

# Dominican Republic; Cuba; Haiti; Guyana

## Dominican Republic

### 1. Special National Intelligence Estimate<sup>1</sup>

SNIE 86.2-64

Washington, January 17, 1964.

#### INSTABILITY AND THE INSURGENCY THREAT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

##### Conclusion

We believe that the security forces of the Dominican Republic can control any subversive activities likely to occur during the next few months. Nevertheless, leftist leaders probably can increase hit-and-run terrorism in urban areas and, over time, may be able to resume guerrilla activity in the mountains. If they show ability to sustain such operations, Castro will probably supply them clandestinely with small amounts of material aid, and they may attract the support of other Dominican elements, including erstwhile moderates. Thus, over the longer run, the insurgency danger could increase, perhaps sharply. This development would be facilitated if the regime failed to show progress in meeting demands for restoration of political freedoms and for social and economic reforms.

##### Discussion

###### *I. Background*

1. The Dominican Republic<sup>2</sup> is one of the Latin American countries least prepared for representative government. Its past has been characterized by a succession of foreign occupations, coups, and despotic administrations. In particular, the thirty years of Trujillo's

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, National Intelligence Estimates, Dominican Republic. Secret. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on January 17.

<sup>2</sup> The Dominican Republic, with some 18,800 square miles, has about the area of New Hampshire and Vermont combined. About 50 percent of the land is arable and the

dictatorship, ended only by his assassination in 1961, warped the political and economic framework of the country. Over the years, many Dominicans have come to doubt that they can accomplish anything by themselves; there are few who have the experience, honesty, and backbone to play effective roles as government leaders.

2. Along with this unfortunate political legacy, Trujillo left an economic jumble of major proportions. His economic policies were designed primarily to funnel funds into the coffers of the Trujillo family. As a result, most of the enterprises now operating in the Dominican Republic are unsound, having inefficient administration structures and swollen payrolls. The Haina sugar complex, the Dominican Republic's most important producer for export, is a case in point. Moreover, some of the country's best land—formerly Trujillo-owned—is still lying fallow.

3. None of the governments which have ruled since Trujillo's death—including the Bosch administration which held power from February to late September of 1963—made appreciable progress toward solution of the country's political and economic difficulties. Although Bosch began with a strong popular mandate, he did not consolidate his electoral victory by decisive and constructive action. On the one hand, he failed to attract the cooperation of influential opposition elements in the business community, among the large property owners, in the military and church hierarchies; on the other hand, he failed to organize his mass popular following into an effective supporting political force. Bosch reacted vigorously against Communists and Castroists only when he thought they posed direct challenges to his own position. His refusal to adopt a strong anti-Communist posture left him vulnerable to rightist pressure for his removal. For many of those working for his overthrow, the Communist issue was the excuse; their own self-interest was the motive.

4. The extreme leftists waited for the dust to settle after Bosch's overthrow before undertaking a campaign of violent opposition. This began in November and has consisted of a number of scare-bombings in the cities and the establishment, for a brief time, of several small guerrilla units in the mountains.

## *II. The Present Regime*

5. The military coup of 25 September was incited by anti-Bosch politicians and carried out by the top-level of the Dominican officer

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ratio of population to land is favorable. The population of about 3.3 million is 13 percent white, 67 percent mulatto, and 20 percent negro; 64 percent of the adult population is literate. The economy remains underdeveloped (GNP: US\$780 million, \$236 per capita) and heavily dependent upon exports of sugar, coffee, and cocoa. [Footnote in the source text.]

corps. The key military leaders<sup>3</sup> were strongly anti-Communist and inclined to believe that reformers and moderate leftists were actually Communists. The coup provoked surprisingly little popular reaction.

6. Upon assuming control, the military leaders called in the heads of six minority parties, only one of which has a significant popular following.<sup>4</sup> In consultation with these party chiefs, the military leaders named a triumvirate of respected, basically apolitical men to head a provisional regime.<sup>5</sup> The military leaders then invited each of the six participating political parties to name one or more of the members of the new cabinet—a process which produced a very mixed bag of ministers in terms of competence, honesty, and political judgment. The other parties, including Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD)—which had polled some 60 percent of the votes in the December 1962 elections—have been given no role or representation in the present government. Bosch himself, and some other leaders of the moderate left, as well as a number of extreme leftists, have been deported and his party has been the object of official harassment.

7. The present regime has developed no clearly defined program to ease the country's basic economic problems—widespread poverty, low productivity, and growing unemployment. The triumvirate has, however, made sensible policy statements and has undertaken some constructive measures, along with many dictated by expediency.

8. In the political field, the regime has taken a strong anti-Communist and anti-Castroist position and has acted to curb Communist and other extreme leftist activities. Under much press, internal and external, to hold elections soon, it has announced a five-phase scheme which would begin with several limited local elections and put off national congressional and presidential elections until mid-1965. Government spokesmen claim that the plan would provide "do-it-yourself"

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<sup>3</sup> Secretary of state for armed forces, Maj. Gen. Victor Vinas Roman; chief of staff of the army, Brig. Gen. Renato Hungria Morell; chief of staff of the navy, Commodore J.A. Rib Santamaria; chief of staff of the air force, Brig. Gen. Miguel A. Luna; chief of staff of the armed forces training center, Brig. Gen. Elias Wessin y Wessin, and chief of the national police, Brig. Gen. Belisario Peguero. [Footnote in the source text.]

<sup>4</sup> Five of the six parties are to the right of center; the conservative National Civic Union (UCN), the only one with much popular support, obtained some 30 percent of the vote in the December 1962 elections. [Footnote in the source text.]

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Emilio De Los Santos, a 60-year old lawyer and former President of the Central Elections Board was named presiding officer of the triumvirate. Manuel Enrique Espaillat, a 39-year old US-educated engineer and former Director of the Dominican Industrial Development Corporation, is noted for his pro-US attitude; he is the member of the triumvirate concerned particularly with economic matters. Ramon Tapia Espinal is a 37-year old lawyer who served as secretary of the Presidency of the Council of State government and at one time assisted in the organization of the UCN party. He has the reputation of being highly emotional though fairly intelligent. [Footnote in the source text.]

training for the populace in democratic procedures; the earthier motivation seems to be the opportunity it might afford for parties participating in the regime to improve their machinery and expand their following. It would be likely, however, to have an unsettling impact on the general political situation; beginning with the campaigning for the elections at the lowest local level in the fall of 1964, there would be voting every two or three months—and electioneering almost constantly—until the summer of 1965.

9. US recognition had a bolstering effect for the triumvirate, but its situation is still a very difficult one. The triumvirate has no independent base of support, is unable to exercise effective control over the actions of the military and police, and is subject to pressure from many sides. The Dominican military leaders retain the power to remove it at any time. Moreover, the triumvirate has been under fire from the extreme right as well as from the left, the ultrarightists accusing it, among other things, of failing to act vigorously enough to expel “Communists” from official positions.

10. Under these circumstances, De Los Santos, the triumvirate’s presiding officer, became increasingly restive; he resigned when the military—against his strong urgings, but apparently with the approval of the triumvirate members—used what he regarded as extreme brutality in dealing with a group of leftist insurgents. The governmental crisis provoked by his resignation was met by reconstituting the triumvirate with Donald J. Reid Cabral, the secretary of state for foreign affairs, as the new member.<sup>6</sup>

11. The revised triumvirate has made a number of changes in the cabinet, narrowing its base essentially to two conservative parties (the UCN and the Dominican Revolutionary Vanguard). This will probably reduce political cross-currents within the cabinet and thus make it somewhat easier to work with; however, the new appointments and the shuffle of ministerial posts appear unlikely to bring any significant improvement in competence. The other four of the original six “in” parties, seeing their position and influence undermined, have shifted into opposition.

12. It now appears that the triumvirate, with the support of certain key military figures, is moving to displace the chiefs of staff of the three military services. Commodore Federico Betances Pierret has already replaced Commodore Rib as chief of staff of the navy. The primary target, however, is the air force chief of staff, Brigadier General Luna, who may try to resist. There is some danger that these devel-

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<sup>6</sup> A former member of the Council of State, Reid has long been close to US embassy officials; his political views are generally in line with those of the UCN. [Footnote in the source text.]

opments may precipitate an open power struggle within the military leadership.

### *III. Leftist Subversion and Insurgency*

13. The 14th of June Political Group (APCJ) is the most potent of the organizations of the extreme left.<sup>7</sup> Its members and supporters probably number several thousand; this contrasts with the Communist-Castroist Dominican Popular Movement (MPD) and the regular Dominican Communist Party, which command the support of no more than a few hundred. The APCJ benefits from its role as a non-partisan underground group which fought against Trujillo. Ever since the extreme leftists gained control of the group in 1961, after Trujillo's death, it has planned for eventual subversive and guerrilla action. Since its resort to active insurgency, it has been outlawed by the government.

14. The APCJ has been the dominant force behind the guerrilla effort in the countryside as well as the frequent but ineffective bombings in the cities. A few members of the MPD have also been directly involved and others may have assisted in procuring weapons. Some of the captured insurgents have denied any Communist allegiance and insisted they were fighting simply for a return to constitutional government.

15. The total number of active guerrilla fighters was about 200, organized into six small groups in various mountainous areas of the country.<sup>8</sup> The groups were not well prepared for any serious fighting and did not take any offensive action. They apparently hoped they could quickly attract significant support from other disaffected civilian and military elements. This was not the case. The government's security forces have managed to mop up almost all of them and to scatter the others. Manuel Tavares Justo, the principal APCJ leader, and several other key APCJ figures have been killed.

16. The guerrilla effort followed the Castro model. A few APCJ members had earlier received guerrilla warfare training in Cuba. Havana press and radio were quick to provide propaganda support to the "insurrection" and to quote the APCJ's claims about its scope. We have no firm evidence that the Castro regime has, as yet, furnished material support to the Dominican insurgents, but Castro would probably

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<sup>7</sup> The other parties of the extreme left are the orthodox Communist Partido Socialista Popular Dominicano (PSPD); the heterodox Communist Partido Nacionalista Revolucionario (PNR); and the Communist-dominated, pro-Castro Movimiento Popular Dominicano (MPD). Other, comparatively moderate, leftist parties are Bosch's Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) and the bitterly anti-Bosch Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano (PRSC). [Footnote in the source text.]

<sup>8</sup> As in Cuba, the terrain is favorable for guerrilla warfare. See map. [Footnote in the source text. The map is not reproduced.]

supply them clandestinely with small amounts of such aid if they appeared capable of sustaining a program of violent opposition. The short distance involved—less than 200 miles from eastern Cuba to the western part of the Dominican Republic—would facilitate clandestine supply operations by small boat or by aircraft.

#### *IV. Security Forces*

17. The Dominican Republic's security forces are considerably more able and better equipped than is typically the case for a small Latin American country. Total strength of the military and security forces is 28,100: 10,500 in the army, 1,700 in the armed forces training center (which has the armor), 3,700 in the air force, 3,100 in the navy, and 9,100 in the national police. The army has three counterinsurgency-trained battalions, and the air force has two counter guerrilla security squadrons. Dominican personnel have received specialized counterinsurgency training from US instructors, and the national police has expanded its program of training for riot control. Key weaknesses affecting the overall capability of the Dominican military are insufficient field training and inadequate communications and transportation equipment.

18. The amount of subversion and insurgency the Dominican security forces have had to deal with to date has not provided a major test of their capabilities, but they have been effective in such fighting as has occurred. We believe that they will be able to cope with any insurgency likely to arise, unless it should be extensively supported from outside or combined with widespread civil disturbances.

#### *V. The Outlook*

19. For the immediate future at least, the leftists pose no serious threat to seize control. The present regime, in one form or another, may be able to hold on to power for an indefinite period. If this does not prove to be the case, the most likely alternative would be an extreme rightist government established through a direct military takeover. This might take place if the triumvirate resigned under pressure; it might come about as a military response to charges by ultrarightists that the present administration is soft on communism; it might occur through an increase in friction among the leading military men and a decision by one or more to take full control. The resulting new government would be even less likely than the present one to fulfill domestic demands for reform.

20. In any case, the extreme leftists will probably concentrate for the time being on trying to increase terrorism in urban areas, hoping gradually to build a new capability for guerrilla actions at a later date. Much of their support comes from the youth in the cities. They could almost certainly step up their bombing program; they might also un-

dertake occasional shooting affrays, acts of arson, and other destructive measures. They may be able to attract additional Dominican supporters by exploiting a martyrdom issue; the belief has become widespread that the military, in one of its mop-up operations, murdered insurgents who had surrendered.

21. Perhaps the leftists' strongest card is the instability of the present regime and the magnitude of the problems that face it. These include the difficulty such a regime is likely to have in convincing the populace that it intends to undertake constructive social and economic programs and to provide for an eventual return to representative government. Some friction is probable among top-level military officers, along with a gradual increase in restiveness on the part of middle-ranking and junior officers. If official harassment of the PRD and other opposition parties continues, there will almost certainly be a tendency for some of the moderate civilian opponents of the regime to shift to a sharper opposition role. The extreme leftists' program of violent resistance might attract such erstwhile moderates. Thus, over the longer run, the present limited threat of insurgency could increase sharply.

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## **2. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Dungan) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 6, 1964.

Attached is a memorandum which I received from a businessman who has been a close observer of the Dominican scene since before the Bosch election.<sup>2</sup> I have found him to be a reliable reporter in the past, although he has relatively few contacts and is therefore weak on student labor and popular democratic parties. He did not get out in the countryside during his recent trip.

This report plus the traffic which I have seen in recent weeks suggests to me that it is time we sat down to map out a program for the Dominican Republic which is geared to developments that are occurring there since the coup. I would suggest that a draft plan of action be prepared by the Desk which could be reviewed here in Washington

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL DOM REP. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

before Bennett goes down to Santo Domingo.<sup>3</sup> Bennett might take this plan down and test it against his own appraisal of the situation as he observes it.

My concern about Santo Domingo is as follows:

Obviously, the situation is extremely fluid and could go in a number of different directions. One of these is a deterioration in political and economic conditions which could lead to a Castro-type takeover. In short, I believe that we must develop a plan which has a positive objective and not simply react to the situation as it develops. I recognize that the formulation of a plan and development of a program to implement it is not a guarantee against deterioration.<sup>4</sup>

**RAD**

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<sup>3</sup> Bennett was appointed Ambassador to the Dominican Republic on March 4 and presented his credentials on March 23.

<sup>4</sup> Mann responded to Dungan in a February 12 memorandum in which he agreed that a plan of action for the Dominican Republic should be readied for discussion with Ambassador Bennett and stated that "one is now being developed." This plan of action, however, has not been identified. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL DOM REP)

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### 3. **Airgram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

A-315

Santo Domingo, February 16, 1964.

SUBJECT

Balagueristas Discover Plot to Overthrow Reid

There is enclosed a memorandum of a recent conversation between two leaders of Joaquín Balaguer's Partido Reformista and an Embassy officer.<sup>2</sup> The balagueristas alleged the existence of a plot on the part of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–8 DOM REP. Confidential. Drafted by Shlaudeman on February 14 and approved by DCM Spencer M. King.

<sup>2</sup> The attached memorandum of conversation, February 14, among Augusto Lora, President of the Partido Reformista, Hector Garcia Godoy of the Partido Reformista, and Political Officer Harry Shlaudeman is not printed.

Rafael Bonnelly, Ramón Tapia,<sup>3</sup> Antonio Imbert and others to depose Triumvirate President Donald Reid Cabral as a means of preventing the issuance of a law granting general political amnesty and the consequent return to the DR of Balaguer.

The Embassy is inclined to doubt that Bonnelly and Tapia are contemplating another golpe. However, the balaguerista charges are another indication that serious dissension has arisen within the GODR over the amnesty issue and the problem of Balaguer. Reid had correctly sensed the political necessity for some kind of amnesty gesture and, in all probability, sees it as a means of advancing his own political fortunes. (Reid continues to stand surprisingly high with a good part of the opposition which sees him as better intentioned and more honest than his colleagues.) On the other side Tapia (and probably Manuel Tavares), backed by Imbert and the radical right of Rafael Bonilla Aybar oppose any concessions at this time to political prisoners and exiles. Unión Cívica Nacional favors a limited amnesty but bitterly objects to extending it to the party's old enemy Balaguer. In all, the amnesty issue carries with it the elements of a political crisis, one that could be on us shortly if Reid is serious in his plan to pass a law February 27.

For the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

**HWS**

*Second Secretary of Embassy*

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<sup>3</sup> Rafael Bonnelly was President of the Dominican Republic and of the Council of State that governed the Republic from 1962 until February 27, 1963. Ramón Tapia was Secretary of State for Presidency under the Council of State, 1962–February 27, 1963, and member of the Triumvirate after Juan Bosch's overthrow in September 25, 1963.

4. **Airgram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

A-320

Santo Domingo, February 19, 1964.

SUBJECT

Conversation With Donald Reid

Enclosed is the memorandum of a recent conversation between Triumvirate President Donald Reid Cabral and an Embassy officer.<sup>2</sup> On the subject of elections Reid revealed what the Embassy has long suspected: that he is in no hurry to begin the electoral process. With regard to the issue of amnesty for political prisoners, Reid asserted the political necessity for such a measure and described his ideas on the subject. He acknowledged strong opposition from the other members of the Triumvirate to his proposals on this score and said that the situation had led to serious dissension. Reid also blamed jealousy and pernicious outside influences for his current troubles with Manuel Tavares<sup>3</sup> and Ramón Tapia. Reid discussed possible forthcoming changes in the Cabinet<sup>4</sup> and indicated that he was particularly anxious to rid the government of Vanguardia Revolucionaria Dominicana because of that party's corrupt practices. On the potentially explosive issue of Joaquín Balaguer's return to the DR, Reid expressed the opinion that the ex-President represented a greater threat outside of the country and should be permitted to come home as soon as the political campaign begins.<sup>5</sup> Finally, Reid brought up the question of AID, stating that the GODR urgently needs help in hospital, school and foreign scholarship programs.

*Comment:* It is sometimes difficult to believe that Reid is the same man who served on the Council of State. Of late he appears much calmer, more pragmatic and more sensible. He is still indiscreet and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 2 DOM REP. Confidential. Drafted by Shlaudeman on February 18 and approved by DCM Spencer M. King.

<sup>2</sup> Attached memorandum of conversation between Reid and Shlaudeman, February 17, is not printed.

<sup>3</sup> Member of the Triumvirate after Juan Bosch's overthrow in September 25, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> Reid specifically sought replacements for the Secretaries of Education and Justice.

<sup>5</sup> During their conversation Reid explained to Shlaudeman that Balaguer in exile "represented a rallying point for golpistas who could use [him] as a front man," and if he were in the Dominican Republic Balaguer would become "vulnerable to attack as a trujillista relic of the past and could be expected to lose much of his present appeal."

basically rather cynical but, perhaps alone among Dominican politicians, he seems to have learned something during the past two years. In any event, his marked political instinct and avocation for government provide an encouraging contrast with the emotionalism and naïvite which Tavares and Tapia display all too frequently.

For the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

**Harry W. Shlaudeman**  
*Second Secretary of Embassy*

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**5. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 21, 1964, 2 p.m.

1053. For ARA. Subject: Prospects for the Dominican Republic.

1. On conclusion of my first eight weeks in this tormented country, Dept will perhaps be interested to have from me a preliminary analysis of the situation here and its portents for United States policy.

**Continuing State of Crisis**

2. During this period since late March the country has been rocked by three major crises, two of which were political and either of which could easily have ended in a military takeover. One did end with change in governing triumvirate. Govt is attempting to face up to financial crisis, and some initial measures have been taken; but we are still in early stretch of long road. Sufficient to say that with crises recurring so constantly little gets done. Political malaise is perhaps more serious than economic, and the various forces emerge from one crisis to prepare for the next.

**Embassy Activity**

3. In this 8-week period American preference has been fully reestablished here. While our personnel situation is still seriously short, we are gradually, perhaps too slowly, building back to strength of last [garble—July?]. AID Mission has been reactivated, as has MAAG, and both new chiefs are now assembling staffs.

4. We have been involved in considerable substantive activity, when we could find a day quiet enough to take action. Such projects

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, FN 2 DOM REP. Secret; Limit Distribution.

as 4-million-dollar EXIM Bank loan for road maintenance machinery, 900-unit workers' housing in San Pedro de Macoris, 600-unit middle-class housing in Santo Domingo and release for on-going projects of funds totaling more than \$1.1 million to assist educational activities, labor cooperatives, etc., have been signed or announced. Numerous scholarships and travel grants covering wide variety of interests and training have been put in motion. I have given a number of formal speeches, together with many informal talks, and have made three major trips to north and east sections of the country, plus shorter trips to nearby towns and in and around the capital. I have also visited numerous Peace Corps volunteers on station, including several who live in the most depressing slum areas of Santo Domingo and Santiago and whose work in a broad range of fields cannot be praised too highly. All these activities have been well received and have received appropriate publicity.

