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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AGRE-00	CIAE-00	CIP-00
	INL-01	DEAE-00	OASY-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	EB-00	OIGO-01	UTED-00	FCC-01	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	JUSE-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-05	PM-00	PRS-00
	P-00	CIO-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	DRL-09	G-00	/032W			

-----DAE451 152038Z /38

R 151948Z AUG 97
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6596
INFO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCCC//
FAA MIAMI FL
USDOT WASHDC
USDOC WASHDC 0322
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 004531

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, ECPS, PREL, SNAR, EAGR, ELAB, DR
SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HIGHLIGHTS -- AUGUST 9 - 15

1. (U) TODAY POST BID FAREWELL TO ECO-POL COUNSELOR
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MILTON DRUCKER, AUTHOR OF MANY A DOMINICAN HIGHLIGHT.

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EX-AIR FORCE GENERAL ACCUSED IN "NARCISAZO" DISAPPEARANCE

2. (U) IN AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION BY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY INTO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF NARCISO "NARCISAZO" GONZALEZ, JOSE LOPEZ HIDALGO -- A MAN ALREADY IMPRISONED FOR MURDER AND CHILD MOLESTATION IN SEPARATE OFFENSES -- HAS CLAIMED HE WAS HIRED BY FORMER AIR FORCE CHIEF AND GENERAL JUAN BATISTA ROJAS TABER TO KIDNAP AND MURDER THE PROFESSOR. LOPEZ HILDAGO SAID HE WAS TO RECEIVE RD\$500,000 (US\$35,000) TO COMMIT THE ACT, BUT WAS PAID ONLY RD\$150,000 (US\$10,700). IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW, ROJAS TABER CATEGORICALLY DENIED ALL ACCUSATIONS. SINCE LOPEZ HIDALGO'S DECLARATION, LOCAL FIRE BRIGADES HAVE BEEN SEARCHING THE HAINO RIVER AT A SPOT WHERE HE CLAIMS TO HAVE DEPOSITED THE CORPSE. NARCISO GONZALEZ, A CRITIC OF THE BALAGUER GOVERNMENT, DISAPPEARED AFTER LEAVING WORK AT THE AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF SANTO DOMINGO IN MAY 1994.

FOOD FOR ALL

3. (U) AN EXTENDED DROUGHT HAS SERIOUSLY AFFECTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE DR. METEOROLOGICAL DEPT STATISTICS INDICATE THE AVERAGE RAINFALL SINCE DECEMBER

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HAS BEEN ABOUT 35 PERCENT BELOW NORMAL, THE LOWEST IN 30 YEARS. PRODUCTION OF STAPLE FOODS HAS DECREASED AND PRICES ARE INCREASING. PARTIALLY AS A RESPONSE, THE GODR HAS INITIATED A FOOD FOR ALL PROGRAM (PROALTO) TO PROVIDE PARTIALLY SUBSIDIZED RICE, CHICKEN, MILK AND BEANS TO CONSUMERS IN TARGETED AT-RISK AREAS THROUGH THE COUNTRY. AS PART OF THE PROGRAM, THE SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE AND PRICE STABILIZATION INSTITUTE HAVE IMPORTED ABOUT 10,000 TONS OF RICE, 1,000 TONS OF PINTO BEANS AND 450 TONS OF CHICKEN FROM THE UNITED STATES AND HAVE ISSUED

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PERMITS FOR ANOTHER 450 TONS OF CHICKEN IMPORTS. FULL PAGE SPREADS IN THE NEWSPAPERS CLAIM THE PROGRAM HAS ALREADY BENEFITED 650,000 CONSUMERS IN AN ATTEMPT TO COUNTER ACCUSATIONS THE GODR IS ALLOWING DISTRIBUTORS AND SPECULATORS TO MAKE HIGH PROFITS AT THE EXPENSE OF POORER CONSUMERS.

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A BETTER WAY TO SOLVE WAGE DISPUTES?

4. (U) FINANCE SECRETARY DANIEL TORIBIO SUGGESTED THAT INDUSTRY AND ORGANIZED LABOR REACH AN AGREEMENT TO INCREASE SALARIES AT THE SAME RATE AS THE ANNUAL GROWTH OF GDP. IN THIS MANNER, TORIBIO SAID, THE COUNTRY COULD AVOID THE ANNUAL DEBATE ABOUT SALARY INCREASES. IN THE PRESENT STAND-OFF, LABOR REPRESENTATIVES HAVE REDUCED THEIR DEMAND FROM A ONE HUNDRED TO A THIRTY PERCENT INCREASE, WHILE EMPLOYERS CONTINUE TO OFFER FIFTEEN PERCENT. SEVERAL EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS -- PERHAPS WEARY FROM THE ONGOING DISPUTE -- IMMEDIATELY
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EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR TORIBIO'S PROPOSAL.

