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FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

DATE: 8/II/69

SUBJECT: Weekly Political Review No. 30 (July 25-Aug.7, 1969)

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1. Introduction

Major attention was focused this week on essentially non-political news (although in the D.R. almost every news item is given some political coloring) including the pros and cons of pending loan applications by Nestle/Carnation, which at week's end was still receiving considerable page one treatment, and efforts by CDA to obtain a Santo Domingo-New York route. There was increased political comment, however, prompted by statements by Vice President Lora and by PRD Secretary General José Francisco PEÑA Gómez concerning their respective positions on the 1970 presidential elections. Generally, however, it was another week devoid of much political content. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
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See last page:8-8-69:hok

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2. Peña Gómez Attacks Government

In two radio addresses this week, one of them on the newly reopened Tribuna Democrática radio program, PRD Secretary General José Francisco PENA Gómez delivered a stinging attack on the Balaguer government, charging that it was worse than the Triumvirate of Donald REID and deserved the same fate (A-292). Peña Gómez offered PRD support for President Balaguer if the President would agree to accept a long list of enumerated conditions (nationalization of some foreign companies, expropriation of all latifundios, etc.) leading to the establishment of what Peña called a "revolutionary dictatorship". The Secretary General also (a) opined that the minimum conditions for PRD participation in the 1970 elections do not exist; (b) attacked "bankrupt democracy" and the National Development Commission; (c) praised the military government of Peru for among other things being a "more human" democracy than the government of Balaguer; and (d) said the PRD's National Executive Committee would name a group of technicians and prominent professionals to devise the party's program of government through the spirit of the "Popular Dictatorship" thesis, which Peña said he personally supported in its "ideological fundamentals" and "essential principles". Peña later clarified his offer of support for the President, declaring that the party was not backing the reelectionist aspirations of the chief executive. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment:

Peña's speech did little to clear up the still murky relationship between elections and "Popular Dictatorship", admitting in effect that the party was not yet in a position to decide to participate ("the appropriate conditions do not exist") or to decide not to take part in any elections ("this is not the approved position of the party"). Thus Peña steered a careful path between the party's electionists and anti-electionists. The party does not appear inclined as yet to permit Professor Bosch to hold a monopoly on explaining and interpreting the "Popular Dictatorship" thesis, and it will be interesting -- as well as hopefully enlightening -- to see what kind of "programs of government" are developed by the new technical committee mentioned by the Secretary General. (CONFIDENTIAL)

3. New Group Reiterates Support for Lora

Vice President Francisco Augusto LORA this week reiterated his strong opposition to President Balaguer's reelection ("it would bring regrettable consequences for the country") and said he would accept nomination by the Movimiento de Integración Democrática Anti-Reeleccionista (MIDA). Lora stated, however, that he would still try to win the Reformista nomination. MIDA reportedly will support Lora even if he wins the PR nomination.

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Also this week in a paid newspaper ad addressed to the Reformista Party, Lora repeated his charges that his supporters were being fired from their positions for refusing to sign reelection petitions. The Vice President said he was confident that at the opportune moment Reformistas and citizens in general would be able to deposit their secret votes as determined by their convictions. (UNCLASSIFIED)

4. UNACHOSIN Threatens Strike

UNACHOSIN, the Santo Domingo taxi drivers union, has threatened to call a strike if the government does not meet the union's demands that the GODR comply with the promises made to the union in the settlement of the chauffeurs strike last September. Complicating the situation is UNACHOSIN's fear that both the national government and the city will try to ignore UNACHOSIN and deal with the newly formed Revolutionary Front of Democratic and Progressive Chauffeurs, especially in exonerating the importation of new cars. In a paid ad this week the new taxi drivers organization, led by the group which lost the UNACHOSIN elections in June [redacted] formally 25 announced its formation, again charging that the election was stolen from them by threats of violence on the part of MPD, PRD and 14th of June activists.

Asked about the UNACHOSIN demands at his mid-week press conference, President Balaguer maintained that the government had complied with the agreement which ended the 1968 strike. The President admitted that the GODR had been unable to do anything about some of the demands, for example lowering the price of gasoline. The President also said that it was not possible to establish a monopoly in favor of only one union or association of unions. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment:

[redacted] some 19 labor organizations have formed a committee to coordinate a workers movement for higher wages with the threatened UNACHOSIN strike in the hope of producing a nationwide work stoppage which would serve as a basis to bring about the downfall of the Balaguer government. (CONFIDENTIAL) 25

5. MPD Leader Disappears

Both the press and opposition political groups have been pressing the government for a complete investigation of the disappearance of MPD leader Henry SEGARRA Santos. Segarra's family has charged that he was detained in the army fortress at Dajabón on July 25. Both National Police Chief, Brig. Gen. Joaquin MENDEZ Lara and Army Chief of Staff,

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Juan PEREZ Guillén, denied that Segarra was being held by either organization. President Balaguer stated that the Attorney General was the official to whom questions could be put and that the case was "very different" than the one involving Virgilio GOMEZ Suardi, another leftist leader who was imprisoned for a month before the Police would admit he was being held. At week's end the National Police published a communique charging that parties of the extreme left, especially the MPD, were trying to deceive the Police and citizens in general by simulating the disappearance of some of their militants. The Attorney General's office is conducting an investigation. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment:

With all the publicity the case has received, it has the potential for becoming as embarrassing to the government as the disappearance (and presumed death) of another MPD member, Guido GIL, in January 1967. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

6. Opposition to Plans for Military Radio Station Continues

Opposition to the announced plans of the Dominican Armed Forces to establish their own radio network for "educational" purposes (see WPR #29) continued this week with the PRD, PRSC, PQD and other political groups speaking out against the project. El Caribe said editorially that the idea is a cause for "legitimate concern", questioned the wisdom of the military involving itself in educational undertakings and urged that the proposal "be carefully re-examined". The Dominican Association of Radio Broadcasters (ADORA) also issued a statement opposing the project. ADORA called it "unfair competition", mentioned the already saturated AM band and said it was "inappropriate that the Armed Forces have the means, even in the remotest way, to intervene in the political process". In response to the ADORA and other criticism, President Balaguer said that critics should not prejudge the project and asserted that it falls within the civic action program of the military.

