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FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO

SUBJECT : Weekly Political Review No. 27 (June 27-July 10, 1969)

REF :

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1. Introduction

Although a large part of both public and official attention during the past two weeks in Santo Domingo was directed toward the 24-hour visit of the Rockefeller Mission (and the threatening security situation which preceded it), two other issues, GODR/Church relations and the public and apparently irreparable split between President Balaguer and Vice President Lora, continued to provide a disturbing side to the news, with either or both of the issues presenting a clear --- and if not present at least potential --- danger to the very stability of the Balaguer Government. For several months now pre-campaign maneuvering and planning for the 1970 elections have dominated all political activity, and the public feud between the two top leaders of the country and the

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

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NAN
as per
JWHittler
7/18/69DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
JUL 17 1969

Reformista party is contributing to a mood of uneasiness and polarization of the electorate still far in advance of next year's scheduled elections. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

2. Lora-Balaguer Split Deepens

The public split between President Balaguer and Vice President Francisco Augusto LORA (see WPR #25 and #26 and other previous reporting) deepened even further during the past two weeks. First of all, in a June 27 speech (which was widely interpreted as indicating that he definitely intends to run again in 1970) to a gathering of the party faithful, the President served notice on the Reformista Party and on the Vice President that he intends to take an active, even decisive, role in party affairs in the immediate future (SD-2009, SD-2031). Then the Vice President threw down the gauntlet, in a half-hour radio and television address on July 4, sharply attacking the President's leadership of the party and calling Balaguer's alleged reelectionist intentions an "unfortunate and lamentable attempt to perpetuate himself in power". Lora claimed that all sectors of Dominican society oppose reelection and he called upon all Dominicans to "unite forces to give battle and defeat that hydra of seven heads that is reelection" (SD-2071, SD-2081).

Reformista Secretary General Raul GONZALEZ, who had been attempting to reconcile the differences between the two men, admitted in a July 8 press conference that any further attempts to bring about a Lora/Balaguer reconciliation would be futile. In the same press conference, González supported the Vice President saying "both Lora and I believed he (Balaguer) would not accept a new candidacy and thus (Balaguer) should not find anything strange in the posture of Lora, nor in my position, in supporting the second man of the PR in his anti-reelectionist posture". By openly supporting Lora against the President, González may well have cut short his tenure as PR Secretary General (SD-2101). The President (who did not hold his usual mid-week press conference) has made no comment on either Lora's speech or González' remarks. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

In other Reformista news this week, Santo Domingo Mayor Guarionex LLUBERES Montás, who is also president of the PR Municipal Directorate, told reporters that he was "disenchanted" with Dominican politics and would definitely retire from political life when his term as Mayor ends next year. The Mayor, who is known to be a Lora supporter, said that he was inclined to "accommodate" the officials of the Secretariat of the Presidency whom he charged were attempting to force him out of his party position, but said he would do so only at the request of a majority of the party. (UNCLASSIFIED)

COMMENT: The lines have been clearly drawn in the battle for control of the Reformista Party and the outcome is far from certain. Although President Balaguer has most of the heavy artillery (patronage and other favors which only the President can bestow), the Vice President is not without supporters. The Vice President also seems to be attempting to establish his credentials as the leader of an anti-reelection front.

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...era reportedly has held recent meetings with former President Rafael BONNELLY, PQD President Elías WESSIN Y WESSIN, PRSC President Caonabo JAVIER Castillo, PRD Senator Pablo Rafael CASIMIRO Castro and other opposition leaders. (CONFIDENTIAL)

3. Governor Rockefeller's Visit to Santo Domingo

In a whirlwind, action-packed, 24-hour visit to Santo Domingo July 2-3, Governor Nelson Rockefeller and well over one hundred advisors, staffers, and newsmen carried out a successful mission and certainly claimed the lion's share of public (and Embassy) attention both during and for several days preceding the Rockefeller Mission's brief stay. (For a detailed description of the visit, see SD-2067; press and other reaction was reported in 2070 and previous; and SD-2062 and previous kept the Department abreast of the security situation).

The Governor enjoyed a somewhat hectic but enthusiastic airport welcome, then he was whisked off to meet President Balaguer while his advisors paid calls on other high GODR officials. That evening (July 2) the Mission was honored by a reception at the National Palace. The following morning the Governor met with the National Development Commission, chaired by President Balaguer, and later with members of the private agricultural and business sectors; his advisors, meanwhile, were busy with separate meetings of their own. In the midst of a heavy schedule, Governor Rockefeller took time for a press conference, at which he explained the purpose of his Mission, stressed points of agreement with President Balaguer, and impressed Dominicans by handily fielding (in Spanish) a number of press queries (See SD A-249). An hour earlier the President held his own press conference, at which he announced that the GODR had presented the Rockefeller Mission with a "white book" which inter alia requested a fixed annual sugar quota of from 800,000 to one million tons, and amelioration of a number of AID and trade problems; the President also said that the "immense majority" of Dominicans welcomed the Governor, and stated that he had not yet made a definite decision concerning reelection. The Mission left on schedule for Jamaica, just one day after touching down at the Airport of the Americas. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