5. Quite aside from govt contacts—and there is almost daily exchange here with top level due to informal atmosphere in which triumvirate governs and the seeming necessity of getting even minor decisions made by them—there have been conferences, meetings and discussions with professional, cultural, business, agricultural, political and military leaders and with labor and youth groups. In short, the country knows we are back in business here. Written and spoken comments at all levels and representing all sectors of opinion (except Communist) indicate great relief and satisfaction that U.S. is back.

#### Economic Misery

6. As a result of sampling this wide cross section of Dominican opinion, I am convinced that country's major interest at the moment is finding jobs and food, i.e. getting on with economic development. With perhaps a third of the working force unemployed and many others underemployed, urban slums I have visited are Asian-like in their overcrowding and squalor (they lack even such basic necessities as water, sanitation, and garbage collection). They are seething with unrest and frustration. Economic misery, as distinct from political tyranny, strikes me as much more prevalent now (drift to cities dramatizes it, of course) than when I served in this country over twenty years ago during the Trujillo period.

#### Political Apathy

7. One of the things which has impressed me most in my travels and conversations about the country has been the almost total lack of interest in talking politics with me. This excepts, of course, the several party leaders here in the capital whose profession it is to keep the waters boiling. In conversations with others, however, the more sophisticated emphasize development needs and propose projects, large and small, government and private. Less educated people stress jobs and

housing. I am repeatedly surprised at how rarely politics comes up. On two separate visits to San Pedro de Macoris, for instance, which offered informal talks with full range of income groups from top to bottom, not once was a political matter mentioned. Despite shrillness of individual political leaders, each of whom has his devoted cadre of acitlarts and some of whom have no further following, most observers agree the country is largely apathetic at this time as regards political matters. This does not mean, however, that Dominican politicians are going to give up playing politics.

#### Leftward Drift

8. On other hand, the poor and the unemployed, most of whom scrape through on a minimum subsistence diet and have trouble even getting water, while not active politically, appear to be steadily drifting leftward in their sympathies. They are, of course, on receiving end of heavy stream of radio and word-of-mouth propaganda from extreme left. My Peace Corps friends who live in slum areas tell us that many of their neighbors sympathize with Castroite 14th of June movement. Comments made to me on my own visits to these sections indicate, despite the appealing simplicity and easy friendliness which still characterizes the average Dominican, a general sense of abandonment at hands of society. Perverted as it is in its aims, the 14th of June at least shows interest in their misery and promises them help.

#### Lack of National Purpose

9. Disorders (including bomb tossing and stone throwing in such normally quiet provincial towns as La Vega) during recent taxi drivers strike, which had no economic justification and was in fact a political effort manipulated by both right and left for separate (but often converging) ends, showed how close to the surface violence is in Dominican life today and how tension grips rich, poor and govt authority alike and influences their actions toward extremism. Part of this represents general spirit of revolt against authority—any authority—which is aftermath of long Trujillo tyranny; and part unfortunately represents those more endemic Dominican characteristics of inordinate suspicion one of another and lack of sense of national purpose (despite homogeneous population) or feeling of individual responsibility to act in national interest—traits which have so often been commented on over the years by observers of the local scene. The difference now is that time is shorter than it was.

#### Need For Urgent U.S. Action

10. Given the above factual situation, what should be the U.S. posture? My own conviction after eight years here is that we have less time even than we thought during Washington consultations in March. If we are to influence Dominicans in ways we want to see them go and counter leftist efforts to poison popular mind, we must lose no time in

getting under way with full-scale Alliance for Progress program. Despite rather somber picture drawn above, I do not believe body politic here is as yet deeply infected with Castro–Communist venom, notwithstanding intensive efforts mentioned above. There is rather touching trust and faith that the United States can solve all Dominican problems; there is, in fact, over-dependence on us.

11. The time for us to act is now. AID Director Carter Ide is presently in Washington, and I hope he can be given urgent and sympathetic support in getting approval of program along lines worked out during his recent consultation here. We believe emphasis should be in fields of (1) agriculture (agricultural productivity has simply got to be increased to meet needs of rapidly increasing population and to offset effects of measures to counter balance of payments problem) and (2) education, but with sufficient flexibility to take on desirable projects that may be offered in other fields. There is critical need to put people to work here, and we should have some impact projects of sufficient scope to be impressive and have effect on local consciousness.

#### Support for Self-Help

12. Our program should place stress on encouraging and assisting self-help efforts of Dominican Govt and private entities and to maximum extent feasible should be implemented step by step as needed reforms are instituted. While many activities necessarily have to be carried out in conjunction with govt, we should make strong effort to avoid tying ourselves too directly to any one administration or any one group. To extent we can do so in accord with sound operational and fiscal procedures, we should seek to work with communities and with private professional, business and labor groups. In that connection, one of most hopeful aspects of local scene involves Community Development Associations which are now being organized all over the country and which are anxious to work with us. These associations are being sparked by the excellent Santiago Committee, which is worthy of similar activity in an American city of its size and already has a number of positive successes to its credit. These efforts indicate that at long last at least some Dominican citizens are becoming aware of their private responsibilities for public progress. Labor organizations and agricultural cooperatives also offer possibilities as suitable vehicles for direct cooperation. We should encourage them. In short, we must tie our programs to people and local initiative and act so as to convince the entirety of the Dominican public that the American people and Govt have an abiding interest in their progress toward social betterment and higher standards of living.

#### Political Effects

13. What are the political effects of all this? We cannot forget—and we should not let Dominicans forget—that the standards of this

hemisphere require Dominican Republic to work its way back to constitutional govt. At the present time, however, except for self-serving declarations of political leaders, most of whom agree only on getting the ins out and wishing themselves in national palace, there is widespread popular apathy. Not one of the various political leaders with whom I have talked gives the impression of having national stature or being capable of giving this country leadership needed. This includes present leadership of the democratic left.

Bosch & Balaguer

14. Oddly enough, the two individuals most often mentioned and credited with stature of presidential possibilities are outside the country, Juan Bosch in Puerto Rico and Joaquin Balaguer in New York. As for Bosch, his own political party, whatever its public posture, is by no means united in desiring his return, there is no widespread public demand for it. And quite apart from whether Dominican armed forces would or would not agree to his coming back, there are sound grounds for believing that Bosch himself much prefers the comfortable martyrdom of Puerto Rican exile to the pains and aches involved in attempting to govern this distressingly ungovernable country. Those who know Bosch best hold that he has no intention of attempting a comeback. Comments of Piera quoted Embtel 1037<sup>2</sup> are latest of a series.

15. Balaguer may well represent at this time the largest common denominator of support for the Presidency, since he has the large PR party behind him and enjoys the backing of important right wing elements in the armed forces and the church and at least some popular favor within groups such as the taxi drivers to whom he gave free taxicabs during his previous incumbency. (He also has bitter enemies who threaten his assassination in event of his return.) However, Balaguer's proven combination of political charlatanry and economic profligacy, together with his record of close association with the Trujillo dynasty, would scarcely seem to recommend him as in the U.S. interest. In final analysis it is not so much Balaguer's personal qualities that make him undesirable. It is fact that his return would open way for re-imposition throughout country of interlocking Trujillo mechanism of governing. It is still less than three years since Trujillo. Those people are still around and they are anxious for another chance.

Donald Reid Cabral

16. That brings us to Donald Reid Cabral, leading member of the governing triumvirate and professedly apolitical. I have not the slightest doubt that Reid Cabral has the smell of politics deep in his nostrils. He has already begun maneuvers to find his way to a longer term,

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

preferably alone and preferably constitutional if he can find a formula. These intentions are already suspected of him by his peers, and there will be increased rumblings, together with efforts to block him, as his presumed intentions become clearer. It is perhaps worth bearing in mind in that connection that he is not the first interim Latin American leader nor, it can be safely wagered, will he be the last to conclude he is the man to lead his country onward.

17. Reid is something of a bantam cock in personality, is strong-willed and impulsive and is at times erratic; he is not well organized personally, with the result that plans and promises often outrun performance. There is a great deal of spur-of-the-moment shifting of gears. However, there seems no doubt of his good intentions nor of his strong desire to improve conditions in his country. He does not lack for personal courage and he is personally honest. He greatly admires the United States and its way of life. While lacking a “popular” background (he will always be subject to the charge of belonging to the oligarchy) and not a rabble-rouser, he can be effective in a crowd; he was, for instance, impressive at a large labor gathering on May Day in which I participated. In sum, from standpoint U.S. interests we could do a lot worse in a country like this in which there is such a paucity of possibilities.

#### Problem of Illegitimacy

18. As an interim executive Reid suffers from the stain of political illegitimacy and he can expect no help from the practicing politicians in removing it or forgetting it. However, if he can prove himself to the people in the months ahead and earn their support for an acceptable formula for return to constitutionality, I see no grounds on which the United States should object. The trick, in light of the political jockeying and plotting which goes on incessantly behind the scenes here, will be for Reid to gain the months in which to prove he can do something for the people and earn their support, i.e. fill today’s vacuum of popular support with himself.

#### Views of Papal Nuncio

19. I should like to comment parenthetically that Monsenor Clarizio, Papal Nuncio, an enlightened and progressive man who is a force for good in this country, shares the views expressed above regarding political prospects and alternatives in this country.

#### Dark Horse

20. Crises ripple here with speed of summer lightning. According to his political opposition, Reid’s radio speech of May 15 has had effect of causing parties to intensify their efforts find unity on single national candidate so as to increase pressure for elections. Given nature of party and individual rivalries this would be neatest trick of week, but if such efforts should prosper result might be turn toward Bala-

guer. Or an individual might be found whose name has thus far not appeared in speculation. Certain it is that, regardless of extent of political apathy in country at large, party leaders have no intention of giving triumvirate any peace or tranquillity. Giving the matter a purely pragmatic view, however, so long as Reid holds the support of the armed forces he will have his office and his opportunity. At present he has that support, and he works hard to keep it.

#### The Military Problem

21. Given the realities of the military position in the Dom Rep, Reid is in fact in the midst of a most discreet operation. He is softly stroking the military in hopes it will purr in response; so far it is docile, although it is an uncertain and dangerous instrument. He is simultaneously engaged in the delicate task of (1) reducing Trujillista influence (still strong, and Balaguer-oriented) and (2) removing from the general military establishment some of the undue privileges it enjoys, while at the same time striving to prevent a split among the several different factions which could easily deteriorate into armed conflict with unforeseeable consequences for the country. It is possible, of course, that he may slip off this tight rope and fall into the military pocket. It is quite probable that it will look that way from time to time, but I believe he is alert to this danger. In my opinion he deserves our sympathetic understanding in his effort to work out a more rational place in Dominican society for the men with the guns. He deserves it the more in view of the constant effort of some political elements to serve their own ends by inciting the military to more active intrusion in the affairs of state.

#### The Prospects

22. If our own activities meet with success—and we have a staff with good teamwork and high morale which is prepared to work hard at the job—some of this success will perhaps rub off on govt in power (as will failures). There is no way to get away from fact that any positive program our part will be taken by many as evidence our support of whatever regime in power at time. However, to serve our long-range interests in this country, I repeat the view that we should insofar as we can avoid tying our program to any one individual or administration and base it as much as possible on broad cooperation with private groups and community activities. Our approach should remain sufficiently flexible to enable us to cut loose from any particular govt formula that may develop badly. We should never cease to stress publicly that our activities are long-range and our interest the welfare of the whole Dominican people.

23. In this throbbing tropic atmosphere, where the realities are often sordid and the atmosphere usually oppressive, the situation does not seem to me to lend itself to brilliant theorizing or to elaborate

operational plans which are dependent for their execution on sophisticated reactions simply not to be found in this politically primitive environment. Rather it seems to me we are faced with meeting each day's problems as they arise, measuring them against our constant objectives and tackling them on that basis. We shall be misunderstood, and we shall be attacked by those who want revolution immediately and by those who want no changes at all. Our daily fare will probably contain as much failure as success, but with luck we may advance a bit now and then. Our problem is largely one of infusing as much reason as possible into an atmosphere in which reason has been resisted and defied for most of history.

24. With sufficient commitment on our part I believe the problem here is manageable, although I do not underestimate the difficulties and the uncertain prospects. We learned all too recently here that we do not, despite our great influence, have the last word; we are dealing with human material which does not always respond logically or even in its own long-range interests. When the chips are down it is the Dominicans who make their own final decisions—largely on the basis of their own self-generated pressures.

25. There are many larger problems than the Dominican one, and many which would appear to be basically more insoluble. But the Dominican Republic is on our doorstep and, let us have no illusions, the Dominican problem is urgent.

**Bennett**

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**6. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, June 5, 1964, 8:30 p.m.

1106. For Assistant Secretary Mann and Crockett ARA.

1. We have become increasingly concerned in recent days over behavior of Reid Cabral. Meeting which King, Bramble and I had with triumvirate June 3 (reported Embtels 1091 and 1097)<sup>2</sup> on IMF discus-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, FN 10 DOM REP/IMF. Secret; Priority; Limdis.

<sup>2</sup> Dated June 3 and 4. (Ibid. and FN 10 DOM REP, respectively)

sions (Deptel 660)<sup>3</sup> may have accomplished purpose but it was distinctly an unpleasant affair. Reid's almost hysterical reaction to suggestion that DomRep has serious financial problems, and his outburst of anger when we made point Dominican delegation seemingly not coming to grips with IMF problem were response of tense, unstable man, in fact quite irrational at times.

2. In past two weeks it has become increasingly difficult to have serious conversation with Reid, and his tendency hear only what he wants to hear has grown more marked. I have found this myself and a variety of contacts both local and foreign report similarly. He is apparently listening to no one and brooks no advice, even from old friends and well wishers. He is driving himself to exhaustion with attention to every detail of administration while at same time rushing about over the country in his "vigorous program" and making all manner of promises for grandiose projects which cannot possibly be filled in any reasonable time. Both Nuncio and British Chargé have commented to me on his irascibility in conversation. All elements of Mission are receiving reports similar to above, and we have had several local approaches this week asking us to "talk to Donnie."

3. Hal Hendrix, for instance, told me yesterday he fed up with Reid and returning to Miami to write story for Scripps-Howard which he says will "cause Donnie to strike me off his list of friends." Hendrix expressed himself as thoroughly disillusioned with Reid and local situation and seemed particularly upset over evidences of broad extent graft and corruption he found pervading local scene. He did not accuse triumvirate personally of this, but various American and foreign businessmen resident here for many years have approached me and other members of staff in recent days to express their view that graft worse now than under Trujillo. There is marked increase of complaint and triumvirate being held responsible even if not personally involved.

4. This deterioration in Reid's behavior has been precipitate. Our telegram 1053<sup>4</sup> called attention to erratic, strong-willed aspects of his nature and he seems to have given these qualities full rein in last two weeks. His cocky overconfidence has grown apace. I believe this is due to a variety of factors: his elation over his govt's success in handling recent taxi strike and the approving *New York Times* editorial in

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<sup>3</sup> In telegram 660 to Santo Domingo, June 2, the Department reported that discussions in Washington with Dominican Republic representatives on a draft IMF standby arrangement for \$25 million had nearly reached an impasse "over apparent Dominican unwillingness come to grips with financial problems they face." The telegram further stated, "unless Dominicans willing to implement meaningful program of reforms, prospect is for rapid deterioration of already serious financial situation." (Ibid., FN 10 DOM REP/IMF)

<sup>4</sup> Document 5.

connection therewith, on top of his feeling which he has expressed to more than one visiting newsmen that he now has both Dominican armed forces and U.S. Govt in his pocket.

5. I believe he has overestimated our recognition of his regime, favorable decisions on several economic matters coincident with first weeks of new U.S. Ambassador's presence in country and support he justifiably received in connection taxi strike. He seems to have taken all this to mean that he has full U.S. support to do what he pleases on political scene (including some highly dubious radio censorship actions, and ominous complaints beginning to emanate from high sources about press criticism of regime actions). He appears, despite cautionary talk from me, to be convinced his promises will be paid for by us (his aid ideas are obviously exaggerated). It is becoming a matter of conjecture among the informed as to how long this can go on unless Donald Reid can be pulled back off this kick.

6. We have reported (Embtels 1078 and 1081)<sup>5</sup> mutterings within armed forces. These are continuing. Yesterday's and today's papers carried stories of "subversive group" discovered within police (we understand Reid participated personally in grilling of enlisted personnel involved). As of now our attachés do not regard Reid's military support so united and secure as Reid apparently thinks.

7. I believe most effective step that can be taken at this time would be for you to have frank and vigorous talk with Bonilla. Bonilla has strong influence on Reid and, as we know, has steadily encouraged him in his political aspirations. We feel here that Bonilla often misleads Reid (witness IMF discussions) and that his reporting seriously offsets our efforts here. So long as Reid is being fed overoptimistic accounts by Bonilla, as we believe, about his (Reid's) high standing in Washington and U.S. Govt's readiness to back him all the way, I am afraid our efforts here to put matters in perspective are lightly regarded and taken with resentment.

8. I urge you to see Bonilla without delay and stress our concern over trend of situation here. You could take as point of departure Dept's surprise over Reid's statements to press during recent Samana visit that new port works would be built with Alliance, i.e. U.S. money (without slightest mention of project before or after to Embassy) and his comments reported front page yesterday's papers following our June 3 meeting primarily for IMF matters but during which he listed without discussion some of projects he expected U.S. pay for (para 6 Emb-

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<sup>5</sup> Dated June 1 and 2. (Both in National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP)

tel 1099).<sup>6</sup> Without any further ado Reid told press U.S. financed Alliance program would include roads, ports, hospitals, etc. It would be desirable to make point to Bonilla that reports of concern over Reid handling matters here are coming in from various sources, including press and business (i.e. not confined to Embassy).

9. I hope you can talk with Bonilla over weekend so that his report can reach Reid before our Monday<sup>7</sup> meeting (which I shall attempt postpone until Tuesday). I expect hard knuckled discussion in view Reid's exhilarated state and am fully prepared do my part in making him face facts. It should be made clear to Bonilla that we cannot do business on basis of Reid promising and then expecting us to pick up the check (he devoted table-pounding emphasis in June 3 discussion to what he "deserves" in way of U.S. aid) and that Alliance program is meant to raise living standards rather than serve as political vehicle. It could also be stressed that U.S. does not wish be associated in eyes of public (as we are being more and more tied in with Reid in local opinion) with govt in which graft and corruption so rampant—and growing according to all reports of those who have to do business on local scene. Shaking Bonilla up would, I hope, have effect of infusing a little more reality into Reid. You will have to douse Bonilla with ice water for it to come out cold on Reid. I don't want to exaggerate in view paucity of alternatives here. However, unless we can get Reid back on path, and quickly, I am afraid all signs point to serious trouble.

10. All senior officers, including [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] and attachés, share this assessment and join in these recommendations.

**Bennett**

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<sup>6</sup> Not found.

<sup>7</sup> June 8.

7. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 6, 1964, 3:53 p.m.

667. For Ambassador from Crockett. Embtel 1106.<sup>2</sup>

Reftel arrived at particularly opportune moment. We had already scheduled interview with Bonilla for this morning in order explain nature contemplated AID program and U.S. objectives under Alliance per your tel #1099.<sup>3</sup> Reftel provided valuable additional ammunition and help in focusing on problem Reid's unrealistic expectations and rash public pronouncements this respect.

Asst. Sec. Mann out of town today but will see Bonilla on June 8 to reinforce today's representations.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, agree you should request one or two day postponement of scheduled Monday meeting with Triumvirate to allow time for Bonilla to report to Reid after conversation with Mann.

Following is summary Crockett's talk with Bonilla today:

1. Bonilla reported that Dom financial delegation has now reached full meeting of minds with IMF and believes stand-by can be signed June 8. (We have not yet been able confirm this with IMF and have no details on what specifics agreement may entail.) In response this good news, Crockett emphasized that stand-by only first step on difficult road; that agreement will only prove beneficial if Triumvirate now hews line on fiscal and other reform measures necessary to put Dom economic house in order.

2. This led to point that Triumvirate's very *raison d'être* is its presumed capacity to take difficult measures for good of nation without undue regard for transitory political considerations. It was recalled that Council of State and Bosch regimes proved reluctant to grapple with country's real problems because of political pressures but that Triumvirate has publicly recognized that it has no excuses this regard.

3. At same time U.S. fully aware of difficulties faced by Triumvirate, particularly severe pressures created by widespread unemployment. Reid's anxiety to show visible, immediate results in terms of public works projects therefore understandable. Nevertheless, in our

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, FN 10 DOM REP/IMF. Secret; Priority; Limdis. Drafted by Shlaudeman and approved by Crockett.

