

PTQ1416

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	AID-00	AMAD-01	ACQ-01	CIAE-00
	COME-00	CPR-02	DODE-00	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	EXIM-01	E-00	FRB-00	H-01	IM-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OES-01
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00
	P-00	CIO-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-10	PRME-01	DRL-04	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/039W					

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R 062122Z MAR 98

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9056

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

USIA WASHDC 4122

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

USINT HAVANA

DOJ WASHDC

DIA WASHINGTON DC

DIA WASHINGTON DC//NMIJ-J2//

USCINCSO MIAMI FL//POLAD/SCCC/SCJ2/SCJ3/JOIC/HSE//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 001023

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TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, KSUM, PREL, ELAB, EFIN, DR

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CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. LINDA E. WATT;
REASON FOR CLASSIFICATION 1.5 (D)

COMMISSION GIVES GODR 30 DAYS TO ACT IN NARCISO CASE

1. (U) AFTER HEARING TESTIMONY FROM BOTH THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE TRUTH COMMISSION FEBRUARY 25, THE INTERAMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS GIVEN DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES THIRTY DAYS TO TAKE DECISIVE STEPS TO RESOLVE THE NARCISO GONZALEZ CASE. UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR GONZALEZ DISAPPEARED IN MAY 1994 AFTER CRITICIZING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JOAQUIN BALAGUER. AFTER ASSUMING POWER IN AUGUST 1996, PRESIDENT FERNANDEZ PROMISED TO RESOLVE THE CASE, BUT HAS NOT INSISTED THAT BALAGUER AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT TELL ALL THEY KNOW. THE TRUTH COMMISSION IS A NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION FORMED TO LOBBY THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT FOR A FULL ACCOUNTING OF THE DISAPPEARANCE. IF THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT TAKE ACTION WITHIN THIRTY DAYS, THE INTERAMERICAN COMMISSION WILL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE INTERAMERICAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN COSTA RICA.

ESSO

2. (C) LAST FRIDAY, PRESIDENT LEONEL FERNANDEZ NAMED RADHAMES SEGURA AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE CORPORACION
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DOMINICANA DE ELECTRICIDAD (CDE), KICKING FORMER
ADMINISTRATOR TEMISTOCLES MONTAS UPSTAIRS AND MAKING HIM
TECHNICAL SECRETARY OF THE PRESIDENCY. SEGURA HAD BEEN
PRESIDENT OF THE DOMINICAN STATE-OWNED PETROLEUM REFINERY
REFIDOMSA (SEPTEL). THE TOP ITEM ON THE EMBASSY'S AGENDA
WITH REFIDOMSA HAS BEEN THE CONTINUING INABILITY OF THE
GODR TO DECIDE ON THE PRICING FORMULA WHICH WILL BE
IMPLEMENTED ONCE (IF) CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETED ON THE
ESSO/TEXACO NORTH COAST TERMINAL. WE LEARNED TODAY THAT

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PRESIDENT FERNANDEZ HAS ASKED SEGURA TO RETAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ESSO-REFIDOMSA DISPUTE, RATHER THAN GO BACK TO SQUARE ONE WITH REFIDOMSA'S NEW PRESIDENT.

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SENSATIONAL COURT TRIAL OPENS

3. (C) A SANTO DOMINGO CRIMINAL COURT BEGAN THE TRIAL MARCH 5 OF THE DOMINICAN DEFENDANTS IN THE SENSATIONAL MURDER CASE OF 12-YEAR-OLD JOSE RAFAEL LLENAS AYBAR. THE VICTIM'S COUSIN AND ANOTHER YOUTH HAVE CONFESSED TO THE MURDER, BUT THE SANTO DOMINGO PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE HAS ACCUSED THE LUIS PALMAS AND MARTIN PALMAS MECCIA, HUSBAND AND SON OF FORMER ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TERESA MECCIA DE PALMAS, OF COMPLICITY IN THE CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT THE CRIME. DETAILS REMAIN UNCLEAR. THE DOMINICANS HAVE APPARENTLY INFORMED THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THEIR INVESTIGATION AND HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN EXTRADITING LUIS AND MARTIN PALMAS, BUT HAVE NOT FILED FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUESTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE OFFICE OF ARGENTINE LAWYER LUIS
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MORENO OCAMPO IS CONSIDERING WHETHER TO HELP DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES PURSUE THE CASE'S ARGENTINE ANGLE.