COMMENT: Despite an ominous security situation prior to the Governor's visit (WFR #25), the Mission arrived and departed without experiencing any untoward incidents (although four people were killed in shootings --- mostly by unmotivated security forces). While the Governor's reception here was far from the massive and wildly enthusiastic one he received in Port-au-Prince, due to heavy security measures which kept crowds at a distance and largely paralyzed normal activity in Santo Domingo, it is probably true that without them the Mission's opponents would have been far more active and the loss of life and property damage considerably greater. As it was, very little terrorism occurred during the visit, and major confrontations (especially between students and security forces --- a major danger) were completely avoided.

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Reaction to the Rockefeller Mission has been along predictable lines, with GODR officials and other members of the "establishment" hailing it as a resounding success, other thoughtful Dominicans adopting a more reserved, "let's wait and see" attitude, and opposition groups attacking it in terms ranging from the PRSC's characterization of the Mission as unnecessary and harmful, through the PRD's outright repudiation of the visit and personal criticism of the Governor, and to the communists' virulent diatribes against the GODR, the Rockefeller Mission and everything associated with it. It was regrettable that the Governor had not the opportunity to meet with members of the opposition, but PRSC, PRD and UASD student leaders had received personally-extended invitations and had decided that for reasons of "image", "loss of face", etc., they could not afford to meet with the Governor or his advisors. In sum, we believe that the Governor's visit here was markedly successful, and this opinion seemed to be shared by the Governor and his aides. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

4. Catholic Church Maintains Pressure on GODR in Figueredo-Varona Case

The GODR has not yet lifted the bar to readmission to the country for Fathers Sergio FIGUEREDO and Gratiano VARONA who were excluded by immigration authorities on June 13, and the Church, for its part, has shown no signs of relenting on the issue (WPR #25 and #26). Late last month the National Development Commission (CND) unsurprisingly backed the GODR in barring the two priests and republished in the capital newspapers an article by landowner, lawyer and oligarchy member Lic. Federico C. ALVAREZ entitled, "Catholic Priest Meddling in Politics of Violence", which article originally appeared in Santiago's La Información. Supporters of the two priests and other observers criticized the CND for "meddling" in an issue outside its field of activity. Also during the latter part of June, public interest focused on opposition charges that by barring the two priests the GODR was violating the Concordat with the Vatican. In a press conference on July 1 President Balaguer raised the hackles of many in the Church by calling the Concordat "inoperative" and "a dead letter". He did admit that Immigration had handled the Figueredo-Varona case in a "clumsy" manner and that the GODR "had received strong pressures" to put an end to the "subversive campaign" that certain priests were carrying out. The President's office also stated on July 4 that "the negotiations with the Papal Nuncio were in the final stage toward a satisfactory solution to the incident concerning Fathers Varona and Figueredo". The Nuncio has consistently refused to make any comment to reporters, giving rise to speculation in some quarters that there are no such negotiations taking place. Reviewing the cases in a July 8 press statement, Higuey Bishop Juan Félix PEPEN pointed out that as soon as he was informed of the bar against Father Varona, he wrote to the President and the GODR asking an explanation for the action and that he had not as yet received a reply from anyone. Bishop Pepén

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asserted that many Christians are "indignant" over the "insincere manner" in which the authorities have handled the case. The Bishop declared it was unnecessary to invoke the Concordat since Canon Law provides one of the most severe penalties (excommunication) to those who issue laws, mandates, or decrees against the liberty or against the rights of the Church. While El Nacional on July 8 raised the spectre of some rather important officials of the GODR being excommunicated, Listín Diario and El Caribe the following day gave restrained front-page treatment to the Pepén press release, with Listín in its editorial calling for prudence on both sides. Both newspapers ran editorials on July 10 concerning the GODR-Church controversy, reiterating their positions that the two priests should be permitted to return to the DR and El Caribe appealing to both the GODR and the Church to halt the steady "deterioration" of relations between them for the good of the country. The press reported on July 10 that 59 priests of the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo signed and issued a declaration expressing solidarity with previous statements by their colleagues and their bishops on the Figueredo-Varona case. The statement also indicated the priests' support of the earlier Pastoral Letters of Dominican bishops on the need for social change. Also on July 10 Listín Diario reported that President Balaguer and Bishop Hugo POLANCO Brito would discuss the Figueredo-Varona case in the Palace on July 11. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

5. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Calvani Visits DR

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Dr. Aristides CALVANI, accompanied by his wife and a group of advisors, spent four days in the Dominican Republic this week at the end of which he and the Dominican Secretary of State for Foreign Relations Fernando AMIAMA Tíó, signed a bi-lateral commercial treaty, issued a joint declaration condemning colonialism, and signed a convention on aviation.