<sup>2</sup> Document 6.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Mann was scheduled to meet with Bonilla on Monday, June 8; see Document 8. No other record of this meeting has been found.

opinion, would be error of first magnitude to pump money into employment-creating projects of this type which did not at same time increase country's capacity to produce. Result would be compounding of current financial problem which has its roots in excess of consumption in relation to production.

4. Referring to Reid's extravagant and misleading promises re U.S. assistance, Crockett emphasized that aid of the type he apparently envisages cannot be justified. In addition damage it would do in terms of DR's financial situation, building of hospitals for which there are no nurses, schools for which there are no teachers and gaudy bridges for which there is no need would be essentially wasteful. Bonilla was told in clearest terms that U.S. has no intention embarking on a program of this sort and that Reid's statements can only cause mutual embarrassment.

5. It was then explained just what U.S. does hope do: assist in raising agricultural production, in improving education, in getting country launched on constructive self-help projects, and, generally, in establishing technical and educational base for genuine development. Crockett singled out Bonilla's own project for rural education as one which fits within framework.

6. Bonilla reacted most favorably. Said he agreed entirely; that our approach coincided with his thinking and that these representations would strengthen his hand in attempting influence Reid. He expressed desire for interview with Asst. Sec. to go over same ground so as to be able impress Reid even more strongly.

7. Referring to Reid's recent statements, Bonilla observed that former is inclined toward rash indiscretions and is at times victimized by bad advice, particularly from his uncles the Cabrals. Bonilla reviewed his own efforts over the months to prevail on Reid to lay aside empty words and make his mark with constructive action. As example, Bonilla asserted he had counseled Reid bring in qualified foreign economist and formulate economic policy on basis this expert's advice.

8. Throughout Bonilla emphasized his belief that Triumvirate must adopt practical programs for promoting basic education, increasing agricultural production, encouraging small industries and attracting foreign investment. Said he would continue urge his views (which appear remarkably similar to our own) on Reid.

In forthcoming conversations with Bonilla we will attempt strengthen these convictions (presuming they are genuine) by discreet coaching and re-emphasis of points made today. Bonilla intends return Santo Domingo next week following conclusion IMF negotiations. Judging from your own estimate of his influence on Reid, he should prove helpful. You may therefore wish follow up our efforts with representations of your own after he arrives.

8. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, June 8, 1964, noon.

1108. For Crockett ARA. Embtel 1106; Deptel 667.<sup>2</sup>

Much heartened by receipt your 667. We must hope Bonilla will talk in same way to Reid as he does to us. I believe best way to forward that project is for Mann to keep pressure on Bonilla. You might go so far in this evening's meeting with Bonilla as to suggest that, since aid discussion scheduled for tomorrow 4 p.m. between triumvirate and our team has been announced to press by Reid as "invitation of formal negotiations on program U.S. aid for Dom Rep," it would be useful have him to advise Reid of Washington discussions before meeting here.

Reid took initiative yesterday to have lengthy conversation with [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], later joined by other two attachés. I consider this was a most useful encounter, since they got down to brass tacks on graft, corruption in armed forces and elsewhere. Reid asked for it and he got it in accord with lines worked out among us beforehand. Reid was in sober state of mind and his manner indicated realization his part things not going well lately. I believe our team made some first downs.

In view Reid's frank admission yesterday's conversation extent of graft in local society and his professed desire to take steps to correct situation as he mentioned some definite plans being readied, I believe it would be useful for Mann to touch on this issue, as discussed paragraphs 3 and 9 my tel 1106. It is admittedly delicate subject and one hard to prove (although attachés did not fail to give Reid some specific cases yesterday), but representation could be made to Bonilla on grounds that aid program will lose value, as well as moral validity, and will not achieve desired results for either side if its administration is attempted in atmosphere of squandering and corruption.

**Bennett**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, FN 10 DOM REP/IMF. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Passed to the White House.

<sup>2</sup> Documents 6 and 7.

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9. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, July 16, 1964, 9 p.m.

62. For Asst Secy Mann. Embtel 57.<sup>2</sup>

1. Loath as I am to encumber you with Dominican problems on eve of Cuba MFM,<sup>3</sup> I consider we are at a point of fundamental decision as regards this country. I refer to proposed IMF standby agreement and connected measures to put Dominican financial house in order, with attendant political strains which can be expected ensue from serious reform effort.

2. Largely through their own ineptitude and false confidence and despite our warnings, Dominicans missed July 1 deadline for putting standby into effect. It was not until end of June that Reid, heretofore shielded by faulty advice, became aware for first time of full implications of situation (Embtel 1221).<sup>4</sup> For past two weeks he has been negotiating vigorously and seriously with IMF representative here on specific measures to be undertaken by GODR in connection standby although they have not settled on final details of agreement. We now understand that negotiations have been proceeding satisfactorily between USG, IMF and New York banks along lines para 4 mytel 1221. It seems important to us, in view Reid tendency step out high and handsome after favorable news, that final action not be taken Washington until Reid commits himself here to take further actions necessary. Otherwise money might well be spent to clear up arrears but without basic, long-term correction. For that reason we sent Embtel 57

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. I, 6/64-4/65. Secret; Priority; Limdis.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 57 from Santo Domingo, July 15, Bennett informed the Department that efforts by the Dominican Republic to meet the provisions of the proposed IMF standby agreement had not been successful due to bureaucratic weaknesses, political pressures, and further delays in implementation. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, FN 1 DOM REP)

<sup>3</sup> The Ninth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, serving as Organ of Consultation in application of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, was held at Washington July 21-26 to consider Venezuelan charges of Cuban intervention and aggression. For documentation on the meeting, see *Foreign Relations, 1964-1968*, volume XXXI, Documents 20-23. For excerpts of the Final Act signed July 22, 1964, see *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1964*, pp. 328-334.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 1221 from Santo Domingo, June 30, recounted a June 28 meeting between Reid and Bennett about problems involved with the IMF standby agreement. Reid commented that his knowledge of these problems was inadequate to deal with them effectively. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, FN 10 DOM REP)

yesterday, with para 4. General situation is urgent and I am counselling delay only long enough in order to get firm undertakings by Reid.

3. If Reid goes through with commitments he has agreed to in principle with IMF rep, there will be tightrope situation here. Reaction of forces of both right and left to first tentative steps toward austerity in Law 221 in May, resulting in taxi–dockworkers strike, offers evidence of what to be expected. Fears expressed to us by Reid in meeting requested by him July 14 that politicians and commercial people will immediately on imposition of controls begin efforts to suborn military with view to causing his ouster are probably not exaggerated.<sup>5</sup> This will be a distinctly unpopular program imposed by a govt which has little or no popular base; and govt will be confronting venal, selfish groups who can be expected react sharply for their own self-serving purposes. Whatever our role or however much controls are exercised under IMF formula, U.S. can also expect draw criticism from affected circles for “imposing” Draconian measures on Dominican people.

4. In our July 14 meeting Reid again reiterated in strongest terms his determination “take every action except devaluation.” However, to counter expected reactions, Reid insisted he would need assistance from us in form:

(A) Statement by USG at time austerity program put into effect that we applaud GODR’s willingness face up to financial difficulties and wish them well in their effort put house in order. Reid urged that for maximum effect locally statement come from President Johnson himself; however, this request made without knowledge of information received later that USG will be contributing financially to total package, a form of support that will speak for itself. Nonetheless, this program will constitute risky and courageous action on part of weak government and the higher the level our indication of sympathy—White House if possible—the better in my opinion.

(B) Announcement of agreement on aid program with us under Alliance for Progress of generous proportions, for purpose reassuring general public that broad-gauged attack on national problems beginning. There is a firmly based mystique here in both govt and private circles of “magic figure” of \$50 million. However illogical this figure may be, I have come to conclusion that tangible and substantive evidence now of our long-range commitment to country’s future and sympathetic assistance in its very real problems of development, in addition to direct and immediate need of bulwarking insofar as possible a program of fiscal reform so necessary but so politically unpalatable to country, is in our own national interest. Accordingly, I propose we

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<sup>5</sup> This meeting has not been further identified.

move urgently on AID program loan for \$25 million for announcement concurrently with initiation standby-austerity program, which may be as early as next week. We realize that such dollar funds are not essential for the first stages of the stabilization program, but they will be needed during the next three to ten months if the stabilization develops as projected.

5. The financial program and the need for balance of payments assistance are the economic justification of the loan. Disbursement of the dollars would be tied to effective implementation of the financial program. Disbursement of pesos would in addition depend on mutual agreement on sound programs.

6. What I have in mind is announcement which will offer dramatic evidence of our determination assist Dominican people at a time when they are seriously disturbed over direction of events, i.e., a positive U.S. approach to supplement the very negative bite of austerity measures. We are caught here in a situation which grows increasingly grave, unless we are prepared to move rapidly, we may well see changes before long which will not be in our interests. Without positive evidence U.S. support, present govt, which appears ready make this effort, may not survive.

7. Nor do we consider that such a course would force the U.S. to do more than we have been thinking of. Due to inherent delays in re-establishment AID Mission here after 6 months lapse and endemic problems of Dominican bureaucracy, there has not yet been sufficient staff or time to work our programs in detail; but we have already identified fields of sound activity and specific programs (Embtel 1065<sup>6</sup> showed guide lines and work now underway to flesh this out) total of which will easily exceed figure of \$25 million. When Reid in July 14 talk proposed announcement of such program together with understanding no pesos would be released except on agreed projects, Ide and I pointed out difficulties and warned that disbursement of any such funds would have to be tied to sound stabilization program and made only in step with performance under it. Reid expressed full agreement with this concept. What proposed therefore is course which will offer Dominicans evidence of timely and generous U.S. policy, together with strict implementation in protection our own interests. We would spend no money until satisfied with soundness of detailed programs, but meanwhile, when needed most, we get benefit of dramatic impact of our announced intentions. I am persuaded that we tend become prisoners our own very valid planning process; by announcing each project only when it is finally and completely wrapped up, we lose public

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<sup>6</sup> Dated May 27. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, AID (IDB) 9 DOM REP)

relations effect of totality of our general intentions and get little or no credit for the very fine things we do. And it is not enough to put out tabulations afterwards; I have seen the yawns go up in various countries as our statistics have been issued. Here, it seems to me, we have the opportunity of maximum public effect at no cost to sound procedures. I hope this can be done.

8. Admittedly we would all prefer to have more time to work these things out. Situation, however, is urgent. July 1 deadline on standby was missed and Aug 1 must not be allowed to go same way. Public already aware and concerned over problem and enough dope stories have appeared in press to make current uncertainty and speculation a decidedly negative factor in political as well as economic field. Reid is being accused more and more of "going way of Bosch" in sense of promises without performance.

9. As reported in previous messages we consider Reid has approached problems in soberer mood in recent weeks. Other foreign observers have indicated to us similar impressions. His approach to aid matters now parallels our own and he has given up his exaggerated public promises. These changes in him seem to have coincided roughly with resignation of Tavares from triumvirate and Reid's own belated awareness in late June of full dimensions local fiscal crisis. While I would not be so foolhardy as to predict a steady course ahead by Reid, he is at present in sounder and more serious mood than any time since my arrival here in March.

10. There seems to be a sensing of this among some local forces as well; or perhaps they are primarily motivated by concern over what would happen if Reid went. At any rate within recent days there has been a certain coalescing around Reid of some influential elements of what might be called the local "establishment." For the first time in my stay here Bannelly has begun appearing at social functions and talking at length with Reid publicly. Imbert, until recently a strong advocate of early elections, now argues that all "sound people" must rally behind Reid, provided he takes action on economic front. Amiama is described as holding similar views. These are at least heartening signs of some influential support for austerity program, and the two leading newspapers have been demanding it for some time.

11. In view of Aug 1 IMF deadline, time is of the essence. We need decisions, favorable I hope, on two proposals above in 4A. and B. within week's time in order allow announcement stabilization program and aid loan as standby becomes effective. I realize this amounts to recommendation for strong U.S. support of weak de facto govt which has not always acted responsibly and will probably not always do so in future. We are, however, confronted with Hobson's choice, and weak fabric of this country is burdened, as I have pointed out earlier, not with

economic problems alone nor with political problems alone but with both simultaneously. If military should decide to turn on Reid—and there are some renewed rumblings—we know of no Castello Branco on local scene. It is the Trujillista elements of military who want Balaguer back and it should be remembered that latter's demagogic economic policies while in office contributed considerably to current state of affairs.

12. I deplore as much as anyone that in recent years we seem to get involved recurrently in this country with "rescue" operations. It is regrettably, after 33 years of Trujillo, that kind of country, but at least it still offers hope of rescue. This combined program may or may not work. If it does work it will not dispose of all our problems, notably political ones, but we have got to get through the present in order to be able to work on the future. If we do not confront the situation vigorously, there will be increasing possibility of some form of blow-up here in not too distant future. We all know who would have to pick up the pieces in such event. We had better batten the hatches, for the hurricane season is approaching.

**Bennett**

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**10. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 23, 1964, 7:10 p.m.

69. Joint State/AID. For Ambassador from Mann. Your 62.<sup>2</sup>

I very much appreciate having your thorough and well-balanced assessment of the current Dominican picture and future prospects there. My staff and I have given a great deal of thought to the complexities of the situation and to the proposal you have made. We are in general agreement that our interests will be served to the extent that we can reinforce the Dominican government's determination to put the country's financial house in order. We agree that a meaningful statement in support of the upcoming effort to accomplish this would be

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. I, 6/64-4/65. Secret; Priority; Limdis. Drafted by Crockett; cleared by William D. Rogers (AA/LA), Anthony Solomon (ARA), and Robert W. Adams (ARA); and approved by Mann.

<sup>2</sup> Document 9.

productive and that the statement should: (1) detail what we are doing now to be helpful and (2) outline in specifics the program being evolved for the near and mid-term future to complement the effort of the Dominican government as it is carried out.

A statement aimed at accomplishing this is being transmitted separately.<sup>3</sup> It has been designed to overcome problems we see in minor aspects of the proposal you have made. I want to discuss these problems in this message.

We feel that any statement made should originate with the Embassy. It could be released here simultaneously as an Embassy statement. Reid's desire to have the President associated with his effort is understandable but we are not prepared to recommend that the President commit himself. GODR has not yet demonstrated through performance that we would be justified in tying ourselves to a figure.

We cannot at this time justify approval of a \$25 million program loan to the DR. Even though disbursements under such a loan would be tied to sound performance as you suggest, it has been our experience that once an announcement of this kind is made, it is all but impossible to stick with the terms as time passes. Unexpected elements enter the picture and pressures mount for release of funds "committed" to cope with "unanticipated crisis situations". Additional major element of uncertainty is impact of stand-by implementation on future balance of payments deficit. Knowledge that funds are available for disbursement very often weakens the resolve of prospective recipients to implement the measures to which they have committed themselves. These and other reservations seem particularly pertinent in the Dominican context. It is therefore our feeling that it would be prudent to avoid associating a dollar figure with a statement of our conditional, future intentions. When the Dominicans have pressed us here for an overall dollar figure, we have responded that there are no specific limitations on future US assistance. We are prepared to look with sympathy and serious intent at any proposal which contributes to the attainment by the Dominican people of the goals of the Alliance for Progress and which will not be counterproductive to the Dominican austerity program. A similar response could be used by the Embassy when this question is raised by Reid and others, including the press.

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<sup>3</sup> Telegram 68 to Santo Domingo, a joint State/AID message, July 23, authorized the Embassy to announce at the conclusion of negotiations that the Governments of the United States and the Dominican Republic had concluded agreements for loans totaling \$10.25 million in support of the stabilization program. The Embassy should also announce that the two governments were reviewing various short- and long-term projects to further improve the economic and social development of the Dominican Republic. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, FN 1-1 DOM REP)

As our proposed statement reflects, we hope shortly to add \$4 million in AID funds to the Treasury's \$6.25 million for immediate use of the GODR in dealing with its balance of payments problem. Although no counterpart pesos for the AID program will be generated by the \$6.25 million from Treasury, the \$4 million in AID funds will generate pesos which can be so applied, while future projects are developed and processed.

We believe this method of approaching the overall problem has several distinct advantages. (1) We are substantially forthcoming now for impact purposes. (2) Our future intentions are stated in specific terms but without tying us to a fixed dollar figure. (3) We maintain maximum leverage for the future in dealing with an individual and a government not notably resolute or effective.

I believe this response to your recommendations represents the most workable and realistic course of action under the circumstances and hope that it meets with your approval. Please let me know.<sup>4</sup>

**Rusk**

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<sup>4</sup> The Embassy's response has not been found.

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## **11. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 21, 1964, 5:14 p.m.

125. Embtel 177.<sup>2</sup> Dept shares your view that disruptive oppositionist political activities by Balaguer and Bosch on U.S. soil are undesirable at this critical juncture. Prospects for future political stability and economic development in DR depend to large degree on successful implementation of stabilization program. Obstacles to carrying out program are presently formidable enough without adding stepped up harassment of GODR by Balaguer and Bosch from U.S.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 30-2 DOM REP. Confidential; Priority. Drafted by Shlaudeman and approved by Crockett.

<sup>2</sup> Dated August 17. (Ibid.)

View foregoing we propose, subject your concurrence, to approach Balaguer and Bosch directly to counsel restraint. (Crockett would see former, Shlaudeman latter.)<sup>3</sup> We would make following points:

(1) U.S. has given strong support to DR since Trujillo's death and cooperated closely with govts of both Balaguer and Bosch in interests Dom people. We made our opposition to Sept. coup crystal clear, and offered hospitality to leading members of deposed regime.

(2) We continue hope for earliest possible return to constitutional and representative government. Interim Reid Govt. knows this and when conditions are propitious we will exert our influence in every way possible to encourage such a return. However, Bosch and Balaguer as realistic men surely recognize that prerequisite conditions for meaningful elections or return to constitutional regime do not presently exist. As patriotic men they wish to see country once again enjoy a democratic order. First order of business in creating necessary climate is overcoming financial crisis. Balaguer and Bosch, along with U.S., therefore have real stake in success of stabilization program.

(3) Fall of Reid regime at this time could benefit no one except perhaps small clique of power-hungry trujillistas and reactionary military. Dom people would be the victims of this step backward. Neither Bosch nor Balaguer can hope for advantage from political overturn under these conditions. (In using this line we assume latter is sincere in professed refusal consider coming to power except through democratic methods.)

(4) U.S. has committed resources and prestige to stabilization program, not to further interests of any politician or political group, but because program is necessary to future well-being of Dom people. We are therefore particularly concerned by activities on U.S. soil which endanger program and which many undoubtedly believe we sanction, but which abuse our hospitality. In making this point we refer specifically to activities on U.S. soil. Publications and broadcasts within DR are internal matter. We are gratified to note that freedom of expression continues exist to large extent in DR and have assurances from GODR that it will not interfere with publication of opposition views which do not violate Dom libel laws or are not patently seditious. (FYI—Bonilla has given us such assurances. He has also stated that playing of taped broadcasts made abroad by Balaguer and Bosch will be permitted in DR if two men observe libel laws, refrain from open calls to sedition and cease using foreign media and radio stations for agitation. You may wish check this point with Reid.)

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 12. No record of a meeting between Shlaudeman and Bosch was found.

These are general points only. Approach will vary somewhat considering differing interests and personalities of two men and according to how conversations go but intent will be to make clear to each individual that speeches and broadcasts they have made in U.S. involve the U.S. in internal Dominican politics, which we cannot condone.

Foregoing method of dealing with problem through Bosch and Balaguer themselves appears most feasible in view complexities involved in attempting to approach stations involved and in view constitutional guaranty of freedom of speech.

Will appreciate reply ASAP.<sup>4</sup>

Rusk

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 14.

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## 12. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 21, 1964.

### SUBJECT

Dominican Political Situation

### PARTICIPANTS

Joaquín Balaguer, ex-President of the Dominican Republic  
Kennedy M. Crockett, Director, Office of Caribbean Affairs  
Harry W. Shlaudeman, Chief, Dominican Affairs

(*Note:* The substance of this conversation was reported in the Department's telegram #146 to Santo Domingo.<sup>2</sup> This memorandum amplifies that message and covers additional points of interest in the conversation.)

1. Following an exchange of pleasantries, Dr. Balaguer said that he particularly wanted to talk about what he regards as the grave general situation in the Dominican Republic. In his view, the Reid regime

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 1 DOM REP. Confidential. Drafted by Shlaudeman. Copies were sent to ARA/CAR, INR, and the Embassy in Santo Domingo.

<sup>2</sup> Dated September 1. (Ibid., POL 14 DOM REP)

completely lacks popular support. As a consequence, there is a continuing state of unrest in the country. The people are uncertain of the future and suspicious of Reid's intentions. On one point a real national consensus exists: the government must announce elections. Elections represent the only solution to the problem.

