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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00
	CIP-00	INL-01	DEAE-00	OASY-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-01	OIGO-01	FCC-01	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	JUSE-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00
	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	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	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-10
	PRME-01	DRL-04	G-00	/037W			

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O 211551Z OCT 97  
 FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7424  
 INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS  
 AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 005795

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/28/2002  
 TAGS: PGOV, ECPS, PREL, SNAR, OAS, PHUM, ELAB, DR  
 SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HIGHLIGHTS -- OCTOBER 11-17

CLASSIFIED BY DONNA HRINAK, AMBASSADOR. REASON: 1.5(D).  
 DECLASSIFY: 7/28/2002

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 NEW COMMISSION WILL LIKELY OVERSEE NARCISO PROBE  
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1. (U) AT AN OCTOBER 6 HEARING IN WASHINGTON, THE

INTERAMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS REQUESTED THAT THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT APPOINT THREE MEMBERS TO A SIX MEMBER OVERSIGHT COMMISSION. THE NEW BODY, TO INCLUDE THREE MEMBERS OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL TRUTH COMMISSION, WOULD PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO THE INVESTIGATING JUDGE EXAMINING THE 1994 DISAPPEARANCE OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR NARCISO GONZALEZ. DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ASKED FOR THIRTY DAYS TO DECIDE WHETHER TO AGREE TO PARTICIPATE ON THE PROPOSED COMMISSION. TRUTH COMMISSION PRESIDENT TOMAS CASTRO TOLD US THIS WEEK HE HAD HOPED FOR A LARGER OVERSIGHT BODY, BUT HE EXPECTS THE NEW COMMISSION TO PLAY A PROACTIVE ROLE.

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 MOVEMENT ON WASHINGTON PROTOCOL AND OTHER TREATIES?  
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2. (SBU) DOMINICAN DAILY OF RECORD LISTIN DIARIO GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO THE NATIONAL CONGRESS'S FAILURE TO RATIFY A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED OVER THE YEARS BY THE DOMINICAN EXECUTIVE. SIGNED BUT UNRATIFIED AGREEMENTS INCLUDE THE WASHINGTON PROTOCOL, THE MANAGUA PROTOCOL, THE INTERAMERICAN CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, THE LAW OF THE SEA, AND THE CONVENTION ON MISSING PERSONS, AMONG OTHERS. THE ARTICLE DID NOT MENTION THE EXECUTIVE'S FAILURE -- OVER A PERIOD OF DECADES -- TO REFER MOST OF THESE AGREEMENTS TO CONGRESS AFTER SIGNING THEM. THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS BROUGHT THE ISSUE TO PUBLIC ATTENTION WHEN IT ASKED THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT TO RATIFY THE CONVENTION ON MISSING PERSONS. THE PUBLIC  
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 ATTENTION MAY FOCUS MINDS IN CONGRESS ON RATIFICATION OF THESE AGREEMENTS NOW THAT THE EXECUTIVE IS INDEED PRESENTING THEM TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FOR ACTION.

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 LABOR SECRETARY OPPOSES PROPOSED SALARY LAW  
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3. (U) LABOR SECRETARY RAFAEL ALBURQUERQUE PUBLICLY DISPARAGED DRAFT LEGISLATION NOW IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES THAT WOULD CREATE A MECHANISM TO PROVIDE ANNUAL

AUTOMATIC SALARY INCREASES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS. ALBURQUERQUE BLASTED THE PROPOSED LAW AS UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND AS PROMOTING A POLICY ALREADY DISCARDED BY SEVERAL SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES. PRESENTLY, THE NATIONAL SALARIES COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, DECIDES ON MINIMUM WAGE INCREASES. VARIOUS LEGISLATORS TELL US THAT THEY WILL LIKELY PASS AN AUTOMATIC MECHANISM TO INCREASE ONLY MINIMUM WAGE SALARIES DESPITE FERNANDEZ ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIONS.