LEGISLATURE LEADERSHIP WILL NOT CHANGE HANDS

5. (U) THE TWO DOMINANT PARTIES IN THE DOMINICAN LEGISLATURE -- THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN REFORMIST PARTY (PRSC) AND THE DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD) -- HAVE AGREED THE PRSC WILL CONTINUE TO CONTROL THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SENATE WHILE THE PRD MAINTAINS ITS HOLD ON THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. THIS AGREEMENT REVERSES AN ARRANGEMENT REACHED IN 1996 BY BOTH PARTIES TO "SWAP" PRESIDENCIES ONE YEAR AFTER THE ELECTION. TO REGISTER THEIR DISPLEASURE WITH THEIR PARTY'S DECISION, TWO-THIRDS OF THE PRD SENATORS DIRECTED A LETTER OF PROTEST TO PARTY LEADER JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ.

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WHO WILL RUN THE JCE?

6. (U) THE DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD) AND THE

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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 004531

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, ECPS, PREL, SNAR, EAGR, ELAB, DR
SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HIGHLIGHTS -- AUGUST 9 - 15SOCIAL CHRISTIAN REFORM PARTY (PRSC) HAVE BEEN SPARRING
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OVER THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CENTRAL ELECTION BOARD (JCE),
LEFT VACANT BY THE ELEVATION OF INTERIM PRESIDENT JORGE
SUBERO ISA TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SUPREME COURT. IT
APPEARS THEY MAY HAVE SETTLED ON JUAN SULLY BONELLY,
CURRENTLY A JCE MEMBER. FORMER PRESIDENT JOAQUIN
BALAGUER OF THE PRSC REPORTEDLY VETOED LUIS MORA GUZMAN,
ANOTHER PRD CANDIDATE FOR THE JCE PRESIDENCY. SULLY
BONELLY AND MORA GUZMAN BOTH JOINED THE JCE IN 1994. THE
JCE SEAT THAT BELONGED TO AURA CELESTE FERNANDEZ
(NOMINATED BY THE PLD) UNTIL HER RESIGNATION SOME MONTHS
AGO, IS ALSO VACANT. A FULLY STAFFED AND SMOOTH RUNNING
JCE IS ESSENTIAL IF DOMINICAN OFFICIALS ARE GOING TO BE
WELL PREPARED FOR NEXT MAY'S CONGRESSIONAL AND MUNICIPAL
ELECTIONS.

FAMILY OF EX-ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR STILL FACES LEGAL WOES

7. (U) ARGENTINE COURT OFFICIALS HAVE NOTIFIED LUIS AND
MARTIN PALMAS, HUSBAND AND SON OF TERESA MECCIA DE
PALMAS, ARGENTINA'S FORMER AMBASSADOR IN SANTO DOMINGO,
THAT A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IS UNDERWAY REGARDING THEIR
ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEATH OF JOSE RAFAEL LLENAS
AYBAR. THE INVESTIGATION COMES AFTER THE DOMINICANS
SUBMITTED A COMPLAINT IN THE CASE TO THE ARGENTINE
AUTHORITIES. CRIMINAL CHARGES ARE ALSO PENDING AGAINST
TWO DOMINICANS CHARGED IN THE KILLING. SERVIO TULLIO
CASTANOS ESPAILLAT, THE DOMINICAN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S
LEGAL ADVISOR, HAS PRAISED THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES FOR

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PURSUING THE CASE, LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT
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PALMAS JUNIOR AND SENIOR WILL FACE CHARGES IN THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. "IF THEY (THE ARGENTINES) DO NOT
EXTRADITE THEM (THE PALMAS'S) TO US, THEY HAVE AN
OBLIGATION TO JUDGE THEM THERE, ARREST THEM, AND PUT THEM
ON TRIAL," CASTANOS RECENTLY TOLD THE PRESS. LUIS MORENO
OCAMPO, AN ARGENTINE ATTORNEY AND TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVIST, TOLD THE PRESS DURING A RECENT
VISIT TO SANTO DOMINGO HIS FIRM WOULD HELP THE DOMINICAN
AUTHORITIES PURSUE ANY EXTRADITION REQUEST FOR THE
PALMAS'S. OROZCO

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