Mr. Crockett asked Dr. Balaguer if he were suggesting that elections should be held immediately. Dr. Balaguer said he realized this would be impossible but saw no reason why they should not be scheduled in three or four months. Dr. Balaguer then went over much the same ground as previously with regard to the absolute necessity for an elections' announcement. However, he ended this time by offering the opinion that perhaps eight months to a year would be a good time frame. Finally, in the face of no response from Mr. Crockett, and after several additional assertions that the announcement of a firm date is the most important thing, Balaguer settled on December, 1965 as possibly the most appropriate time for elections. The elected government would take office in February, 1966, thus giving the Reid regime some 18 months to work on the nation's problems.

2. On several occasions Balaguer sought to elicit an indication that the USG would be prepared to intervene in the problem of elections. He suggested that we would be in the best position to bring pressure on the Reid regime to announce elections. Mr. Crockett painstakingly explained our position, going over it twice in Spanish and once in English so that there could be no misunderstanding: (1) The United States hopes for a return to representative government as soon as feasible and the present Dominican government is fully aware of this position. (2) We cannot, however, become involved in the strictly internal problem of how this return is to be accomplished. The Dominicans themselves must work out the details. (3) Once a reasonable plan has been evolved with the support of the majority of responsible elements in the Dominican Republic we are certain that public opinion here and throughout the hemisphere will strongly approve.

Balaguer indicated that he understood this position. He would, under the circumstances, not wait for the US but would himself take the initiative. It was at this point that he brought up the plan (described in Deptel 146) to call a meeting in the United States.

3. With regard to Bosch, Balaguer used the word "obstinate" (terco) on two occasions. He also referred to Bosch as a "romantic." In his view, there is no possibility that Bosch would agree to a formula for elections, even if all the other parties were to fall in line. Bosch inflexibility holds the position that only a return to constitutionality in the form of reinstating the 1963 Congress can be accepted. In all honesty, Balaguer remarked, the position does coincide with Bosch's own personal political interests inasmuch as he could scarcely par-

ticipate in elections. Balaguer added, however, that representative leaders of the PRD can be prevailed upon to join in an agreement on elections.

4. Asked what other parties he would expect to be represented in the proposed meeting of political leaders, Balaguer mentioned Luis Amiama's PLE, Read Vittini's PDC, Ramón Castillo's PPDC and other undesignated "legitimate" parties. He dismissed Juan Isidro Jimenes Grullón [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] and asserted that there would be no reason for UCN participation inasmuch as whoever came on Reid's behalf would also automatically represent that party. In his opinion, the government and the UCN are one and the same. Balaguer remarked that all the parties he had mentioned (including the UCN but apparently not the PRD) are minuscule and of no real importance as political entities. He had a kind word for Read Vittini as a young man of some substance. Castillo, however, is another [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*].

5. As for his own plans, Balaguer said that he would return and participate in the campaign once there is agreement on an electoral formula. He spoke, in the manner usually employed on these occasions, of his duty to his supporters. Subsequently, however, he commented that as a political figure he must think primarily of his own political interests. Thus, his public pronouncements should not always be taken at face value, bearing in mind the necessity for preserving a political position.

6. Balaguer made only one passing reference to the Dominican military during the conversation, remarking that nobody can be sure just what is now the real position of the armed forces.

*Comment*

Neither Balaguer's manner nor what he had to say gave cause for surprise. He appeared anxious to please and to show himself as a reasonable man. It remains to be seen how far this will go. Past history indicates that Balaguer can really only be relied upon to pursue his own interests.

13. **Telegram From the Joint Army/Navy/Air Force Attachés to the Chief of Naval Operations (McDonald)<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, August 26, 1964, 1455Z.

Joint msg C-40. Appraisal Current Political/Military Situation.

1. In view Emb [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reporting of current widespread rumors of attempt overthrow of government by army San Cristobal group, believe a run-down of military attitudes may be helpful.

A. Rumors that San Cristobal group interprets current strike as excuse overthrow triumvirate and install military junta being generally discussed in all military circles as well as by people on the street. Carbuccia, Air Force Chief, states group nothing more than debating society and should mind its own business; Wessin of training center states he would like San Cristobal group make move as excuse to eliminate them once and for all; Rivera of Navy states he will move two destroyers into position to bombard army camp if they get out of hand; Peguero, Police Chief, disdains the probability coup effort. Point is, rumors, whether or not based on fact, have caused split in armed forces unity—a very effective Communist or oppositionist maneuver.

B. Attachés maintain belief that rumors are just that, and there is no group within army, or military, planning or plotting overthrow of government. San Cristobal group openly discussing requirement for Reid announce schedule of elections on ground that such action would ease political pressure now on triumvirate. Group strongly Balaguerista and are convinced when elections held Balaguer can win. Unquestionably other factions within armed forces, other than San Cristobal group, are restless and discontented, principally amongst junior officers of all services. Discontent stems from unfair promotion policies, disgust with graft and incompetence of senior officers, and pressures exerted by politicians. Attachés do not, however, find any cohesion among factions, nor any single group, including San Cristobal group, having sufficient strength undertake golpe on its own.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. I, 6/64-4/65. Confidential. Also sent to CSAF, DA, USAFLDACTYGP FTBELVOIR, and DIA and repeated to the Department of State, CINCLANTFLT, CG FMFLANT, COMUSAFSO, OSD/ISA WASHDC, COMCARIBSEAFRON, USCINCSO, CG ANTCOMD USARSOUTH, and COMUSMILGP DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Printed from the copy sent by the JCS to the White House. A handwritten notation by Gordon Chase on the first page of the telegram reads: "Mr. Bundy, State expert on Dominican Republic agrees with this assessment. He feels that odds are 2 or 3 to 1 against coup during next few months. GC."

C. Current strike, rumors, and public discontent unquestionably making military restless. For moment attachés see no sign change of military attitude towards Reid and believe they will follow him through current crisis. San Cristobal group views towards elections, however, may catch on. With the remainder of the military and coupled with the already existing pressures for elections from the politicians, become a serious issue that Reid will have to face and resolve.

2. Fld coord: Amb. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

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#### 14. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, August 29, 1964, 11 a.m.

221. For Crockett, ARA. Deptel 125.<sup>2</sup>

1. I welcome idea of approach to Balaguer and Bosch but believe we would be on sounder ground in talking with them if we avoided taking as open a position on elections as suggested in para 2 reftel. Other points re importance stabilization program and disinterested nature our help could well be made.

2. For one thing I believe it is asking too much to expect them, especially Balaguer, to agree that conditions for elections or "return to constitutionality" do not exist. Both men, along with certain other politicians, have been insisting that political "solution" is sine qua non for any successful economic stabilization program, that financial crisis is essentially fault of present regime, and that changing government is first order of business. Although he seems unlikely to return under present conditions, Bosch was after all the elected President and is not likely accept argument of this type which he would regard as action our part to protect regime which overthrew him. To the extent that underprivileged Dominicans have active political interests now, he may still be the most popular figure.

3. As for Balaguer, he probably believes conditions are ripening for him. He may be right. Embassy continues believe him a divisive force here due past association with Trujillo and his record of submissiveness to military and of economic demagoguery (his policies contributed

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. I, 6/64-4/65. Secret; Limdis.

<sup>2</sup> Document 11.

greatly to present fiscal problems); but we must bear in mind that, like him or not, we may have him to deal with again one day. His appeal is considerably broader than merely to Trujillistas, and extends into agricultural, business, labor, and military elements. Presumed intent of reactionary military group, if it were able carry out coup so much discussed here during recent days, would be to take over govt and then piously proclaim early elections in confidence Balaguer would win. Against this background it does not seem likely to me Balaguer would agree with alacrity to suggestion on our part that he postpone indefinitely what he must regard as good prospects.

4. Given attachment of Dom Rep, along with other countries of this Hemisphere to ideal of elections and constitutional govt, US should in my opinion avoid bad posture of being on public record as opposed to elections. Conversations in that vein with country's two leading public figures, each with his own interests to further, would be public knowledge in short order. On other side of coin I find it equally disadvantageous to make implied commitment to either of these two that at some point we will help them return to country to participate in elections. Our present formula that US of course favors return to constitutional govt in Dom Rep but consider Dominicans themselves must make decision re type and timing of elections, I believe, serves our interests about as well as any we might devise. It preserves our flexibility and does not tie us to any one individual or solution. It is in the nature of the environment of a country like this one that we cannot escape being charged by the outs as favoring the ins, going on record re postponing elections would confirm what is now only an allegation.

5. Nor do I believe we will meet with any great success in ensuring publication and broadcast rights within Dom Rep for the two B's, as suggested in para 4 reftel. I frankly do not think Bonilla's assurances in this regard are worth much—nor would any I might get from Reid be any more enforceable. Latter is thin-skinned and often tends regard legitimate difference of opinion with his proposals as base political machinations against him personally. He would see sedition much more quickly than we. In short, we could not deliver to Balaguer and Bosch with respect handling given within this country to their expressions of opinion, and I recommend we not get involved beyond stating our continued support of freedom of expression here.

6. A further point on which we should be careful in my opinion is the extent of our commitment to Reid. We should avoid overcommitting US to him. We should have no illusion that Reid is now a popular political figure. He is not. A principal reason for his survival this past week was not so much positive support for him and his policies as fear on the part of responsible elements over what would take his place. While he has thus far shown considerable responsibility as re-

gards stabilization program, his administration of govt remains erratic and marked by actions which often alienate very elements who should and would like to support him. As reported before, there is instability in his make-up and he is strong-willed. Circumstances could lead him to take authoritarian turn if he considered he had carte blanche from us and full control over local military, many of whom think in such terms anyway (it is my opinion that, while he has thus far done adept job in balancing military, diverse ambitions this group make it an uncertain element and Reid is perhaps inclined to overestimate his mastery of them). There could well be actions and decision with which we would not want to be identified. We are giving and should continue to give Reid support to extent he deserves it, but I believe we shall get better results through keeping him on fairly short rein and not tying ourselves to him irrevocably.

7. Agitation for some action on political problem is rising again. While apathy and distrust of politicians may rule countryside, political, press, and other elements including some in military are beginning to heat up electoral issue. We can expect more of it as September 25 anniversary of coup approaches. We are already being reminded by some that US recognition of triumvirate was based on promise of election schedule to begin this fall. Next crisis here may well revolve around the electoral issue. Agitation is not so much for actual elections as for the setting of a date for them. We may find it in our interest before much longer to add our voice to those who are urging that at least a date be set.

8. For all these reasons I believe approach to Balaguer and Bosch, which I heartily support, should be based on very legitimate grounds of their abuse of US hospitality through their indulging in political activity from US territory. It has long been accepted among Latin Americans that political exiles do not engage in home politics from their place of exile. Current agitation in Brazil over Goulart's activities in Uruguay is a case in point; and Mexico would not sit idly by if anti-govt broadcasts were beamed from Laredo or El Paso. However, rather than have approaches made by political level of Dept—with all that local rumor mill here would make of them—it would seem preferable to have matter raised by Justice Dept officials or Dept security officers and treated as straight violation of US hospitality. If latter not considered feasible, then I would still favor restricted approach along above lines by political officers in order put some restraint on Balaguer and Bosch.

9. It seems to me we have strong case here in making clear we cannot condone activities from US soil which involve us in internal Dominican politics. To the extent that we take position with them as regards elections, then it appears to me we involve ourselves in precisely what we wish to avoid.

**Bennett**

## 15. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 8, 1964.

### SUBJECT

Dominican Political Situation

### PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Joaquin Balaguer, Ex-President of the Dominican Republic  
Kennedy M. Crockett, Director, Office of Caribbean Affairs  
Harry W. Shlaudeman, Chief, Dominican Affairs

Dr. Balaguer called on Mr. Crockett at his own initiative. He said he had come simply to “exchange views” on the current situation in the Dominican Republic.

Balaguer was of the opinion that things have been going from bad to worse. Although the Triumvirate did announce elections, nothing is being done to create a climate in which elections can be held. The “majority parties” (PRD and PR) are prevented from using the radio or staging public manifestations. On the other hand, “extremist” groups such as the Social Christians and the 14th of June do have access to the radio and continue to agitate. Antonio Imbert has been going about the country handing out arms for a “campaign of terror” against Balaguer’s supporters. A new black list of those who are prohibited from entering the country (including Bosch and Balaguer) has been published. Some of the most dubious elements on the list are actually in the country at the moment—a strange state of affairs. There has been a wave of police brutality. Two persons apparently murdered by the police were recently left out in a public park.

Discrimination against the PR and the PRD has led Balaguer to conclude that the political truce proposed by the Triumvirate is to be completely one sided. While the leftists, the “pocket parties” such as Vanguardia, and the UCN continue doing business as usual, the responsible opposition is to be repressed. In essence, Balaguer thought that these developments indicated an intention by Reid and his entourage to maintain themselves in power indefinitely.

Mr. Shlaudeman remarked that we had not previously heard that the 14th of June enjoyed access to the radio. Dr. Balaguer explained that he had meant indirect access through other groups which propagate the 14th’s line. He mentioned the Social Christians in this regard.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 1 DOM REP. Confidential. Drafted by Shlaudeman.

With respect to Imbert, Mr. Crockett said we had the impression he was operating on his own account, not the government's, and that he was giving trouble to everyone concerned. Mr. Crockett also questioned the reports that Imbert was handing out quantities of arms. Balaguer insisted that Imbert and his cohorts had collected large stocks of arms during the time of the Council of State and quoted a communiqué issued by the 14th of June to the effect that Imbert had offered weapons to the "revolutionary youth."

Mr. Crockett reiterated our hope for a return to representative government through elections and our intention to leave the working out of the details to the Dominicans themselves. He commented that progress made now in solving the country's economic and financial problems would, to a large extent, determine whether a proper climate will exist next summer for an electoral campaign. Balaguer agreed.

Balaguer asked if Francisco "Pancho" Aguirre had any connection with the United States Government. Mr. Crockett assured him that no such connection existed.

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**16. Memorandum From Robert M. Sayre of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Dungan)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 15, 1964.

SUBJECT

Dominican Republic

I have been following the Dominican situation closely, but in view of your memorandum of October 10 to Desmond FitzGerald,<sup>2</sup> I thought I ought to do some more specific checking.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. II, 1/64-4/65. Secret. A copy and the attachment were sent to Bundy.

<sup>2</sup> In this attached October 10 memorandum to Desmond FitzGerald of the CIA, Dungan recalled his earlier request for the latest information on "Communist infiltration to the D.R." Dungan wrote that he now "understood that the Agency had verified the presence of a significant number of Communist activists who were not in the D.R. several months ago . . . [and that he] would be very interested to know what, if anything, the U.S., through your Agency or otherwise, was doing to: (1) monitor this activity, (2) control it, and (3) perhaps eliminate it." Dungan concluded: "As you know, this is part of my deeper concern with what I believe is a drift in U.S. policy in the D.R. I do hope that you and your colleagues will continue to push for clarification of U.S. policy and short term objectives in the D.R."

I find a little more optimism on the Dominican situation than there has been for some time. This apparently stems from two factors:

a. Donny Reid recently had a confrontation with the Trujillista element in the armed forces (San Cristobal group) and bested them. He thereby strengthened himself within the government and with the Dominican people. Since the San Cristobal group was supporting Balaguer, this confrontation also hurt Balaguer's position. Balaguer feels it, and is toying with the idea of returning to the DR. He has also talked about going via Haiti. His reasoning on Haiti is hard to see, but it would create tension between the DR and Haiti and probably blow-up any chance of an improvement in relations, which the OAS is trying to work out. The end result would probably be to strengthen Reid even more.

b. Reid is carrying out an economic stabilization program with vigor. AID, State and the IMF were all pessimistic about the chances of pulling this one off. IMF doubted the wisdom of even starting, and leaned toward devaluation instead. There is some hope now that the program may work.

I do not find anyone really confident about the Dominican situation. There are only a few Dominicans qualified to help run the government. When you are that thin, it does not take much to upset everything.

AID is working on a program which will probably cost \$15 million in 1965. Its main thrust is in agriculture—the idea is to put more money in the farmer's pocket; cut imports of foodstuffs and save foreign exchange; and possibly improve exports and earn some foreign exchange.

The question of Communist strength is a mixed up one, and not as urgent as either of the two factors above. When the Government broke up the guerrilla movement and killed a number of its leaders, it dealt a severe blow to Communist strength. It also deported a number of activists—in fact got rid of two more last week. At the same time, some are coming back. The only explanation at the moment seems to be that they are from "good" families in the Dominican Republic and the Government has not resisted the pressure from these families. Nevertheless, Ambassador Bennett raised the issue with the Dominican Government last week. His [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] has put together a list of those that have filtered back, and both the Ambassador and State plan to urge the Government to take necessary precautions.

**Robert M. Sayre<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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**17. Airgram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

A-250

Santo Domingo, December 5, 1964.

## SUBJECT

The Reid Government, January–November 1964: A Review

## FOREWORD

The following review of events in the Dominican Republic under the governing Triumvirate headed by Donald J. Reid Cabral covers the period of the past eleven months and represents a joint effort on the part of the Political, Economic, Military, AID, and USIS elements of the Mission.

While Reid has clearly been the dominant member of the Triumvirate since his accession to it in the last days of 1963, the group was marked by dissensions and rivalries until the resignation of Manuel Tavares Espaillat at the end of June.<sup>2</sup> From January through June the Government managed to hold things together in a highly fragile situation, but very little positive was accomplished. It is only during the past five months that Reid can be said to have had a free hand in policy. While Ramón Caceres Troncoso, the other member of the now truncated Triumvirate, has special competence in the field of fiscal policy and is generally helpful as a balance wheel, it is clearly Donald Reid's administration.

It is undeniable that there has been forward motion in the country since June on urgent national problems. The formidable commercial arrears problem has been liquidated, and right on schedule. Commitments to the International Monetary Fund have been effectively met. An austerity program involving new tax measures and other belt-tightening activities has been put into effect to correct the fundamental imbalance in the country's balance of payments situation. It is far from being a perfect program, but in the Dominican context it has required political courage and skill to do what has been done; and the operation goes forward. There have been gingerly but steady steps to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 1 DOM REP. Confidential. The foreword was drafted by Bennett; the other sections were drafted by A.E. Breisky with contributions by J. Nepple (AID), J. Bushnell (ECON), Lieutenant Colonel L.F. Long (Attaché), J.F. Quilty (MAAG), and M. McLean (USIS). Cleared and approved by Bennett. The Department of State received the airgram on December 9.

<sup>2</sup> Manuel Tavares resigned on June 27 because of strong differences with his fellow Triumvirs over the political direction of the country.

bring the undisciplined military and police establishments under better control and to reduce the graft and corruption so characteristic of influential elements of those forces. Along with these necessary but essentially negative measures there has been positive and increasing activity on the part of the Government in the field of economic development, particularly in the fields of agriculture and education. In the private field considerable initiative is being shown, notwithstanding widespread uncertainty over the future and a distressingly high level of unemployment.

Against the background of Dominican life, with so little sense of community obligation on the part of the more privileged group, with general lack of technical and organizational skills and with petty venality underlying the whole structure of society, any motion at all requires strong determination and considerable talent for maneuvering on the part of the head of government. Throughout its history the Dominican Republic has alternated between dictatorship and chaos. Ingrained habits persist today, with a group of political leaders who are with discouragingly few exceptions self-seeking in the extreme and who show little or no interest in offering a positive program to the country, but rather prefer the more exciting pastime of trying to organize revolutions or persuade the military to pull off yet another coup d'état. The Dominicans' tendency to dramatize their problems being what it is, it is often said that Reid almost alone among current Dominican political figures has learned anything from the political torment of the Trujillo period and these first three years of its aftermath.<sup>3</sup> Certainly today, beset by trujillista elements and others on the right on one side, and by Bosch followers and those of the more extreme left on the other, Reid emerges as the moderate in the local scene.

There is general acceptance of Reid's personal honesty, however much criticism there is of corruption at other levels of the Government—a corruption unfortunately all too prevalent in the private sector as well. Of secure economic and social position himself, Reid is deeply concerned over the problems of his country and is highly motivated to do something about them. He considers himself something of a latter-day Franklin D. Roosevelt in that he wants to improve the lot of underprivileged Dominicans against the disinterest and often the opposition of his own class. It must be said in that connection that, although democratic in his social outlook, he often tends toward paternalism in his approach to the poor and their problems.