The bi-lateral treaty calls for a mixed commission which is to meet three times yearly in order to oversee the functioning of the formulas set forth therein. Furthermore, the treaty calls for: (a) development of community health, professional training, social security, housing, economic planning, and social and public administration; (b) study of the means of promoting cultural exchanges; and (c) stimulation of the development of tourism and related investments.

In their joint declaration condemning colonialism the governments of the Dominican Republic and Venezuela underlined their belief that respect for human rights, for self-determination, and for non-intervention constitutes a minimum norm for international conduct. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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Venezuelan and Guyanan Foreign Ministers Meet in Santo Domingo

In what he described as a "casual" and "purely social" occasion Guyanan Foreign Minister S. S. RAMPHAL met on July 9 in Santo Domingo with Venezuelan Foreign Minister Aristides CALVANI. Diplomatic sources reported that the GODR had offered to aid in mediating the dispute between the two countries, and that Calvani allowed that he and Ramphal might arrive at a formula to be negotiated later. Both men denied having planned ^{the} a conference, and Ramphal said he was "just passing through on way to Jamaica". (SD-2124). (UNCLASSIFIED)

7. Violence-as-Usual Continues

Although many of the incidents of terrorism during the past two weeks were directly related to anti-Rockefeller protests, the usual incidence of shootings and other violent acts showed no measurable decrease, and the following were noted: (a) a campesino leader was found hanging in his San Francisco de Macoris jail cell, and the opposition demanded an investigation; (b) a recently-released murderer was found shot to death near the Mercado Modelo; (c) a METALDOM vehicle was burned, and others were stoned, at the Autonomous University; (d) hand grenades were thrown at a police jeep in San Pedro de Macoris -- but failed to explode; (e) a student and a worker were killed in separate bar shootings; (f) another worker was found shot and strangled to death near the site of Trujillo's assassination; (g) a policeman was shot and wounded by unknown persons on Albert Thomas Street; (h) at least three persons were wounded in a confused shooting affray allegedly involving a PQD member and the Mayor of Castañuelas (near Santiago); and (i) the National Police announced that there had been a total of 285 acts of terrorism in 1968 (and it appeared that 1969 would not be much better). (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

8. Héctor García Godoy's Campaign

Since his return to Santo Domingo on June 6, Héctor GARCIA GODOY, leader of the Movimiento de Conciliación Nacional (MCN) and presumed 1970 presidential candidate, has expressed himself on all manner of subjects in frequent press interviews. Most recently, he was the first guest on the reinaugurated "Before the Press" television program where, inter alia, he criticized the government's agrarian reform program and said that an "electoral climate" did not now exist in the country. The former Provisional President and former Dominican Ambassador to the U.S. said that President Balaguer was "not a dictator by nature", but warned that reelection would bring with it "danger for the democratic stability" of the D.R.

Despite the frequency with which García Godoy's comments and views are reported in the press, there are no indications that his campaign is as yet generating much enthusiasm. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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Other Developments

In other developments during the past two weeks, (a) Ambassador Meloy arrived at post on July 7; in addition to carrying the USIS press release about his arrival, El Nacional resurrected the June 13 Diario de las Américas story alleging that the Ambassador was under orders to "prevent Joaquín Balaguer from persisting in his reelectionist plans" (see WPR #26); (b) officials of the Dominican Electric Corporation announced that repairs on the Haina electric plant are proceeding satisfactorily and that the frequent blackouts experienced during the past month in Santo Domingo and the interior should end next week; (c) Alfonso MORENO Martínez, the PRSC's 1970 presidential candidate, returned from a month-long visit to Chile and Venezuela; (d) the Embassy learned that PRD Secretary General Francisco PEÑA GÓMEZ, who is still in Europe, will supposedly return to the DR about July 20; (e) some 60 delegates, representing most of the Latin American countries, are expected to attend the Fourth Congress of Social Christian Youth of Latin America in Santo Domingo July 25-30; among the special guests will be Chilean Social Christian leader Radomiro TOMIC; (f) MPD leader Rafael "Fafa" TAVERAS was sentenced to six months in prison for "communist activities" (he has already served nearly the entire sentence); (g) still another political organization appeared with the announcement of the Avanzada Revolucionaria Reformista proclaiming Dr. Rafael E. RUIZ Mejía as the 1970 vice-presidential candidate of the "humble classes"; (h) Palace Press Secretary César HERRERA announced that he would replace Ramon CASTILLO as Dominican Consul General in New York; (i) Bishop Hugo POLANCO Brito frustrated police attempts to oust from the Cathedral some 80 ex-METALDOM workers, all that remained of some 200 who occupied the church in protest against the company's strike-breaking dismissal of all who refused to work; and finally (j) Puerto Rican Vice Governor Fernando CHARDON, the island's Secretary of Commerce, Milton ZAPATA, and President Balaguer participated in ceremonies on July 10 opening a Puerto Rican commercial office in Santo Domingo. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

J.E.M.

MELOY

by J.J.D.

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