In a possibly related development, the President of ADORA, Pedro JUSTINIANO Polanco, resigned his post on August 6 and called an assembly of the organization for August 18 to consider his resignation. Justiniano refused to cite a reason for his intention to resign but specifically denied that it had anything to do with the Armed Forces radio proposal. The announcement came as a surprise since Justiniano had just been reelected to his post in July. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment:

ADORA president Justiniano is reputed to be a good friend of President Balaguer and this has led to speculation that the President (or others) pressured Justiniano into resigning because of ADORA's opposition to the military radio station project. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Radio Clarín, a proposed radio broadcasting enterprise that ran into heavy flak late last year because of allegations that it was being financed with Trujillo money, resurfaced this week when El Nacional reported that police and military personnel and equipment were being utilized in the construction of the station's buildings. Nacional also claimed that Colonel Neit NIVAR Seijas and Brig. General Braulio ALVAREZ Sanchez are "important stockholders" in Radio Clarín. They promptly denied the charge. The person organizing the station is Salomon SANZ, a Dominican businessman who manages the Perla Antillana racetrack. Sanz is a former Trujillo thug, confidant of Ramfis and Rhadamés Trujillo, and is alleged to be a close friend and business partner of Col. Nivar Seijas. Sanz ran a paid announcement in El Caribe terming the allegations of military involvement "absurd" and denying Trujillo financial backing of Radio Clarín. Sanz also named the present stockholders (the list of which differs considerably from that published by Sanz on November 20, 1968 and now includes José MARTI Otero, former Director of the Trujillo propaganda outlet, Radio Caribe). Nacional was quick to point out that both Sanz and Martí were former executives of Radio Caribe and recalled a number of inconsistencies in the case which were brought to public light last November when the Radio Clarín case was the center of considerable controversy and press attention (SD A-888 of December 15, 1968). (CONFIDENTIAL)

Comment:

According to USIS sources, the Dominican Association of Radio Broadcasters (ADORA), which vehemently opposed the formation of Radio Clarín last year, has withdrawn its opposition on the basis that Sanz no longer is pressing for the establishment of a radio network with Radio Clarín as the master station. USIS also reports that Sanz has been granted the frequency of 860 KC which was originally assigned to him by the Trujillo government in 1959 and which was used in 1960-1961 by Radio Caribe. It is also worth noting that Sanz' lawyer, Lic. Federico NINA hijo (who is a Radio Clarín stockholder) is the individual who read and presented to President Joaquín Balaguer the "Carta del Este", a document which lauded the accomplishment of the Balaguer Government and called for his acceptance of renomination, in San Pedro de Macoris last March 25. (CONFIDENTIAL)

8. Other Developments

In other developments this week (a) the topic of greatest press and official comment was a pending \$600,000 loan application to FIDE (and another \$400,000 commercial bank loan) on the part of CODAL, the Dominican subsidiary of Nestle/Carnation; opposition to the loans centered on charges that wealthy foreign companies were seeking to

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utilize scarce Dominican development funds. President Balaguer pointed out at his mid-week press conference that FIDE operates with U.S. and other international funds that are available both to foreign and local investors. Also at mid-week the National Development Commission went on record as favoring authorization of the loans and decided to issue a communication defining the government's economic policy regarding foreign companies; at week's end the Secretary of Industry and Commerce, José A. BREA Peña, issued a communique which declared that foreign firms could utilize sources of financing which receive international funds, under the same conditions as domestic firms and that foreign companies were eligible to apply for available funds from private banks; (b) the Central Electoral Board rejected PQD requests to use only one ballot (different colored ballots for each party are now used); (c) the Administrator of the Dominican Aviation Company (CDA) announced that the D.R. has "practically" obtained a Santo Domingo/New York route and that CDA could begin SDQ/NY service in early 1970; (d) the Consejo of the Autonomous University again postponed consideration of BRUC's request that the UASD revoke the honorary doctorate awarded President Nixon in 1955; (e) the GODR authorized visas for 32 members (including support personnel) of the Cuban team which will participate in the 17th World Series of Amateur Baseball scheduled to open in Santo Domingo on August 15; Cuba has requested visas for 40 persons; (f) the President named Professor Ramona Noboa de SIMO as a subsecretary of the Secretariat of Foreign Relations; (g) in answer to press queries, the President reiterated that should ex-Col. Francisco CAAMAÑO Deño return to the D.R. and form a political party he could count on the same "guarantees" as any Dominican even though it were proved that he had been in Cuba; (h) the President said he had not yet received the audit of funds of the extinct Partido Dominicano, which audit the Secretary of Finances announced had been completed and sent to the Palace; (i) three ex-leaders of the MPD announced that they had resigned and joined PACOREDO because of the "bankrupt ideology" of the MPD; (j) the President named three leading members of the National Youth Movement in Santiago as "honorary civilian aides"; and finally (k) more than 200 campesinos of the Jayaco section of Bonao were jailed, accused of invading some 770 tareas of rice land.
(UNCLASSIFIED)

J.E.M.

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By J.J.L.

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