Reid is a legitimate child of his own society and bears the psychological scars of the Trujillo experience as do so many of his coun-

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<sup>3</sup> The following handwritten notation appears in the left margin next to this sentence: "why does one follow the other?"

trymen. In that connection, few if any have a cleaner record than he as regards the Trujillo years.<sup>4</sup> As is characteristic of Dominicans, he is erratic and impulsive; when things are going well his self-confidence sometimes indulges itself in a form of cockiness which irritates those whom it would be in his interest to cultivate. He is strong-willed and can be high-handed; at times he insists on his own way when compromise would improve the general atmosphere and thus further his own long-range objectives.

A man of formidable nervous energy, he drives himself day and night. Better personal organization would make his schedule slightly less strenuous and the course of governing more orderly. While he has gradually assembled around him in the Government a group of able and even dedicated young men, his popular base remains much too narrow. Although young and attractive himself, and one who shared personally the Trujillo oppression, he has not as yet built a bridge to youth in this young-man's country.<sup>5</sup> While an individual of wide-ranging interests, he seems to find little appeal in intellectuals; and conversely he has not much appeal for them. A poor public speaker, he is more effective in small groups than at large public gatherings.

Reid can be criticized for poor personal organization, for concentrating too many details in his own hands, for acting in a spirit of improvisation rather than careful planning in meeting the needs of the country—and this is a country with such a variety of needs that everything needs to be done at the same time—and for being over-cautious in cleansing the military structure. He is indeed criticized for all these things, and for other things as well.

Reid's faults and imperfections must, however, be judged against his own society and relative to the performance of others who have sat or aspire to sit in the same seat of responsibility. A judgment on this basis results clearly in his favor. However halting his steps with respect to some of the more unsavory aspects of Dominican life, he is the first post-Trujillo governor to take on, for instance, the all-important but highly delicate task of cutting back to size as primitive a military establishment as exists in this Hemisphere. If he seems to make haste slowly, it is, after all, his own slender neck he is risking in pitting his wit against the brute force of the Trujillo-trained men in uniform.<sup>6</sup> And he is doing it. In the financial field he has shown a readiness to face

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<sup>4</sup> The following handwritten notation appears in the left margin next to this sentence: "questionable."

<sup>5</sup> The following handwritten notation appears in the left margin next to this sentence: "true."

<sup>6</sup> The following handwritten notation appears in the left margin next to this sentence: "good point."

up to the unpleasant and unpopular task of more taxes and more restrictions in order to restore fiscal balance to the country. This is a primary problem but it was ignored by the bulk of his predecessors and, in fact, heavily contributed to by some such as Balaguer. His economic development program may suffer from lack of planning and coordination, but it is at least underway, and it is well oriented toward Alliance for Progress objectives. In sum, Reid, with faults and slippages which are partly his own and partly inherent in the Dominican scene, is now governing the country more effectively than it has been governed since Trujillo whipped it into order and lashed it into productiveness. Given Dominican history and realities, Reid is governing with a minimum of violations to civil liberties. There is full freedom of the press.

Reid's courage is not in doubt and he has great determination. He is pro-American and pro-Western by strong conviction. He has shown the toughness of mind and the flexibility which are essential to govern in this country which so dislikes to be governed. There has been considerable growth in him in recent months. The governing group he has put together and their vigorous interest in attending to the country's needs in agriculture, education and health are reminiscent of Figueres and his associates in Costa Rica<sup>7</sup> (the writer was Costa Rican desk officer in 1948 and closely associated with the Figueres revolution). Hopefully, despite formidable economic problems ahead and an always dangerous political instability, the corner has been turned from the confusions and dangers of the immediate post-Trujillo period and the shock of the failure of the Bosch experiment.

The Embassy study makes the point that Reid's major handicap is his political illegitimacy. Had he won an election, he would probably be considered one of the more hopeful leaders in the Caribbean area today. How to make himself constitutional—how to obtain that moral base which looms so importantly in a Latin country, even one like the Dominican Republic which patently gives constitutionality more lip service than loyalty—that is the question. From his present course it seems clear that Reid is attempting to play over the heads of the politicians and establish direct rapport with the people, especially the rural population, as a leader who gets things done for the little man.

While Reid can hardly be said to have wide political popularity, recent events do tend to indicate a considerable acceptance of his administration, in part from general apathy and disillusionment with politics and in part due to the preoccupation of many that any change now would result in something worse. It is too early as yet to gauge the effect of Reid's trips around the country to win popular support,

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<sup>7</sup> The following handwritten notation appears in the left margin next to this sentence: "interesting."

but the professional politicians are howling, and they can be counted on to try means both fair and foul to block him. The coming months should be interesting.

[Omitted here are Section I, an overview of the period, and Section II, evaluating in greater detail economic, foreign, and military assistance, and public affairs.]

e) *Political:*

The arrival of a new American Ambassador in the D.R. in late March after a six-month vacancy<sup>8</sup> in the post came at a time when the Dominican political outlook was discouraging. The post-coup regime had produced no real progress and, indeed, even among those who had lavishly praised the coup doubts were sprouting. The Triumvirate itself was divided and ineffective. The country seemed politically apathetic, but violence was close to the surface and there was a noticeable political polarization in process. The world price of sugar was falling, and the economic profligacy of previous months and the errors of previous administrations were coming home to roost. Endemic ills such as the lack of national purpose and civic consciousness, overdependence on the U.S., and the lack of durable institutions all contributed to a bad situation. On top of this, active subversive efforts were being made by several political groupings and the tide of balaguerismo was rising. At the peak of this pyramid of sand sat Donald Reid, a politically ambitious and at times erratic, but basically well-intentioned and determined man. His Government was de facto, had no broad base of popular support, was troubled with graft, and had had to resort to restrictions on public liberties.

A decision was required as to what the U.S. posture should be in this situation. That decision favored rebuilding rapidly the U.S. presence in the country, with a heavy emphasis on economic assistance which would get the country over its short-run hurdles while getting underway on long-range development.

By June Reid was clearly in the driver's seat, with adequate military support to give him some freedom of action. He "kept the lid on" politically—although not always in ways to our liking—and attacked economic and administrative problems vigorously. By the fall the problems were still formidable, but the regime for the first time was showing real signs of moving forward, and without simply turning to the United States for solutions to all problems. Although the GODR's own pace would necessarily regulate the pace and scope of our assistance,

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<sup>8</sup> Full diplomatic relations between the United States and the Dominican Republic were suspended when President Juan Bosch was overthrown on September 25, 1963. Ambassador Martin left Santo Domingo on September 28, 1963; he was replaced by W. Tapley Bennett, Jr., who arrived at post on March 23, 1964.

there was continued reason to help this Government put its house in order and face the triple political, economic, and military threat facing it. A refreshing contrast to the bad leadership endemic in recent Dominican Government was being provided in several instances, most notably in the very important agricultural sector. The military and political problems, not the least of which were Mr. Joaquín Balaguer and perhaps to a lesser extent Mr. Juan Bosch, would bring further and probably frequent crises, and the sugar problem seemed all but insolvable in the short run. At least, however, the country was moving ahead again, and in truth the alternatives to this Government did not seem good.

This regime has been subjected to a war of words perhaps even more intense than that experienced by its immediate predecessors, with public commentary ranging from charges that it is a dictatorship reminiscent of Trujillo to earnest claims that this is an essentially democratic, if necessarily firm, regime which for the first time in years is sincerely moving to get this country on its feet. This wide and vocal disparity has been reflected in the U.S. press as well. A balance sheet would include at least the following:

*Opposition Charges*

1) *Restriction of Public Liberties:*

- a) Constitutional guarantees pertaining to arrest and arraignment remain suspended (a measure taken prior to Reid's assumption of office).
- b) Outdoor political rallies prohibited.
- c) Political radio programs repeatedly put off the air (for often vicious attacks on regime and invitations to subversion); permission to broadcast speeches by Bosch and Balaguer denied.
- d) Sporadic police and military brutality (hardly a new story); occasional killings by armed off-duty police and military.
- e) Refusal of trials to jailed guerrillas and other evidences of domination of the judiciary by the executive.
- f) Use of exiling as political weapon against extreme left and occasionally (largely prior to January 1964) against non-extremist opposition.

2) *Widespread corruption* at all levels below the Triumvirate itself, generally believed to have increased after the coup (this trend seems now to have peaked).

- a) Military self-enrichment, especially through contrabanding according to popular opinion, has been displayed without shame, e.g., in luxurious new houses being built with police/military labor.
- b) Padding of Government expense accounts, civilian contrabanding, generalization of demands for kick-backs.

3) *Misuse of Control of Bureaucracy:*

- a) Special favors for certain power interests, arranged with apparent approval at highest levels of regime. Awarding of contracts without required competitive bidding.
- b) Padding of diplomatic establishment.

c) Sidestepping of demands for social reform, with limited exception of agrarian reform. Dealing with the masses in patronizing manner long typical of local oligarchy.

d) Economic stabilization program tailored so as not to incur active opposition of big business interests, with smaller businessmen suffering proportionally greater hardships.

e) Country being mortgaged with excessive foreign borrowing.

f) Excessive nepotism in high office.

g) Little genuine austerity to date in Government—many cuts being only paper cuts of bloated 1964 budget.

4) Cronyism, arbitrary Government by decree, and excessive politicking by Triumvirate.

a) Country being run by small inner circle, including such as foreigner "Pancho" Aguirre, who is generally believed to be getting \$150,000 yearly payment.

b) Refusal to name third Triumvir in order to eliminate any possible opposition to Reid at top level. Personal ambition on part of Donald Reid violates purpose of interim regime. Limited faith in regime's political intentions.

c) Regime often seems more interested in impressing (the U.S. as well as Dominicans) than in real progress. Witness Reid's frequent trips around the country and lengthy list of promises, hosting of international conferences for publicity purposes, construction of an unnecessary luxury air terminal.

d) The regime demonstrates no political philosophy beyond its desire to stay in power.

5) Perhaps most basic to all the above, the regime is politically illegitimate. It is violating the trust placed in it by temporizing on its obligation to return the country to representative Government.

### *Defense*

1) The coup against Bosch was necessary to stop the Communists, and to change a hopelessly ineffective regime with much corruption.

2) The regime has had to act in the face of overwhelming odds.

a) The collapse of sugar prices.

b) Political subversion and even Communist guerrilla warfare.

c) The economic and political sins of Trujillo and Balaguer are bearing their bitter fruits today.

3) There is freedom of speech and press in the D.R. and the police are behaving better all the time. Certain limitations on individual liberty are required temporarily in order to create the stability needed if pressing problems are to be faced up to responsibly. The country is not ready for elections.

4) Bosch regime talked, but this regime is acting.

a) Community development is being put into practice all over the country;

- b) More farmers are getting land under the agrarian reform program;
- c) The military are building a civic action program;
- d) More and better construction, including workers' housing, is in process now than ever before;
- e) The Agriculture Department is at work in a serious way for the first time in years to build productivity, conserve the nation's forests, and so on;
- f) Farm-to-market roads are being built;
- g) Education is being improved with new schools, educational TV, and a new educational credit institute;
- h) An industrial incentive law has been passed since the coup. Private investment is slowly increasing;
- i) The economic stabilization program is being carried out with determination.

5) The top leadership of the country is dedicated and honest, and has demonstrated considerable courage under fire. Its efforts to reform the military, however halting, exceed those of its predecessors.

6) Contrary to predictions after the coup, the Communists have not gained in strength and have been ever less able to mount anti-regime activity. Some restriction of liberties is necessary to do this in the D.R. The drift to the left, if happening, is not of alarming proportions.

7) This Government is perhaps the most pro-U.S., pro-Western Government this country has seen for a long time. Witness its support for U.S. positions in international forums.

8) In the words of the Government's own "Information Bulletin" (August–October, 1964 issue): "Undoubtedly the Triumvirate is an unpopular Government. The majority of the Dominican people, without stopping to think of the reasons behind . . . measures, consider the Triumvirate a Government which has done absolutely nothing to gain popular support and sympathy. And this is the great truth. The Triumvirate acts in favor of the people, even if against the will of that people . . . There lies the difference between the present Government and others which preceded it."<sup>9</sup>

Truth and self-serving statements can be found in both lists. Many of the situations complained of are inherent in Dominican life and would be there under whatever Government. Many unpleasant realities in this country derive naturally from more than 30 years of a harsh dictatorship, and will be corrected only with time.

Moreover, the range of choice for the U.S. has been limited. The alternatives to working with this regime have at no time since September 1963 been inviting. We have moved ahead with support, and

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<sup>9</sup> The following handwritten notation appears on the left margin next to this paragraph: "incredible."

have tailored that support to the willingness of the regime itself to apply itself to the formidable tasks at hand. This approach has produced some forward motion and would seem to offer the best hope for the immediate future.

### III. Prognosis

At the time this report was being written serious labor troubles, subversive political efforts, and coup rumors were again (one tends to lose track of the number of such sequences in the past few years) stirring up the country. Political peace here is a very relative thing; there is no way to avoid living from day to day.

The present regime, although it has made progress in important areas and deserves acknowledgment for doing so in the face of formidable odds, suffers from important faults. The most basic of these is its political illegitimacy. It operates from a much too narrow power base and depends, however necessarily in the realities of the Dominican experience, far too greatly on the military. It suffers from cronyism. And so on. It can be expected that its life will continue to be troubled. Although it is operating with reasonable effectiveness in the light of local circumstances, and seems stronger now than in the past, its strength could change in a matter of hours with the wavering of a few key persons (especially in the military).

We cannot be certain that, should Reid survive the coming months politically, he will in fact lead the country to the elections now scheduled for September 1965. Reid himself may well not be entirely sure in his own mind what he plans for that—by Dominican political standards—far-off time.

Reid is, however, a reality—the reality with which we have to work or sacrifice to a change over which we would certainly not have full control and which well might (e.g., Balaguer) prove far less in the interests of either the Dominicans or ourselves.

Hopefully by moving cautiously ahead with Reid, making our actions at each step of the way dependent on continued indications of his own willingness to move the country toward sound economic development and a feasible return to representative government, our efforts will bear fruit. Perhaps there is greater reason to be optimistic over the basic situation now than at some times in the past, for Dominicans themselves are at last showing some signs of understanding that they must gird themselves for a long pull. They are perhaps beginning to realize that the fruits of progress and democracy are not there for effortlessly plucking off the tree of liberty which for so many years was watered with their blood but kept beyond their reach.

**W. Tapley Bennett, Jr.**

18. **Letter From the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic (Bennett) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann)**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, February 2, 1965.

Dear Tom:

I hope Washington does not underestimate the military changes which occurred here last week.<sup>2</sup> It is not exaggerating to say that Reid Cabral made the shifts at the risk of his very life—in several cases he was dealing with gunmen of the Trujillo era. I myself consider last week's events the most significant step here in cleansing the structure and putting Dominican society on a more rational basis since the departure of the Trujillo family in late 1961.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the politicians and the newspapers which are against Reid have been loath to give him credit. Many of the same people who ten days ago were accusing Reid of being under the domination of the military and in league with the corruption so prevalent in the Police leadership and certain quarters of the Armed Forces now view with pious alarm their sudden finding that the military is now dominated by Reid. They were clamoring for civilian authority to assert itself, but now, seeing that the move has redounded to Reid's personal prestige, they see incipient dictatorship.

The fact is that the list of names of those retired, reassigned, or shelved reads like an Ian Fleming rogue's gallery, and those involved would have long since figured in a police lineup in a more well-ordered country. There are quite naturally smoldering resentments among some of these saurian elements and the situation, as the cables to and fro indicate, is still not without some danger. However, as of now the changes, which were of such a scope as to affect all four services and the police, seem to be being absorbed. Our military people are

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA Files: Lot 70 D 295, Dominican Republic, 1965–1967. Confidential. The following handwritten notation appears on the first page of the memorandum: "Kennedy Crockett has copy—expects to come up with program to discuss with T[homas]CM[ann] on Wednesday, February 10." No record of this meeting has been found.

<sup>2</sup> On January 27 Reid removed a number of key military officers, including Air Force Chief of Staff Miguel Atila Luna Perez, Navy Chief Julio Rib Santamaria, Army Chief Salvador Augusto Montas Guerrero, and Police Chief Belisario Peguero Guerrero. Reid himself took over the Minister of Defense. In telegram 766 from Santo Domingo, January 29, Bennett reported that these military changes "constituted major step forward in continuing struggle to eliminate or neutralize Trujillo-minded elements in Armed Forces, reduce military contraband and graft, and stabilize military base of support for government which will enable it to get better on with its business, particularly crucial economic program." (Ibid., Central Files 1964–66, POL 15 DOM REP)

for instance very much heartened over reforms already being instituted by the new Chief of the Air Force. They are right in line with what we have been urging for some time. The Minister of Finance has told us that they have already been able to find economies in the military budget which will save \$100,000 a month, and that their goal is to get this up to \$300,000 a month. That is significant saving in these latitudes, and we shall do our best to see that they are carried through. At the same time, I am counseling that they not move so fast as to provoke a counter-reaction that could not be controlled.

In connection with local events, you will recall our conversation in Washington about Juan Bosch.<sup>3</sup> It seems to me that the time has clearly come to move on him. In line with Kennedy Crockett's request, we are sending forward in this same pouch some examples of Bosch public speeches in Puerto Rico and his more flamboyant statements which are regularly published here. I have no doubt whatever that he is grossly abusing his status as a political asylee on our shores. The pace and tone of his activities has stepped up markedly in recent weeks, and his latest activities (reported in our telegram 781)<sup>4</sup> of attempting to rouse the Dominican military against Reid seems to me to go far beyond the limits of acceptable activity. After all, this is a Government with which we have normal, even close, relations and whose Chief of State has on numerous occasions complained of the Bosch activities.

As I wrote to Kennedy Crockett not long ago,<sup>3</sup> Bosch followers are continually going back and forth from here to see him—only an hour's flight each way—and he is constantly sending instructions and exhortations, both public and private, to his followers here. One of his principal lieutenants told our political section recently that the PRD was resolved on violence and disorder for the spring months. We know that Bosch sent word to the PRD in December to go all out in the strike attempted at that time. Of late he has become more and more bold in his activities, and this week two PRD-sympathizing radio stations joined in the effort to rouse up the military, on direct orders from Bosch I am told.

At the very least, I do not see why he should be allowed to make public speeches in Puerto Rico attacking this Government with which we have friendly relations and with which we are working at forced pace to try to keep a very critical economic situation in balance. The Chase Manhattan manager in Puerto Rico, a top-flight man who used to be in charge here, spoke to me three days ago in perplexity over the

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<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>4</sup> Dated February 2. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 12 DOM REP)

free hand we give Bosch to make trouble and to try to tear down something we are attempting to build. We have required other Dominican political leaders who go to and from the United States to register as foreign agents on the basis of activities on their part which are minuscule as compared with those of Juan Bosch. I do not know that this would actually be much of a sanction for him, although the general feeling seems to be that he does not wish to register.

My own feeling is that Bosch is basically anti-American. This feeling is shared by members of the Embassy who were here during the Bosch period as President and by some of my Latin American diplomatic colleagues in whose views I have confidence. The pact he has just signed with the violently anti-American Social Christian leadership, reported in Embtel 781, certainly gives grounds for questioning Bosch's personal orientation. One can speculate that he may have done this so that the Social Christians can jab and kick at Uncle Sam here in the Dominican Republic day in and day out while Bosch sits in his privileged sanctuary in Puerto Rico at no damage to his American reputation while hopefully profiting from his friends' campaign of defamation against us.

I hope that you, after looking over the material, will agree that action needs to be taken with respect to Juan Bosch. While I realize there are some domestic difficulties for us in dealing with him and it is perhaps not feasible to move him out of Puerto Rico, I hope something can be done to put a halt to his political activities on our soil. If he wants to go away to Venezuela or farther, that would be all right with me. That would at least put an end to his calculated program at present of implying that the Embassy at Santo Domingo may be "supporting" Donald Reid Cabral, but that the American Government's real heart lies with Juan Bosch. Many Dominicans will continue to buy that assumption as long as he is permitted to operate unchecked from such a close vantage point and, by so doing, suggest subtly that he enjoys American official support.

Yours very sincerely,

**Tap**

19. **Letter From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic (Bennett)**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 25, 1965.

Dear Tap:

We, too, have been impressed with Reid's resolute and deft handling of his military people. As you point up in your letter of February 2,<sup>2</sup> Reid is gaining experience and growing in the job. It is unfortunate that so many of the more articulate people in the Dominican Republic are disappointed he is making a success at it. This will not inhibit us in working with him so long as he continues to do the right things for his country and his people.

The problem of what to do about Juan Bosch is a difficult one. I do not think we can come up with a final answer at this time. Kennedy has briefed me on Bosch's recent activities and we have examined options open to us for dealing with him. Unfortunately, there is very little room within which to maneuver.