DOMINICANS IN NEW YORK STATE PRISONS

4. (U) AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1996, THERE WERE 9,052 FOREIGN BORN INMATES IN NEW YORK STATE PRISONS ACCORDING TO THE STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES. CLOSE TO A THIRD OF THESE FOREIGN BORN INMATES, 2,732, WERE DOMINICANS. OVER 1,600 JAMAICANS MADE UP THE NEXT LARGEST GROUP. FOR ALL FOREIGN BORN PRISONERS, ABOUT SIX PERCENT WERE NATURALIZED CITIZENS, ABOUT 52 PERCENT WERE LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS, ABOUT 23 PERCENT WERE UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS, AND ABOUT 14 PERCENT WERE AWAITING DETERMINATION OF STATUS. THE REMAINING FIVE PERCENT WERE MARIEL CUBANS. THEREFORE, ABOUT 89 PERCENT WERE SUBJECT TO DEPORTATION AFTER COMPLETION OF

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THEIR SENTENCES. THESE STATISTICS DO NOT INCLUDE FEDERAL UNCLASSIFIED PRISONERS IN NEW YORK.

CRITICAL, NOT SERIOUS? UNIVERSITY WORKERS STRIKE

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SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HIGHLIGHTS -- FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 6,
1998

5. (U) EMPLOYEES OF THE AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF SANTO DOMINGO (UASD), THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST CENTER OF HIGHER LEARNING, HAVE ENGAGED IN A WORK STOPPAGE FOR THE PAST THREE WEEKS. THEIR UNION, THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES, DEMANDS A TWENTY PERCENT PAY INCREASE. UNIVERSITY RECTOR EDYLBERTO CABRAL RAMIREZ SAYS THE STRIKE IS COSTING THE UASD TWO MILLION PESOS (ABOUT US\$130,000) EACH DAY. AS A LOW-COST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY, UASD IS A MAJOR VEHICLE OF UPWARD MOBILITY FOR THE COUNTRY'S LOWER CLASSES. UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES HAVE GROUND TO A HALT. THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL. UASD HAS ENDURED FREQUENT STRIKES BY STUDENTS AND WORKERS FOR SEVERAL DECADES. PROTESTS ARE FREQUENT AND ROWDY ENOUGH THAT THEY REPORTEDLY HAVE DRIVEN DOWN REAL ESTATE VALUES IN SOME AREAS ADJACENT TO UASD'S MAIN FACILITIES.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND CHILE SIGN AGREEMENTS

6. (U) IN PREPARATION FOR THE UPCOMING SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS, CHILEAN FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE MIGUEL INSULZA VISITED SANTO DOMINGO THIS WEEK. THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND CHILE SIGNED MINOR AGREEMENTS ON SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, TOURISM AND DIPLOMATIC VISAS. THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE VISIT, HOWEVER, WAS CHILEAN INTEREST IN

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POTENTIAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES DERIVING FROM THE
PRIVATIZATION OF THE CORPORACION DOMINICANA DE
ELECTRICIDAD (CDE), THE CRISIS-RIDDEN, BLACK-OUT
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PRODUCING, AND WOEFULLY INEFFICIENT STATE-OWNED
ELECTRICITY COMPANY.

DOMINICAN PESO CONTINUES FALL

7. (U) THE PESO HAS LOST APPROXIMATELY FIVE PERCENT OF
ITS VALUE SINCE DECEMBER 1997. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS REPORT
THE DOLLAR IS FETCHING AS MUCH AS FIFTEEN PESOS ON THE
STREETS AND BETWEEN 14.20 AND 14.80 AT DOMINICAN BANKS.
THE OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE, HOWEVER, REMAINS STUBBORNLY
FIXED AT RD\$14.02/US\$1 AS THE CENTRAL BANK AND MONETARY
BOARD STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN THE VALUE OF THE PESO.

WATT

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