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 CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM  
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4. (U) DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD) LEADER JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ HAS NAMED A PARTY COMMISSION TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING ELECTIONS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND REFORMING THE DOMINICAN CONSTITUTION. COMMISSION MEMBERS WILL INCLUDE HUGO TOLENTINO DIPP, MILTON RAY GUEVARA, AND TWO UNNAMED PRD MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. TOLENTINO DIPP IS ACTING PRD PRESIDENT AND RAY GUEVARA IS COORDINATOR GENERAL OF THE  
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 PARTY'S "GROWTH COMMAND," A TITLE WHICH RINGS A LITTLE LESS ODD IN THE EAR WHEN RENDERED IN SPANISH. PENA GOMEZ FORMED THE COMMISSION IN RESPONSE TO AN OFFER TO DISCUSS CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM MADE BY FORMER PRESIDENT JOAQUIN BALAGUER, LEADER OF THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN REFORM PARTY (PRSC). THE PRSC HAS NOT YET NAMED ITS CONTERPARTS TO THE PRD COMMISSION. PRESIDENT LEONEL FERNANDEZ REYNA HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT BOTH HIS ADMINISTRATION AND HIS DOMINICAN LIBERATION PARTY (PLD) ARE STUDYING THE IDEA OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

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 ELECTION LAW CONTROVERSY  
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5. (U) CENTRAL ELECTORAL BOARD (JCE) PRESIDENT JUAN SULLY BONNELLY BLASTED THE DRAFT OF THE ELECTORAL REFORM BILL THAT PASSED ITS FIRST READING IN THE DOMINICAN SENATE OCTOBER 14 AS A STRAIGHT-JACKET SURE TO UNDERMINE THE JCE'S EFFECTIVENESS. HE STRONGLY CRITICIZED

PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE POLITICAL PARTY DELEGATES IN THE JCE'S DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION, SAYING SUCH DELEGATES WOULD DRAG EVEN TECHNICAL ISSUES INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA. HIS COMMENTS WRUNG FROM ALL THREE OF THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN CONGRESS PROMISES TO CONSIDER REVISIONS TO THE SENATE DRAFT'S MOST OBJECTIONABLE CLAUSES.

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FRENCHMEN ACCUSE FORMER DRUG COP OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES  
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6. (C) TWO FRENCH CITIZENS HAVE ACCUSED THE FORMER  
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF DRUG CONTROL (DNCD),  
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AIR FORCE MAJOR GENERAL JUAN FOLCH HUBIERAL, OF VIOLATING  
THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE HE OVERSAW THEIR FIFTEEN-DAY  
LONG DETENTION AND INTERROGATION FOR ALLEGED DRUG  
TRAFFICKING, DOMINICAN MEDIA HAVE REPORTED. FRENCH  
EMBASSY COUNSELLOR ERIC LAVERTU TOLD US THE DNCD  
EVENTUALLY RELEASED THE FRENCHMEN, THAT THEY DO NOT  
ALLEGE ANY FORM OF TORTURE, AND THAT DOMINICAN  
AUTHORITIES WILL NOT FILE CHARGES AGAINST THEM. LAVERTU  
SAID HE HAD SOUGHT TO KEEP THE MATTER OUT OF THE PRESS,  
BUT -- HE BELIEVES -- THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE LEAKED THE  
STORY AS PART OF AN ONGOING CAMPAIGN TO EMBARRASS THE  
DNCD AND FOLCH. DOMINICAN NEWSWEEKLY RUMBO HAS ALLEGED  
THAT FOLCH SOUGHT TO SEIZE THE BEACH HOUSE OF ONE OF THE  
FRENCHMEN IN PALMAR DE OCOA.

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BEST WISHES  
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7. (U) "BEST WISHES, MICHAEL JORDAN," READ THE  
BASKETBALL CHICAGO CUBS SUPERSTAR SAMUEL SOSA, A  
DOMINICAN, PRESENTED LAST WEEK TO THE DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC'S FIRST HOOPS FAN, PRESIDENT LEONEL FERNANDEZ  
REYNA. THE BASKETBALL GRABBED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE, AS  
DID THE NEWS THAT JORDAN ASSURED SOSA HE WOULD VISIT THE  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN 1998.

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