From a legal standpoint, we have no evidence that Bosch has violated or conspired to violate any U.S. laws. What he has done is exercise the right of free speech. I can understand why the Dominicans find reason to complain about the way he's done it, but there isn't any law against it. Nor is there legal basis, or basis in precedent which would support a finding that Bosch's activities have constituted an abuse of his status as a political asylee in the U.S. I'm afraid this would be true even if Bosch had made statements which could be identified clearly as incitation of Dominicans within the Dominican Republic to rebel against the Dominican government. Although we can agree that this is what he hopes to accomplish, after going over the statements we can attribute to him, we would also have to agree that he has carefully phrased what he has said to avoid anything approaching outright or clear-cut incitation to rebellion.

This leaves us with only one way to clamp down on Bosch. We could make a finding that his activities are prejudicial to the public interest within the meaning of Section 212(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.<sup>3</sup> But given the background and circumstances which

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA Files: Lot 70 D 295, Dominican Republic, 1965-1967. Confidential; Official-Informal. Drafted by Shlaudeman and Crockett on February 24.

<sup>2</sup> Document 18.

<sup>3</sup> P.L. 414, June 27, 1952. (66 Stat. 184)

have led to his being out of a job and in the United States, we could expect a hue and cry from liberals in the United States and Latin America at large if we decided to make such a finding. This certainty would have to be weighed against the damage which Bosch's continued presence in Puerto Rico is likely to cause our interests in the Dominican Republic. There are other considerations to be taken into account as well.

Bosch is an unpredictable man, but we do know he's a political gambler, sometimes a reckless one. He plays what we might call a forcing game, as the series of crises he deliberately provoked during 1962 and 1963 demonstrate. It would be in character for him, then, to force us into a showdown.

Also, as you know, Bosch likes the underdog role. For years he has looked for ways to appear as the persecuted champion of democracy—just he and the people against the powerful forces of reaction. This is his style and it won the 1962 elections for him. He has also been effective in the pose of defender of national honor, dignity and independence.

We think the foregoing suggests that Bosch would seek to extract maximum advantage out of what he would picture as U.S. persecution on behalf of an illegal and unpopular government. His only chance to regain power probably lies in some kind of upheaval within the Dominican Republic. Under the circumstances, why should he hold back? At this point Bosch needs an issue. The best new tack available to him might well be to tag the Triumvirate with the U.S.-lackey label—another colonialist regime sold out to big brother. This could be particularly effective at a time of acute economic difficulties and it is not entirely improbable that he has had just this possibility in the back of his mind during recent weeks.

The possible effect on Bosch's own political position is also worth our attention. We gather there is at least an outside possibility that some of his following might, under favorable circumstances, be attracted to a more moderate and responsible candidate in the September elections. The question then arises whether a new martyr's role for Bosch might not work against this desirable development. We realize that Bosch's removal from Puerto Rico would weaken his grip on day-to-day PRD affairs but that this would result in a similar weakening of his popular appeal and ability to influence basic party policy appears doubtful to us.

Finally, let me give you some of our thinking on the larger aspects of the problem. Bosch's claim to an exalted position among the hemisphere's democratic leaders has obviously been seriously eroded by events and by his own actions. Similarly, he is no longer quite such an attractive figure to liberals in this country as he once was. Reid, for his

part, has had increasing success in conveying a responsible and progressive image to the U.S. press. These are gains which a move against Bosch could jeopardize.

In making these observations, I don't wish to leave the impression that we do not give considerable weight to the Embassy's arguments. We do not feel we should close the matter either way at this time. Our inclination at the moment is to take no action but we will be pleased to have whatever further thoughts you may have on the subject. You can at least be certain that we will give the problem another hard look when Bosch comes in for his next extension of stay in April.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas C. Mann<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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**20. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Carter) to the Director of Intelligence and Research (Hughes)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 14, 1965.

SUBJECT

ARA—Agency Meeting April 14, 1965

PARTICIPANTS

ARA—Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Adams, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Crockett, Mr. Shlaudeman;  
Agency—Mr. FitzGerald, [2 names not declassified]; INR/DDC—Mr. Carter

*Dominican Republic*

[2 paragraphs (6 lines of source text) not declassified]

In FitzGerald's opinion we have three alternatives:

1. Let Bosch and Balaguer run.
2. Postpone the election for a year to allow time to "quiet down" the Bosch and Balaguer factions.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, Dominican Republic 1965. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted on April 16. Also sent to George C. Denney, Jr. and Allan Evans (both INR/OD).

3. Have “stretched out” elections, beginning with municipal elections in the Fall and following with congressional elections in the Spring. The presidential election would come still later.

Crockett commented that if the choice were between Bosch and Balaguer, he would readily take Balaguer. [*name not declassified*] said this was also his position.

Vaughn expressed the opinion that for the present “the economic bind” has been eased a bit and asked if there was “nothing on the horizon to strengthen Reid?”

Crockett responded that he favored Reid but saw “no way to make it wash.”

Vaughn wanted to know if we could build Reid up in a year. Agency representatives thought that Reid is getting weaker rather than stronger and Crockett pointed out the elections are presently scheduled for September.

The question was raised as to whether we might use the DR military to put pressure on Reid should we want him to stand aside. FitzGerald commented that Adolph Berle has developed a relationship with Wessin y Wessin (DR Army Chief). Crockett cautioned that Reid “may not roll over and play dead even if we ask him to.”

Vaughn wanted to know what kind of cabinet Balaguer could muster. Crockett thought it would be a good one.

[2 paragraphs (5 lines of source text) not declassified]<sup>2</sup>

[Omitted here is discussion of other subjects.]

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<sup>2</sup> Ambassador Bennett left Santo Domingo for consultations in Washington on April 23. He stopped in Georgia to visit his parents, intending to go to Washington the night of April 25. (Martin, *Overtaken By Events*, p. 645) Bennett, Vaughn, Mann, Sayre, and Read met with Secretary Rusk on April 26 at 11:40 a.m. (Johnson Library, Rusk Appointment Book) No other record of the meeting has been found.

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**21. Telegram From the White House Situation Room to President Johnson at Camp David<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 25, 1965, 1658Z.

CAP 65134. Following is State Department report on the situation in the Dominican Republic as of noon today:

The Embassy in Santo Domingo has reported that Donald Reid, respectively President and member of the triumvirate which has governed the country since September 1963, resigned this morning and turned power over to General Montas Guerrero, ex-Army Chief of Staff who has been serving as Minister of Interior. General Montas in turn, is forming a three-man military junta. No information is yet available on the identity of the officers who will make up the junta.

Reid and Caceres, who have been providing the country with responsible and reasonably effective government, resigned in order to prevent further bloodshed. Key units of the army revolted yesterday and, although the other services at first seemed loyal to the triumvirate, it became apparent this morning that the government could only survive at the cost of civil war. The rebellious units moved into Santo Domingo, the capital, some sporadic fighting occurred and the military units loyal to the regime began to waver. Crowds of anti-government demonstrators were active and there were reliable reports that the rebellious troops were distributing arms to their civilian sympathizers. Under the circumstances, Reid had little choice but to resign.

The movement against the triumvirate was initiated yesterday by a mixed group of disgruntled military, students and political agitators. The leaders included at least two prominent members of ex-President Juan Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party: Jose Francisco Pena, a skilled and eloquent agitator, and Miguel Soto, who directs the party's affiliated labor federation. Both are identified with the party's left wing and both have been suspected of ties to the extreme left. Available information indicates that individuals identified with the pro-Castro 14th of June political movement were also involved, along with representatives of extremist student groups. It does not appear, however, that either the official Communist Party or the Popular Dominican Movement, a party oriented toward the Chinese Communists, was directly involved.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Dominican Republic, White House Cables, 4/65-7/65. Secret. A handwritten notation on the first page of the telegram reads: "Seen by the President 25 Apr 65."

The more radical supporters of Bosch, who have long been agitating for the overthrow of the triumvirate, were joined by some middle-grade and junior officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men in the army. The motives prompting this military participation were mixed. There has been mounting evidence during the last year of growing dissatisfaction among younger officers over the armed forces' command structure which seemed to perpetuate incompetent and venal officers in the positions of greatest authority. In addition, sentiment favoring ex-President Joaquin Balaguer has been particularly prevalent in the army. Recent Press interviews by Reid in which he indicated his intention to prevent Balaguer from returning to the Dominican Republic to participate in the elections scheduled for next September undoubtedly increased military disaffection. Finally, Bosch supporters for the past eighteen months have actively been proselytizing young officers and enlisted men, urging them to help overthrow the triumvirate and restore "constitutional government." These elements combined to create divisions within the armed forces and eventually to undermine the position of the top commanders who supported Reid.

With the government now in the hands of a military junta, the key problem is restoring at least a measure of unity within the armed forces. Continuing dissension would open the way for the extremist elements who have attached themselves to the anti-triumvirate movement and would bring the possibility of further bloodshed. If unity is restored, it seems probable that the junta will call early elections. The available evidence indicates that Joaquin Balaguer would probably win such elections. He has a history of demagoguery and was closely associated with the Trujillo regime. However, Balaguer is firmly anti-Communist and enjoys the support of some of the country's best people. We could cooperate with him, as we have in the past.

Failure to resolve the dissension among the military would cause a dangerous situation. However, it seems likely that the quarrels can be patched up on the basis of self-interest in preserving the armed forces as an institution.

**22. Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 26, 1965, 9:35 a.m.

President: What is the report on the Dominican Republic?

Mann: Well, it isn't good this morning. We were hoping last night that the Army would be able to get together but they are split. The Wessin group and the Air Force are in one camp; a large part of the Army that is in Santo Domingo, the capital itself, is supporting the rebel government and the loyalties of the troops outside the capital are still uncertain. They have not gone over to the rebels yet and presumably they will split too. The Wessin forces are separated from the center of town by a river which is commanded by the rebels—the bridge over the river—there is only one. The guns controlling the bridge are being strafed by the Air Force and Wessin has not yet tried to move across the bridge with his main troops. Looting is going on in the city and a lot of chaos. They have got about 1400 Marines on board these ships standing offshore. I just asked if we might alert Defense, we might have to airlift in case things got very bad, some people out of the southern part of the U.S. assuming the Marines could get control of.

President: Southern part of the U.S.?

Mann: Well, by air.

President: Repeat the statement.

Mann: We've alerted Defense against the possibility of having to airlift some additional people down in case the 1400 are needed and are not enough. I do not think that there is anything that we can do right now except wait it out. I do not know how it will go. They are not likely to do too much shooting—at least they never have in the past. Either the troops on one side or the other are likely to cave. We heard last night late that they were moving over to Wessin's side and it apparently stiffened during the night and early this morning.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, Tape F65.10, Side B, PNO 3. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. President Johnson placed the call to Mann, which lasted approximately 9 minutes.

President: I went out to see Abe Fortas last night<sup>2</sup> just to visit with him on the general picture. He had had a call from a fellow that Bosch lives with or visits down in Puerto Rico and Abe is their lawyer. He said Bosch wanted to know whether he should go back or not. He had about concluded that he could not go back because the fields are closed and it might be dangerous so he was going to stay in Puerto Rico for awhile.

Mann: I don't think he could get in right now. I don't think anybody can get in right now.

President: What about our Ambassador. Is he cut-off right now?

Mann: Well, he was asked to come up on consultation by the Bureau<sup>3</sup> which was worried about the deteriorating situation but they did not expect it to come so soon.

[Omitted here is a 2-minute discussion on the negotiations for a new Panama Canal Treaty.]

President: We are going to have to really set up that government down there, run it and stabilize it some way or another. This Bosch is no good. I was down there.<sup>4</sup>

Mann: He's no good at all. And the tragedy behind all of this is the price of sugar which you can't do much about—even try to raise the price of sugar—without putting Castro firmly in the saddle. They are both sugar economies. I think what we are going to have to do is pour even more money into Santo Domingo to offset this low sugar price right now. This is what's hurting them. And if we don't get a decent government in there Mr. President, and we get another Bosch, it is just going to be another sinkhole.

President: Well, that's your problem. You'd better figure it out.

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<sup>2</sup> On April 25 President and Mrs. Johnson departed the White House at 8:03 p.m. to have dinner at Abe Fortas' home. They arrived back at the White House at 9:38 p.m. (Johnson Library, President's Daily Diary) Abe Fortas, an attorney to the President, and a trusted friend for over 20 years had wide-reaching and high-level contacts in Puerto Rico, an area in which he had long possessed a strong interest. He offered to assist the President in contacting Juan Bosch, the ousted President of the Dominican Republic who since September 1963 was in exile in Puerto Rico. One of Fortas' contacts was Jaime Benitez the Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico and Bosch's friend. (*Fortas: The Rise and Ruin of a Supreme Court Justice*) From this point on in the crisis Fortas becomes one of President Johnson's most trusted advisers on the Dominican Republic.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 20.

<sup>4</sup> On behalf of then President Kennedy, Vice President Johnson attended the inauguration of President Juan Bosch on February 27, 1963.

Mann: I think we will know in the next 6 to 8 hours how this comes out. If Wessin comes out on top, the man to get back, I think, is Balaguer. He is the one that ran way ahead in the polls.

President: Well, try to do it; try to do it some way.

[Omitted here is discussion of a press report alleging U.S. Government support of the rebels and President Johnson's request of Mann to notify the press to set the record straight.]

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### **23. Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1965, 7:17 a.m.

Mann: Last night about 9 o'clock we got a statement from both sides. The Navy is absent in all this but both of the combatant sides would permit an orderly evacuation as far as they were able to do so. As far as they were concerned. They could not speak for the other side. And early this morning they have assembled some 400 or more Americans, mostly tourists in the Hotel Ambassador, and they are ready for evacuation. We did not want to try to get them out at night because of all the Communists running around at night. We thought it was too dangerous. Early this morning we hear reports that the Navy, which has gone back with the Wessin Air Force group, is threatening to deliver an ultimatum—not to start shooting but to deliver an ultimatum—somewhere between 7 and 9, our time, this morning to bombard the city in a very intensive way. They could get maybe as many as 30 planes in the air and if the Navy turned their guns on, it could be a pretty messy thing. So I have just talked to the Secretary—what I think we should do, if you agree, is to tell our Navy to come into the port of Haina, this is about 7 miles from the center of town—this is where the Embassy wants them to come in because they are not supposed to be shooting—get in touch immediately with the Dominican Navy and since land lines are out we cannot communicate this morning with the Air Force people or the Wessin people—and find out whether they can communicate over the Naval radio (Dominican Naval Radio) with

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, Tape F65.11, Side A, PNO 1. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. President Johnson placed the call to Mann, which lasted approximately 11 minutes.

those bases and tell them what we are doing and that we insist on a cease fire until we can get these Americans out and if they can't get in touch any other way, to send them a helicopter if this is necessary, to the San Isidro Air Base. We already have the word of the Commander [Colonel Elias Wessin y Wessin] and make sure that this cease fire and this ultimatum and bombardment doesn't start until we are through evacuating, then use this time to try to get a 'junta' set up of some kind which will stabilize the situation. Does that make sense?

President: Yes. Yes. Why would they want to be bombarding the city until we got our people out, they agreed it's all right to take them?

Mann: Well I think they are desperate. The Navy and the Air Force and Wessin's force are cut off from the city and they cannot get in and they do not have the strength to get in. They cannot get across this bridge and this is about all they can do. They strafe and bomb. It looks like to me a measure of desperation, and designed I think to break down the morale of the rebels and regain control ultimately in the city. This is what the design would be. Must be a pretty bitter feeling between the two branches of the Armed Forces by this time.

President: This is awful, isn't it?

Mann: Yes, it is awful.

President: How much did we know about all this, Tom?

Mann: Well, we knew that it is a graft-ridden place and this guy [Donald] Reid [Cabral] has done a very courageous job in firing unnecessary people trying to balance his budget and doing all these unpopular things like taking taxes from the rich; eliminating graft in the military forces, and that sort of thing. They had duty free entry privileges, and brought in scotch and selling it twice for what they paid for it. They just tried to establish a little order out of chaos down there. It pinches everyone's toes who were used to all these unusual privileges. The price of sugar dropped and we knew they were going to have a drought; we knew that things were not going well, that is why Tap Bennett was up here to tell us that we had about 2 or 3 weeks to try to do something about it.<sup>2</sup> We have put in a good deal of money but money does not do everything we hope it will sometimes. They had 30 years of a very strong rule and they just do not know how to manage their own affairs now that they have the responsibility themselves. It is a complex thing.

President: Does it mean, do you think, that this is another Castro government?

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<sup>2</sup> Ambassador Bennett left Santo Domingo on April 23 for consultations in Washington; see footnote 2, Document 20.

Mann: Not yet. No. It is hard to tell what comes out of one of these messes and who comes out on top, but we do not think that this fellow Bosch understands the Communist danger. We do not think he is a Communist but what we are afraid of is that if he gets back in, he will have so many of them around him; and they are so much smarter than he is, that before you know it, they'd begin to take over.

President: What is it that they see in him, why do you have this Bosch?

Mann: Bosch is a kind of literary man. He writes books but he is the most impractical fellow in the world—sort of an idealist floating around on Cloud 9 type—he is a handsome man and a good orator and the people just do not have the maturity to distinguish between words and deeds. He makes a lot of promises to them and so forth. That is the way he got elected by being a good orator.

President: What should I say about him in this press conference?<sup>3</sup>

Mann: That the situation is fluid; that we are evacuating Americans. There's some kind of baker's convention there; a lot of tourists there and we are getting them out. We are going to ask the Embassy if we should get the wives and families of our official people out and that we have been promised a cease-fire so that this can be accomplished and we are in touch with both sides hoping to do what we can to stop the bloodshed.

[Omitted here is discussion regarding Mann's failure to contact Luis Munoz-Marin, former Governor of Puerto Rico, due to Munoz-Marin's attendance at a meeting on the death of Albizu Campos, an independent leader in Puerto Rico.]

President: Now let's go back over what we're doing again.

Mann: We will tell the Navy we have this OK from both sides to get in touch immediately with the Navy at the Port of Haina and make sure everything is safe and that they are expected and unless some trouble develops, to let us know immediately, otherwise go on in as fast as they can, and get in touch with the Embassy. We will tell the Embassy the same thing and establish communication as best they can with the Air Force and the Wessin Forces across the river either by land line or by naval/military radio or if necessary by helicopter and tell them that we are starting to evacuate and to hold off on any shooting.

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to a news conference on April 27 at 4 p.m. in the East Room at the White House during which the President summarized the situation in the Dominican Republic. (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965, Book I, pp. 448–457*)

President: Is it likely that we might start moving our people out and they'll start shooting?

Mann: I think there is certain risk in this kind of situation that somebody will shoot. As long as you have all these Communists and everything else around, and there is a chance for misunderstanding, I think there is always a certain risk. That is why we did not want to do it in the middle of the night. Communications are very poor but certainly with these threats of bombardment.

President: Where do you get those reports threats? Who tells us that? Gossip?

Mann: No, no. These are reports that the Embassy has whether they are listening to them over the radio or something, I just don't know, I suspect it is just a radio threat. They said they're going to announce it between 7 and 9, and give them a little time to think about it and then presumably start. That would put them up around 10 or 11. But I think the sooner we get started this morning the better.

President: How long does it take to get our people out?

Mann: Well, this we don't know. The Port of Haina is about 7 miles. I presume the Embassy can get enough cars to get these 400 or more people down to Haina and then presumably they'll have to be lifted either on helicopter or on these boats which would take several hours. But once they get to Haina, they're 7 miles away from the center of town.

President: I would get them out as quick as I could.

Mann: Will do.

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## 24. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 27, 1965, 11:37 a.m.

644. Establishment of Provisional Government.

A. Our primary objectives are restoration of law and order, prevention of possible Communist takeover, and protection of American lives. We understand provisional government under Molina Urena is

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Sayre and cleared by Rusk and Vance.

not in control of situation. We also understand that situation has materially changed since yesterday (April 26) and that position of Wessin and de los Santos and company now seems more evenly balanced with that of rebel forces.

B. Believe you should contact military leaders of contending forces and suggest to them establishment of military junta to act as provisional government. This junta would have objectives of restoring law and order, preventing Communist takeover, and holding free and democratic elections as promptly as feasible. You should not become involved in details of formation of junta but should urge there be no preconditions on participation in junta and there should be assurance from both sides that there would be no reprisals.

You should make whatever arrangements are feasible to get Ambassador Bennett to Santo Domingo as promptly as possible.<sup>2</sup> We believe presence of Ambassador could make difference in bringing contending forces together as outlined above.

**Rusk**

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<sup>2</sup> At the time this telegram was sent, Ambassador Bennett had not yet arrived in Santo Domingo following a 48-hour visit to Washington for consultations. He arrived in Santo Domingo at 12:40 p.m. (Martin, *Overtaken By Events*, p. 653)

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**25. Memorandum From William G. Bowdler of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1965.

