeting; (c) PRD Senators LOVATON Pittaluga, GIL Morales and CASIMIRO Castro agreed the President's remarks were a "manifestation of fear"; (d) Deputy Miguel SOTO threatened a protest walkout by PRD legislators; and (e) Sen. Casimiro appeared on the party radio program to warn that the PRD, if driven underground, would be "more dangerous than ever" and that the party would continue holding rallies despite the Presidential directive. (SD-4251).

The only other noteworthy (albeit anticlimactic) PRD news this week concerned Professor Juan BOSCH, who left Communist China and began a North Viet Nam visit. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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Comment: A. The initial PRD reaction to President Balaguer's speech has been somewhat milder than might have been expected. The official party line seems to be that the President acted out of alarm at the ugly and revolutionary mood of the masses at the Santiago rally, rather than in reaction to any-particular speeches by the PRD leaders, although some "moderate" PRDers have privately expressed the conviction that the speeches of the "hotheads" in Santiago (especially "Rafa" Gamundi's) were the real cause of the Balaguer crackdown. PRD confidant Sacha VOLMAN told the Embassy that Peña Gómez was relieved to be freed from his commitment to a mass Santo Domingo meeting for he had feared the possible consequences (i.e., a clash with security forces); however, Peña Gómez reportedly told Volman that the party would continue holding indoor rallies elsewhere.

B. Private and press reaction (with the exception of pro-government sources) appears generally agreed that the PRD's Santiago meeting was indeed subversive, but that the President committed an error in overreacting against the entire party rather than against the alleged offenders. (CONFIDENTIAL)

4. Students Protest Killing of Professor

Both secondary and university students in Santo Domingo and Santiago left their classrooms this week in protest against the shooting and killing of a school teacher by a policeman in the capital on October 28. The police private who, according to the police, has confessed to killing the teacher and to wounding a student, has been suspended and will be tried by a police court. The incident, in which a second student was also wounded by gunfire, took place when UER-affiliated students who reportedly had been discussing new educational reforms (according to another report, the students were holding a demonstration in support of students who have been engaged in a dispute with the Secretary of Education over the appointment of a new director at a trouble-prone Santiago secondary school) threw rocks at a passing police patrol car. In protest against the police action, secondary school students joined those from the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD) in burning tires, stoning vehicles and creating other disturbances near the UASD campus on October 29 and 30. At least two GODR vehicles were burned and two cars belonging to Embassy employees were stoned. The Academic Council at UNPHU suspended activity there after students left classes and staged a brief protest march. In a communique the Council said it was investigating the disturbances and would punish those guilty of disrupting normal academic activities. In Santiago

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police and army units used teargas and night sticks to break up a threatened march of students from the Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (UCMM) on October 29. Earlier in the day some 20 students were detained after shouting anti-GODR and anti-US slogans from a University bus. Classes at UCMM, which has generally remained free of student disturbances, were suspended by university authorities on October 30 while the faculty and administration met to discuss the situation. (SD-4246; SD-4230; SD-4216) (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: A. Given the actions of Dominican students this week and their propensity to leave their class rooms on almost any pretext, the present school year is shaping up as a volatile one, especially in view of the forthcoming elections.

B. It is noteworthy that the week's events mark the first time that students from all three universities (including the "apolitical" UCMM and the "bourgeois" UNPHU), and many secondary students throughout the country as well, have united to protest a given issue. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

5. A Bad Week for the National Police

Reacting to widespread criticisms of the National Police following last week's events at the PRD's Gualley meeting (WPR #41) Secretary of Interior and Police Francisco ORTEGA Ventura stated that the police had "done their duty" at the meeting, and that it did not surprise him that they reacted as they did. Dr. Ortega Ventura expressed the belief that the National Police "had evolved", and he attributed this evolution to training courses carried out by the government and the jefatura of the National Police. Unfortunately, that very same evening saw the shooting of a high school teacher by a policeman (Item 4); and even the next day's celebration of the feast day of the National Police's patron saint (San Judas Tadeo), which events were attended by President Balaguer, could not protect the service from from outraged public opinion and prompt presidential reaction to it. In his October 28 speech to the nation (Item 2) the Chief Executive ordered an immediate and exhaustive screening of undesirable elements within the police force; and by week's end it was announced that 15 police privates had been "dishonorably" cancelled from the service. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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Comment: A. Although representing a quick response to the presidential "purge" directive, the firing of only 15 policemen (and those cancellations were for disciplinary infractions apparently unrelated to the question of "terrorism") would hardly satisfy the ostensible intent of the President's orders; it is to be expected that more dismissals will follow.

B. Almost none of the criticism of the police has been directed at the recently appointed Police Commander, Brig. Gen. Rafael Guillermo GUZMAN Acosta. Both PRD and PRSC leaders who have had nothing but harsh words to say about the police have gone out of their way to exclude the 34-year old Guzmán from the criticism. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

6. Javier Castillo Reelected PRSC President

Caonabo JAVIER Castillo this week was reelected President of the Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano (PRSC) for another two-year period in the second national convention held by the party this year. The delegates also elected a new National Executive Committee and approved a suggestion advanced by the party's youth wing, the Juventud Revolucionaria Social Cristiana (JRSC), to postpone selection of a vice presidential candidate until yet another convention, presumably to be scheduled sometime next spring. The JRSC delegates, who said the youth organization had resolved to oppose "by all possible means" PRSC participation in the 1970 elections if President Balaguer is again a candidate, argued for the postponement on the grounds that "sufficient conditions" for a political campaign do not exist in the country. In an address to the convention Javier said that the party would continue its electoral campaign while presidential candidate Alfonso MORENO Martínez (selected last May) also urged the delegates to work for an electoral triumph (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: The PRSC leadership, in an attempt to hold the split over electoral participation within reasonable bounds, probably agreed in advance to support the JRSC's suggestion to postpone the selection of the vice presidential candidate in return for the JRSC's active support for the official slate of party officers, which won 50-34. (SD-4194)(CONFIDENTIAL)

7. Other Developments

In other developments this week a) the new Philippine Ambassador (the first to be accredited to the GODR), Ernesto LAGDAMEO presented his credentials to President Balaguer; Ambassador Lagdameo, who is also the Philippine Ambassador to the U.S.,

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will be resident in Washington; b) during ceremonies commemorating the 431st anniversary of its founding, the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo presented degrees to 106 new graduates; c) Santo Domingo Mayor Guarionex LLUBERES warned that the city government was facing a serious economic crisis partly because of a loss of funds due to a new Civil Register and Mortgage law promulgated last month; d) ex-Trujillo strongman Aliro PAULINO, hijo, a civilian aide to President Balaguer who is seeking the PR nomination for mayor of Santo Domingo, admitted that he was a good friend of Ramfis Trujillo but denied being the spokesman for a possible Trujillo presidential candidacy; e) the founding of yet another new political organization, the Movimiento de Unidad Dominicana (MUNDO), headed by ex-PQDer José Antonio BRACHE Lora, was announced; f) the UNACHOSIN taxi drivers' union charged that the government's plan to investigate all drivers, announced in President Balaguer's speech, was nothing but an attempt to destroy the union; the GODR acted after complaints by young persons of both sexes that they had been physically molested in taxis; g) a young bystander was slightly wounded by gunfire when ex-Lt. Col. José Ramón PUENTE Eusebio was attacked by unknown persons while delivering milk from a jeep; and finally h) several armed robberies, which may have been the work of the MPD, occurred; one lottery ticket salesman was shot before being robbed. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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