SUBJECT

Dominican Situation as of 2:30 PM

1. State reports that the bombardment of Santo Domingo by loyalist forces has begun in several areas of the city. So far the bombardment has not affected the evacuation, in line with earlier pledges given to the Embassy.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Memos and Miscellaneous, Vol. II, 1/64-4/65. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 23.

2. State has received word that the evacuation of people from the Hotel Embajador area to Haina is virtually completed. The timing was fortuitous because the Embassy has received a report that rumors are circulating around Santo Domingo that U.S. planes are doing the bombing and that people are being urged to move against the Hotel Embajador and the Embassy.

3. Ambassador Bennett is in Santo Domingo and has taken charge. He has personally checked on the evacuation program.

4. A message (copy attached)<sup>3</sup> has gone [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] concurred in by State, stating:

a. Today appears to be Wessin's last chance to take military action to dominate the situation.

b. Nothing should be done to discourage or impede Wessin's reported moves and consideration should be given to any Embassy actions or expressions which could assist Wessin without actually siding with him openly or intervening actively.

c. Consideration should be given to passing to appropriate rebel leaders data on the identities, activities, arms caches, strong points and plans of communist leaders and groups, with a view to getting them to take strong action at once against communist elements.

**WGB**

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<sup>3</sup> Telegram 271723Z, April 27, was repeated to the Department of State and the White House for McGeorge Bundy who received it at 5:34 p.m. This telegram was not found attached. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Dominican Republic, Cables, Vol. 1, 6/64–4/65)

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## **26. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 0316Z.

1128. Joint State/Defense message. Molina Urena, appeared at Embassy shortly before 4 pm, accompanied by gaggle of some 15 or 20 whom he introduced as his principal political and military advisers.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CAR Files: Lot 69 D 158, Dominican Republic, 1965. Confidential; Immediate. Repeated to CINCSO and CINCLANT for POLADS and COMCARIBSEAFRON and DOD. Passed to the White House and CIA.

(FonMin Lovaton reportedly had already taken refuge in foreign embassy and collapse some other leading military already reported.) Cols. Hernando Ramirez and Caamano were with him. Following security practice I have instituted, I required all weapons to be checked at entrance.

Molina Urena, nervous and dejected, was trying hard to carry himself as constitutional President and failing miserably. While all emoted democratic principles and some sought breathe fire, it was clear they realized forces arrayed against them were superior and they said they prepared negotiate settlement.

In a meeting lasting almost one hour, various members of group asserted their people still prepared resist, but they felt their action necessary in interest preventing further bloodshed. I made clear our emphatic view senseless shedding of blood must end, at same time reminding them that it was their action on Saturday<sup>2</sup> which initiated this fratricide and called forth counter-reaction. I recalled to them US had loyally supported Bosch to end of his government and beyond and had made clear its emphatic disapproval of his overthrow. That had happened, however, more than eighteen months ago. Latest effort to restore Bosch was obviously unsuccessful and at some point one had to start anew. I made clear to them we were talking in similar terms to both sides and, while meeting was going on, word was brought in that navy-air force bombardment had ceased. I suggested it was high time they approach other side for talks.

Both in full group and in private conversation with Molina and one or two civilian cohorts, I underlined and reiterated there was no question Communists had taken advantage of their legitimate movement, having been tolerated and even encouraged by PRD. I noted that in spite of fact PRD democratic party, they had in effect given Communists free rein, especially through military distribution of arms to civilians in large numbers, their tolerance of widespread looting, and physical mistreatment of innocent persons. I said there was much talk of democracy on their part, but this did not impress me as road to get there.

At one point I told Molina Urena, with whom I have always had good personal relations, I was sorry for him as regards the way all this had turned out, but that he could not deny serious Communist infiltration and influence in recent events. His answers and those his colleagues were specious and unconvincing, although I found little give in their position and no willingness admit such was case. I recounted incidents to him on local TV over weekend of Castro-type "barbudos" spouting pure Castroism. He said I was trying to talk details. I replied

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<sup>2</sup> April 24.

to him I wanted to make clear my government considers this kind of detail of great importance.

During meeting message came re danger posed for American citizens in La Romana through action rebel forces in handing out arms to civilians. I called this to group's attention as example of just what we were talking about. They indicated concern and offered use marine helicopter to go to La Romana and stop it. This has however, been worked out through Police Chief Despradel.

As regards their request that we dissuade Wessin from crossing bridge and get air force to call off bombing, I reminded them Embassy staff had been successful four times yesterday in getting air force to hold back and had thought early this morning truce had been worked out. They had, in fact, tried to take advantage of each situation. Then I came down strongly on disgraceful incident at Hotel Embajador where American lives were wantonly placed in peril this morning.<sup>3</sup> Was this an example of democracy in action?

During meeting, Martinez Francisco called back (Embtel 1118)<sup>4</sup> asking to speak to Molina and saying he was going to make strong effort with him to give up. They had long talk by phone, contents of which not discussed with us.

I declined courteously proposal made by Molina that I attend negotiations along with Dean of DipCorps and representative of church. I said I had no authority to participate, and that US view was accord should be reached by Dominicans talking to Dominicans. I said we looked forward to early elections, hoped they would be entirely free, and that perhaps they could be supervised by OAS if Dominicans wanted it that way.

Meeting finally dragged to close with Molina leaving accompanied by small group, and several others, principally military, lingering as though they trying to avoid going out again into cruel world. There was some evidence navy-air force group ready to talk with them and I urged them to get together. We have not yet heard results.

**Bennett**

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<sup>3</sup> At about 7 a.m. on April 28 a shooting incident occurred in the evacuation area at the Hotel Ambassador when rebel patrols entered the grounds on a false rumor that one of their opponents, Rafel Bonilla Aybar, an anti-Bosch journalist, was among the evacuees. The patrol departed after firing several hundred shots. No evacuees were reported injured.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram 1118 from Santo Domingo April 27, 1820Z, Bennett reported that he had just spoken to Captain Mario Pena Taveras, leading member of the revolt, and Martinez Francisco, Secretary General of the PRD. Bennett recounted that he had told them in part that the "USG wants cease-fire to give opportunity to form government which can effectively govern country." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP)

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27. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 1718Z.

1146. Joint State/Defense message. It is our combined judgment that communications equipment is most critical lack in current situation. Air force, navy, Wessin and Montas forces are at separate points and hours go by without direct contact.<sup>2</sup>

Attachés feel this the critical point and could well mean difference in results of present confrontation. Superiority of combined forces does not necessarily avail if it is separate, as here, in distinct pockets, with inadequate communications between them, and with each ground element facing leftist forces with heavy psychological propaganda of "people's struggle for liberation." Equally serious, in attachés' opinion, is effect on morale of air force and others if we seem to deny them this item of equipment which, after all, has civilian as well as military uses. They are not asking for offensive weapons, merely means to talk.

While I regret as much as anyone that, once again, we have to rely on military solution for political crisis engendered by confused democratic left, all valid elements of which now either in asylum or hiding, as much from extremists who have come to dominate rebel situation, as well as from opposing military forces. However, plain fact of situation is that while leftist propaganda naturally will try to fuzz situation as fight between military and people, issue here now is fight between Castro-type elements and those who oppose it. We should be clear as to situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CAR Files: Lot 69 D 158, Dominican Republic, 1965. Confidential; Flash. Repeated to CINCSO and CINCLANT for POLADS and COMCARIBSEAFRON. Passed to the White House, DOD, and CIA.

<sup>2</sup> The request for 50 portable radio communications sets came from General de Los Santos, Dominican Air Force Chief of Staff, who wanted them for use by military forces and police in mopping up operations. (Telegram 1136 from Santo Domingo, April 28) In this telegram Bennett strongly recommended that the sets be made available from stocks in Puerto Rico and that they be flown to San Isidro that morning. At 11:05 a.m. Under Secretary Mann told Vaughn informally that he had decided against moving the walkie-talkies in at that time but was instead in favor of moving the walkie-talkies to the USS *Boxer*. (Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, Research Project No. 939, "The Response of the Department of State to the Dominican Crisis of April-May 1965," pp. 15-16)

I do not wish to be over-dramatic, but if we deny simple communications equipment and opposition to leftist takeover here loses for lack of heart or otherwise, we may very well be asking in near future for landing of Marines to protect U.S. citizens and possibly for other purposes. Which would Washington prefer?

**Bennett**

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**28. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 1900Z.

1149. Joint State–Defense message. Col. Benoit, member of junta,<sup>2</sup> just telephoned Embassy to ask that U.S. land 1200 Marines “to help restore peace to this country.” Benoit did not elaborate simple request and he was given no encouragement. I do not believe situation justifies such action at this time and agree with Navy Attaché that Marines should not be used in any event for street clearing operations. Preponderant military forces are on side of Joint Chiefs of Operations, although they are separated geographically and, I repeat, without adequate communications between them. Psychological advantage still rests with rebels. Logically the junta’s forces should bring situation under control, but situation not really very logical and severe test of nerves now in process. In view conditions described my talk with Vaughn this

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CAR Files: Lot 69 D 158, Dominican Republic, 1965. Confidential; Flash. Repeated to CINCSO and CINCLANT for POLADS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, DOD, and CTG FOUR FOUR PT NINE. Passed to the White House and CIA at 3:30 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> At noon on April 28, Radio San Isidro announced the formation of a military junta comprised of three Colonels representing three service branches: Colonel Pedro Bartolome Benoit of the air force; Colonel Enrique Apolinar Casado Saladin of the army, and Captain Manuel Olgo Santana Carrasco of the navy. The junta announced that its principal purpose was to prepare the nation for free and democratic elections.

morning, Dept's 657<sup>3</sup> is perhaps drawing unduly optimistic conclusion. Further, we learned Wessin has not advanced this morning beyond bridgehead this side Ozama River and, all in all, not making very aggressive showing. Junta army organization confused and Air Force carrying burden. In short, attachés at this stage consider outcome still in doubt.

Department may wish do some contingency planning in case situation should break apart and deteriorate rapidly to extent we should need Marines in a hurry to protect American citizens.

**Bennett**

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<sup>3</sup> The morning of April 28 Bennett telephoned Vaughn at approximately 10 a.m. to convince him of the need for communication sets. Bennett telephoned Vaughn again at approximately 11:45 a.m. repeating his request for the walkie-talkies, which the Department deemed unnecessary at this time. In telegram 657 to Santo Domingo, April 28, the Department summarized its position and stated that it did not wish to intervene unless the outcome of the struggle in Santo Domingo was in doubt. The Department wrote that it appeared as though the anti-rebel forces were winning, and that it would be only a matter of time until they dominated the situation. (Office of the Historian, Research Project No. 939, "The Response of the Department of State to the Dominican Crisis of April-May 1965," p. 16) Later the same day during a telephone conversation among Mann, McGeorge Bundy and President Johnson, the President approved the transfer of the walkie-talkies and instructed Mann to inform General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to start flying them in. (Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965)

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## **29. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 2015Z.

Critic 4. Following is text of request by newly formed junta for US military assistance:

Military junta of government, conscious that present revolutionary movement against democratic institutions junta represents, is directed by Communists and is of authentic Communist stamp, as shown by excesses committed against population, mass assassinations, sackings of private property, constant incitations to continue fight

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Confidential. The telegram printed here is the copy repeated to the Department of State, which was received at 4:54 p.m. Passed to USIB agencies.

broadcast by Radio Habana, and which movement, if victorious will convert this country into another Cuba we request, with responsibility and in categorical manner, that United States Government lend us its unlimited and immediate military assistance so that such grave situation may definitively be controlled.

**Bennett**

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### 30. Editorial Note

During a 5:15 p.m. telephone conversation on April 28, 1965, between President Johnson and Mann (see footnote 3, Document 28), President Johnson also asked Mann “to be sure we are right on our predictions.” Furthermore, the President said he “[didn’t] want the rebels to win; he had just about lived down the Bay of Pigs and he [didn’t] want Mr. Mann to get him involved in another spot like that.” (Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965)

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### 31. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 28, 1965, 5:45 p.m.

#### PARTICIPANTS

Mr. Mann  
The President  
Secretary Rusk  
Mr. Bundy

Mr. Mann said that he thought the consensus here is that we have got to go with the judgment of those on the spot. The military commanders would have to decide on the best place.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965. Extra Sensitive. According to the President’s Daily Diary, Johnson was in the lounge of the Oval Office from 4:45 to 6:01 p.m. on April 28 meeting with Rusk, McNamara, Ball, McGeorge Bundy, and Moyers (Ibid.) Presumably this 5:45 p.m. conference call occurred during this time.

Mr. Bundy asked if Mr. Mann could telephone the Ambassador and make it the Ambassador Hotel. Mr. Mann said he thought we should make a statement saying we are there to evacuate the 2,000 Americans and any other nationals who want to leave. Second, call on both sides to send representatives to wherever we land—the Ambassador Hotel or wherever—to negotiate terms of a cease fire and agree on the way we restore law and order and a democratic government.

Mr. Bundy asked if we wanted to take on the role of peace maker. Mr. Mann said there is a possibility that the mere landing of Marines will serve to strengthen the will of the Wessin side. The first thing is to go in and say we are there to evacuate. The second thing is to let them come and negotiate.

The President said that we were not going to announce anything until they have landed. Mr. Mann said that was correct. The President said we did not want them waiting there to shoot at us when we landed, like they did to the Belgians in the Congo.

Mr. Bundy asked who was holding the Hotel Ambassador now, and added that he assumed it was the friendlies.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Mann said we could not be sure because the Ambassador is saying that the loyal troops cannot guarantee the route from the Hotel to Haina. Mr. Bundy said in any event the recommendation was clear: we give the order and then we begin to draft the statements.

The President said he would tell the commanders to take off in the helicopters and he would tell the riders to get their statements prepared so when they do land we can say they are there to evacuate and to bring these citizens of ours out and then he would follow up with the riders. He would have the airplanes over the islands immediately—he would have the helicopters off and we would have people drafting their statements explaining we were there to evacuate.

Mr. Bundy said one thing they wanted is a clear message to Bennett asking him to get the request rephrased in these terms and not in terms of the communist threat.

Mr. Mann said he had not recognized the new Junta. He said there are political problems and we may want to call in both sides.

Mr. Bundy said if we could get the Junta to inform us that they cannot guarantee to protect the Americans.

The President said that we could say that help is on the way in response to his request to evacuate the Americans. We have been informed that the Junta can no longer do it.

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<sup>2</sup> The Constitutionalist forces.

Mr. Mann said that what the President wanted was a clear statement that they could no longer protect the American lives. The President said that this has already been said but he would say help was needed to protect the lives of the Americans and not refer to the communist angle. The existing government says that it wants us know it can in no way be responsible for American lives, it has reached a point where these lives are in danger, and therefore help is urgently requested. He added that in the meantime they will be on their way.

Secretary Rusk said that he thought Mr. Mann should consider giving an alternative to the Hotel Ambassador if, as a matter of fact, they cannot get in without serious losses. He said he thought the military commander should have some discretion. Mr. Mann agreed.

Mr. Bundy said that the military [illegible—and the?] military commander—and the Ambassador—should be in touch about that before they land. Mr. Mann agreed but said that we do not tell them anything until we are there. Mr. Bundy said except to coordinate with the friendly who are holding the area. Mr. Man said if we told them it would leak all over town. Secretary Rusk said that we would not tell them until they are actually coming in.

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### **32. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 2040Z.

Critic 5. Joint State/Defense message.

Regret report situation deteriorating rapidly. San Isidro pilots who have been principal element in junta forces tired and discouraged. Army leadership disorganized although Montas just named Commander in Chief armed forces, in effort mobilize army effort. Police Chief Despradel informs his mopping up operations have met such violent resistance he can no longer continue and that his maximum capability now is defense of few key installations. Wessin still expresses confidence, but obviously weary and speaking of need for more men.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Confidential. The telegram printed here is the copy repeated to the Department of State, which was received at 5:16 p.m. It was incorrectly identified as “Critic Four”; a handwritten correction on another copy of the telegram indicates it is “Critic Five.” Passed to USIB agencies.

Rivera Caminero worried and discouraged. De Los Santos and Montas still full of fight.

Chief MAAG just returned from San Isidro where most above officers now gathered found general atmosphere dejected and emotional, with number of officers weeping. Belisario Peguero there also in hysterical mood urging "retreat."

Benoit of junta sent formal request U.S. supply troops, told MAAG Chief that without help they would "have to quit." In view this report and recent messages through [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], Country Team unanimously of opinion that, now that we have request from military junta for assistance,<sup>2</sup> time has come to land the Marines.

American lives are in danger. We suggest, subject conditions at moment, Marines establish beach head in Hotel Embajador vicinity centering on polo field which can be used by helicopters for landing. We would also be glad have detachment take possession Embassy grounds. If Washington wishes, they can be landed for purpose protect evacuation American citizens. We have just been told by police chief, for instance, that he cannot provide protection route Haina Naval Base which has been used until now for evacuations.

I recommend immediate landing.

**Bennett**

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 29.

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### **33. Transcript of Teleconference Between the Department of State and the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

April 28, 1965, 2230Z.

Present: Under Secy Ball, Deputy Under Secy Mann, Ass't Secy Vaughn, Deputy Ass't Secy Sayre, Mr. Kennedy Crockett, Executive Secy Ben Read

Subject: Dominican Situation

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret.

*SecState Item 1 28/2242Z*

We have authorized task force 44.9 to land Marines in necessary strength to establish secure point or points for evacuation U.S. nationals and other foreigners. Task force will execute on Ambassador's orders.

Secure point or points will be maintained for duration of emergency situation.

We intend issue statement here explaining:

(1) This action taken as result of notification given us by Dominican authorities that they are unable to safeguard American lives.

(2) We continue to deplore situation in Dom-Rep and call on both sides to cease fire.

(3) We hope it will be possible for them to sit down and reconcile differences.

Provide current sitrep. *End Item 1.*

*[SDOM] Telecon Note 1*

Marines have landed and in good time since evacuation area already under fire from irregular forces.

*Item 2 28/2300Z*

First draft of announcement to be made here follows:

"The United States Government has been informed by military authorities in the Dominican Republic that American lives are in danger, that the authorities are unable to guarantee their safety and that the assistance of United States military personnel is needed for that purpose.

Accordingly, I have issued instructions to the Secretary of Defense to take necessary steps to proceed immediately with the evacuation of the several hundred Americans still in the Dominican Republic. Our assistance will also be available to nationals of other countries residing in the Dominican Republic some of whom have already requested assistance.

I am sure that the Dominican people in this hour of their tribulation will understand that we continue to hope and to work for a cessation of hostilities, the restoration of law and order and the speedy return to the normal processes of government." *End Item 2.*

*SDOM Item 2*

Have established direct comm[unication] from Emb and are communicating without difficulty. *End Item 2.*

*SecState Item 3 28/2305Z*

Are you in touch with task force commander. Your answer this query should precede all others. *End Item 3.*

*SDOM Item 3*  
*Current SitRep*

Present situation is that second increment 300 Marines now landing at Embajador Hotel to protect Americans who are under fire there and who have asked for authority to shoot to defend themselves, which we have given them. Apparently platoon earlier sent there was not adequate to cover both heliport at polo field and hotel. We hope that with additional reinforcements this will be possible.

One platoon Marines came by car from Embajador to guard Embassy Chancery and are now in position along with some 38 policemen. They claim they can defend perimeter against small arms attack, but will have difficulty containing situation if rebels bring in mortars, artillery, or tanks, all of which they have at their disposal. *End Item 3.*

*SecState Item 4 28/2307Z*

How many U.S. citizens are still in Santo Domingo—official and private?

Are there concentrations at locations other than the Hotel Embajador?

Do you wish to evacuate official dependents? *End Item 4.*

*SDOM Item 4 (ref)*

Approx 1000 all of which do not desire to leave. Many permanent residents reluctant.

No other concentrations than at Hotel Embajador.

Some people are in Emb Chancery and will give refuge in residence tonight to extent possible.

In event additional Marine platoon now supplementing Emb security guard is able to cover residence on same property as well.

Evacuation route through Haina no longer being used.

Many official dependents have already departed.

I have told Dean of Diplomatic Corps that we would offer protection to any members corps who might wish go to Embajador.

Colombian Amb. has asked whether we can supply Marines for protection other embassies. But I am telling him we do not have enough Marines for that purpose.

34. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 2302Z.

Critic 6. Joint State/Defense message. Sec State for Mann.

1. Further re my earlier statement American lives in danger. Police Chief Despradel has informed us he can no longer guarantee safety Americans en route evacuation area.

2. Have just had following message from Col. Benoit of junta relayed over carrier communications net:

“Situation deteriorating rapidly. Request urgent reply my official request for assistance.”<sup>2</sup> He is 16 miles away and only communication over open channel. Am therefore sending AirAtt by helicopter to get statement from him. I have no doubt whatever he will give it.

3. Delegation resident American citizens just left my office having advised no protection their residential areas and their belief Americans will be logical target of leftist mobs who have been sacking so many Dominican homes.

4. Police unable fill requests for additional guard duty even last night. Their numbers are strapped already, as reported earlier, and it obvious they cannot protect individual homes. We are recommending Americans assemble Embajador Hotel for evacuation. Naturally, many permanent residents not anxious take this step.

5. AID office just broken into. Evacuation area being fired on by rebels.

**Bennett**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Confidential. The telegram printed here is the copy repeated to the Department of State, which was received at 7:29 p.m. Passed to USIB agencies.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 29.

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**35. Minutes of Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 28, 1965, 7:27–8:10 p.m.

MEETING WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP ON  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

## IN ATTENDANCE

*From the Executive*

The President, The Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Under Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, The Ambassador to the United Nations, The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

*From the Senate*

Mansfield, Dirksen, Long, Kuchel, Fulbright, Hickenlooper, Saltonstall, Smathers

*From the House*

McCormack, Albert, Boggs, Ford, Arends, Dr. Morgan, Mrs. Bolton

*From the White House*

Moyers, Valenti, Reedy, O'Brien, Watson, Busby

The President began the meeting at 7:30 p.m., EDT, calling on the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State: Mr. Rusk reviewed developments of the past several days in the Dominican Republic. He explained that the PRD moved to overthrow Donald Reid Cabral, successfully ousted him quickly. However, some elements of the Army were determined not to allow ex-President Bosch to return to power. By Tuesday afternoon, a consolidation of the situation had apparently been accomplished and several of the military leaders declared a junta. Mr. Rusk recited the findings of a recent poll among the Dominican people regarding their preferences for President in a popular election.

Mr. Rusk explained that it appeared, as of the previous day, that the armed forces and police would be able to establish order. However, during the afternoon, there had been a deterioration. A number of civilians in the city of Santo Domingo had been armed by Rebels, including some Castro-trained Communist supporters. Law and order had broken down as a result. Approximately 1,100 Americans were taken out of Santo Domingo on Tuesday<sup>2</sup> and approximately 1,300 remained.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Meetings Notes File, 4/28/65 Meeting with Congressional Leaders on Dominican Republic. Secret. The meeting was held in the White House Cabinet Room. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> April 27.

The Ambassador had been informed by the junta that American lives were in danger and that further protection was needed for them because the military and police could not guarantee protection.

The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency: Admiral Raborn reported that there had been positive identification of three ring-leaders of the Rebels as Castro-trained agents.

The Secretary of Defense: Because of the danger in the Dominican Republic situation, the President had instructed the Department of Defense to place troops in position to take the necessary measures for protection of the lives of American citizens. Mr. McNamara reviewed the deployment of units of the fleet, including the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Boxer*, with its complement of Marines and helicopters. He reported that approximately 2,000 Marines were in position to be ashore within a time span of one to ten hours. He reported also that two divisions of paratroopers were on alert at Ft. Bragg, N.C. Mr. McNamara said that all forces had been put in position and placed on alert to meet contingencies in the Dominican Republic.

The President: The President reported that Ambassador Bennett had advised Washington that authorities in Santo Domingo were no longer able to provide protection for American lives.<sup>3</sup> The President reviewed the fact that we had repeatedly asked for a cease-fire by both sides. Since activities were continuing there, however, he had on the advice of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense asked that helicopters and other essential supporting equipment be in position to act as necessary.

The President reported that it would shortly be announced—within the hour—that the United States has sent Marine units ashore to protect and escort American citizens to safety. This action, he explained, was being taken on the basis of unanimous decisions of our country team in the Dominican, the recommendation of the Ambassador, and on the recommendation of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The President reported that shortly several hundred of our military forces would be landing in Santo Domingo.

Senator Fulbright: The Senator asked if there were any way in which the Organization of American States could help.

The Secretary of State: Mr. Rusk replied that there was concern within the OAS both for the safety of the nationals of the member states present in the Dominican capital and for the implications of the developing situation in the Dominican Republic.

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 32.

The President: At this point, the President read to those present the messages received in Washington from Ambassador Bennett on the scene in Santo Domingo, D.R.

Senator Dirksen: The Senator related a telephone call he had received the previous night from Miami, reporting that the Dominican Vice Consul there was advising persons that Castro was making a concerted effort to take over the Dominican Republic. Senator Dirksen commented that without regard to the reliability of the information he had received, it was necessary to take into account the factor of Castro.

The President: He observed that there was no alternative to the actions being taken by the United States in view of the unanimous recommendations received from all responsible officials in regard to the advisable course for this government to pursue.

Senator Dirksen: He observed that, speaking for himself, if this proliferates, it seems imperative that the United States go to the heart of the matter and lay it out at them. Speak our piece, he said, and demand respect for it. He expressed his hope that actions taken would be vigorous and adequate and said "I will stand up for you."

Speaker McCormack: It seems obvious that this situation is not consistent with our national interest. He asked the question, Can we afford another Castro situation of this sort?

The President: He reviewed the various influences contributing to escalation of the situation in Santo Domingo and observed that we can't waste one moment in taking action. He asked the Congressional leadership if there was support or criticism for any of these actions.

Senator Smathers: He asked whether it was the plan to put the Marines in and take them out immediately—or allow them to remain there?

The President: We haven't crossed that bridge yet.

The Secretary of State: This is not a 24-hour operation.

Representative Arends: How many civilians are there?

The Secretary of State: 1,300 or, maybe 1,000<sup>4</sup>—all of whom do not want to leave.

The President: At this point, the President read to those present a preliminary draft of the statement he planned to deliver on television network broadcast shortly.<sup>5</sup> The President asked if there were objections or suggestions.

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix material for corrected figures. [Footnote in the source text. According to the appendix 2,865 Americans were estimated to be in the Dominican Republic as of April 27; of these 1,115 were evacuated April 27–29.]

<sup>5</sup> See Document 33. For the final statement read by President Johnson at 8:40 p.m. from the Theater of the White House, see *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*, Book I, pp. 461–462.

Senator Mansfield: Suggested that mention be made of the OAS.

Ambassador Stevenson: Concurred in Senator Mansfield's suggestion.

The President: The President agreed with the suggestion and directed that appropriate language be included. He again asked if there were comments, criticisms or objections to the statement or action. None were expressed.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m. Senator Mansfield, Ambassador Stevenson, Mr. Bundy and others reviewed the statement, making the changes directed by the President.<sup>6</sup> The President, The Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and Admiral Raborn individually briefed various late arrivals, including Senator Hickenlooper, Representative Ford, etc.

The President left the room at 8:25 p.m.

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<sup>6</sup> At 8:10 p.m. on April 28 President Johnson, Mann, and Ball held a telephone conversation in which they discussed the draft statement on the Dominican Republic. During this conversation President Johnson asked about the sentence: "I assure the Dominican people that in this hour of trial the United States remains fully pledged to support peace and freedom in their country." Mann said he "saw no trouble with this. The very fact that we have gone in there is going to do it. If we are going to be hanged, let's be hanged for a wolf instead of a lamb. We are for peace and freedom, why don't we say it." (Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965)

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### **36. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, April 28, 1965, 2327Z.

1155. Joint State/Defense message. In view of rapid deteriorating situation here I have just asked Boxer to provide helicopter evacuation of Americans assembling in Embajador Hotel, including company for security purposes in view of sniping going around Embassy building, I have also requested Pathfinder Platoon to land on Embassy grounds for protection of chancery. I hope this action will give some heart to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Confidential; Flash. The telegram printed here is the copy repeated to the Department of State, which was received at 7:52 p.m. Repeated to CINCLANT and CINCSO for POLADs, COMCARIBSEAFRON, DOD, and CTG FOUR FOUR PT NINE and passed to the White House and CIA.

loyal forces. Breakdown of all government authority and possibility that remaining forces available to it may soon tire or become physically incapable of maintaining their present position, I recommend serious thought be given in Washington to armed intervention which would go beyond the mere protection of Americans and seek to establish order in this strife-ridden country. All indications point to the fact that if present efforts of forces loyal to the government fail, power will be assumed by groups clearly identified with the Communist Party. If the situation described above comes to pass, my own recommendation and that of country team is that we should intervene to prevent another Cuba from arising out of the ashes of this uncontrollable situation.

Pending this decision we recommend that additional military units be dispatched to this area since present forces available are considered inadequate to perform the mission I have suggested as our last resort.

**Bennett**

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### **37. Editorial Note**

At 8:31 p.m. on April 28, 1965, President Johnson and Thomas Mann held a telephone conversation during which the President instructed Mann to divide up a list of all Latin American Ambassadors with Vaughn and Sayre and call the ambassadors to explain the reasons for the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. The President told him to stress the fact that the United States repeatedly asked for a cease-fire. The President also instructed Mann to send a telegram to all U.S. Ambassadors asking them to reach the highest authority of their respective countries to explain the actions of the United States. (Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 20, 1965)

Circular telegram 2066, April 28, drafted by Mann and sent to all posts began:

“In speaking to Latin Americans about today’s evacuation avoid any suggestion that U.S. is supporting or opposing any particular political faction or group. Emphasize that purpose of operation is to evacuate Americans and nationals of other countries wanting to leave and that this action taken only after authorities had stated that lives of U.S. citizens were in danger and that government could not guarantee their safety.” (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP)

38. **Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 28, 1965, 11:45 p.m.

The President said he had been talking with Abe Fortas.<sup>2</sup> According to him, Bosch was saying that our Embassy was directing the thing for the other side and that we were responsible for it and everything and that we had furnished them with equipment and he didn't know what else. The President said he did not tell him anything about what we had done. Bosch said that he wanted to go back but he would not go back until after elections, if we could get them to agree, cease fire, etc. Mr. Fortas said he would be standing by to do anything we wanted him to. The President said he thought Mr. Mann should have this information.

Mr. Mann said he thought we would know tomorrow. He said it seems that we have two or three possibilities. He said that the consensus was that the presence of the Marines would calm everyone down. He added that this would have been true before the commies came but what we don't know is what difference the commies will make. He said if it all quiets down the anti-communist forces will get control and we can guide it. If, on the other hand, we have to fight or go in and clean up it is possible that we will be in trouble, in terms of international organizations. He said we had been giving thought to which one of the various routes we should take if we go get in trouble. He explained about the Rio Treaty<sup>3</sup> and a confrontation between two countries vs the situation if someone else invokes it. He said we therefore had to balance off the advantage of taking the initiative against the advantage of winning the battle. He said we do not know if they will attack us in the UN but they could. He said we are losing a little bit by not taking the initiative in the OAS because we could say that they had already "seized" but if we take the initiative we lose a lot of our freedom of action.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a April 28, 10:20 p.m., telephone call from Abe Fortas to President Johnson, which lasted approximately 9 minutes. (Ibid., Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, Tape F65.11, Side A, PNO 4)

<sup>3</sup> The Rio Treaty, or Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, signed at Rio de Janeiro, September 2, 1947. (4 Bevans 559)

Mr. Mann said that as far as Bosch is concerned, he did not see that he would help us a bit. He said he is against us, he is criticizing us, saying we were supporting the other side which is not true. Mr. Mann added that he thought Bosch had been heated up ever since he was thrown out and he thought we would have to play it by ear. The President said Mr. Mann should have time to think about it. Mr. Mann said he would like to think about it over night and then see what has happened in the morning.

The President asked how many they thought they would evacuate tonight. Mr. Mann said he did not know whether they would be able to carry on in the dark. He said he assumed that since the number is up to 4,000 now it is going on during the dark and he would say they have evacuated 700 to a thousand. He said we were not sure.

Mr. Mann said that the real trouble would come when we are finished with the evacuation—when we have to find a reason to stay on and he thought we would probably have to say that there are 2,000 Americans in the country—outside of Santo Domingo, and begin to stall a bit some time tomorrow. Mr. Mann said we would have a lot of decisions to make tomorrow.

The President asked Mr. Mann what he thought would happen between the two competing forces. Mr. Mann said he did not know what had happened between noon yesterday and noon today because when he talked to the Ambassador last night around 10:30 or 11:00,<sup>4</sup> the Ambassador thought it would be all over within five hours. Mr. Mann said the only thing he could figure was that the troops themselves must have become fed up with the shooting at Dominicans and just sort of refused to carry out orders—maybe there have even been mass defections.

The President said that Bosch claimed he had 17,000 troops in the Army that would back him up, and that would be ready to fight. Mr. Mann said that the figures he had seen were closer to 7 or 8,000. He said AP had an item saying 10,000—and this was composed of all the rag-tags, scum, riff-raff and commies, everybody they could fool. He said he would not be surprised if he had 2,000 but he would be surprised if he had 10.

The President asked what the population was and Mr. Mann said he would guess around 4 million.

Mr. Mann said he was a little worried. He said the Ambassador had asked that the Marines be landed and Mr. Mann felt that perhaps the anti-communist troops were not as weak as the Ambassador thought. However, the Ambassador had said they were necessary and

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<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

we had no alternative. Mr. Mann said it was one of those situations where you have to rely on the people in the field. He said it was not only the Ambassador's recommendation—the Country Team recommended it and that includes the three military attachés, political section chief, economic section chief, agriculture, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], etc. Mr. Mann mentioned that [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] were ahead of us on this all the way. They were sending in memos predicting doom if we did not send in the Marines. The President said he did not know that. Mr. Mann said it was true, even when things appeared to be going pretty good.

The President asked about the Ambassador's background and Mr. Mann said he was a Georgia boy, in the service twenty years, fine record, solid, level-headed, believes as the President believes.

The President asked Mr. Mann who did the talking on the backgrounder. Mr. Mann said that Mr. Ball had led off but he supposed that he himself did most of the talking. He said there were no hard questions. It was the White House group. He said we would have had a hard time if some of the leftwing Latin correspondents had been there. He said it was easy and we made all the points. We told them we did not know all the details because the fighting was still going on and had been violent. We painted a picture of the thousand people being loaded on the boat and how the commies had come before this to the hotel, separated the men and women, sent the women back into the hotel and then lined the men up (we took a change on that because we were going by reports we had received and these people were now in Puerto Rico). Without mentioning the commie side we said that the insurgent movement was more anti-government than it was pro-anything.

Mr. Mann told the President that all of Bosch's people went into asylum today—they thought it was all over. The President asked who kept the fire going and Mr. Mann said he thought it was the commies. He said he thought they had been building up strong points in the poorer sections of town. He said however that we do not know because no one can circulate around without getting shot. He told the President that we had informed the press about the Embassy Residence being sprayed with machine-gun bullets. He added that we had not gone into detail about the notes we had been sending but that we had stressed the safety angle and stressed that this was an evacuation. We said we were not in there to help or hurt any particular group but were there to evacuate Americans and printed a pretty clear picture of what actually went on. Mr. Mann told the President they had given them a good background.

The President said he had better not plan on going home tomorrow. Mr. Mann said he did not think he should. He said tomorrow will be the day. The decisions that will be made tomorrow will be much more important than the ones he made today.

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**39. Telephone Conversation Between Director of Central Intelligence Raborn and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 29, 1965, 8:47 a.m.

President: What's the news this morning?

Raborn: Well, the news is about the same as it was last night. We have about 500 Marines ashore. The rebels have heavy weapons and are holed up and barricading themselves in the center of the city. And the police force are relatively ineffective against these people because they can't deal with these heavier weapons. They found a tank which was promptly knocked out by a bazooka. There was no report of any contact or any fighting by our Marines. That's in Santo Domingo.

[Omitted here is a situation report on Vietnam.]

President: Back to the DR thing. Do we have any evaluation of the relative strengths of what really happened yesterday that turned this around?

Raborn: Yes, we do. We have identified 8 hard-core, Castro-trained guerrillas that are—they came in, they pushed aside the Bosch people and took command of the forces. The Bosch people well, they might be slightly pink, but were not the kind of terrorists that the Castroites were. Now they took over the situation rapidly. They raided the police station, took their arms, took their uniforms, and are sort of in command of the city in spots. The regular army, their tank units and so forth just sat on their bitty box over there and haven't done a darned thing about moving in. I think he's afraid of the gasoline bombs and the bazookas in the hands of the rebels. The army officers are holed up inside the city in one or two places and seem to have lost their nerve against the hard-core and hard-nosed guerrillas. I think they lined up a bunch of people and shot them and this sort of terrorized the other folks. In my opinion this is a real struggle mounted by Mr. Castro.

President: What do you think we ought to do about it?

Raborn: I think it's clear we have got to take more positive action to clean these people out. Otherwise it's liable to drag on and on, and eventually these other folks, Castro types, will get the top hand and then we'll have a mess on our hands. Then we will restore order and turn things back over to the Junta. We had a member of the junta who begged us to do this.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Admiral William Raborn, Tape F65.11, Side B, PNO 1. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. President Johnson placed the call to Raborn; he and Raborn talked approximately 7 minutes.

President: That will put us in pretty much trouble internationally with all the international organizations, OAS and United Nations, won't it?

Raborn: It could sir, and I notice the OAS is meeting this morning.<sup>2</sup> But there is no question in my mind that this is the start of Castro's expansion.

President: How many Castro terrorists are there?

Raborn: Well, we have positively identified 8 of them. And I sent a list over to the White House about 6 o'clock. It should be in the situation room—who they are, what they are doing and what their training has been.<sup>3</sup>

President: What has been our problem with intelligence down there? Have we known this thing was in this shape?

Raborn: From my review of the material I think we have been pretty much on top of this. Forces are being pre-positioned and all that and ready to move in was part of the deal. I think there are some deficiencies in our ability to get a regular broadcast-sized radio aboard ship. We probably should have some aboard ship so we can reassure the population and all that sort of thing. The local radio station went off the air and the only thing they heard was from Puerto Rico. It looks to me like we ought to equip ourselves with regular household radio transmitters so the house radio could broadcast information directly to the people if we so wished.

[Omitted here is the remainder of the conversation with Raborn confirming that walkie-talkies had been distributed the day before.]

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<sup>2</sup> At a special session of the Council of the OAS convened at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the Dominican Republic crisis Ambassador Bunker explained that the landing of U.S. Marines was to protect U.S. citizens and to secure their evacuation. Ambassadors from Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, and Costa Rica expressed distress at the turn of events in the Dominican Republic and indicated their concern over U.S. unilateral action. The Council requested the convocation of a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OAS for May 1 and called on the Apostolic Nuncio, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Santo Domingo, Monsignor Emmanuel Clarizio to help arrange a cease-fire.

<sup>3</sup> A list of the eight alleged "Cuban-trained Dominican extremists" was presented in a Central Intelligence Agency memorandum, OCI No. 1208/65, April 29. The memorandum states: "While there is no evidence that the Castro regime is directly involved in the current insurrection, it is nevertheless clear that Cuban-trained Dominican extremists are taking part. It can be demonstrated that at least 45 extremists had returned to the Dominican Republic since last October after receiving training in Cuba and/or elsewhere in the Communist bloc. All or most of these people can be presumed to be active in the current fighting which has a number of aspects reminiscent of Castro's revolutionary tactics." (Johnson Library, NSC Histories, Dominican Crisis 1965, Chron 4/24–9/21, Background Documents)

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**40. Telephone Conversation Between the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 29, 1965, 9:48 a.m.

Bundy: Have you seen the over-night things or had a chance to talk to Tom Mann?

President: I have not talked to him.

Bundy: There is no real news. It's perfectly clear that the rebels have dug in down in the city with in-town guerrilla techniques—bazookas and mortars. There is going to be a very tough fight unless they are starved out. We don't know very much about the tactical situation. Our own people are all right. Bennett doesn't want more than the 400 he has got at the moment. We are backed up with good strong forces that are available at intervals of up to about 8 hours now for more battalions from outside the area. We have got another 1,000 men right offshore if we want them, and 2,000 more 8 hours away and another 2,000 at one day intervals from there on. We are not going to need that force unless Buzz Wheeler is very much surprised. But the political front is the one that is hotting up. There will be a meeting in the OAS this morning. Leoni has pitched in pretty hard with the clear implication that we are against dictatorships on both sides. If there is this kind of violence by Castro-types in the city, I think we can expect very good support in the OAS because it is just what about two thirds of those governments are afraid of. The Castro people have taken out after us pretty hard on the radio and the Soviets are beginning to do so, although they haven't yet zeroed in very hard.

We have a problem with a request for asylum from Reid and Caceres, who are two of the triumvirs who have been thrown out. We are trying to get them taken care of either by the Papal Nuncio or by some other Embassy so we won't be in the particular position of protecting unpopular people but they would get stabbed in the back by the Comies if they were caught so we have a certain obligation there. We will simply be dependent upon information from there as the day goes forward. My guess is that we now have a sufficient force on the ground. We will have to wait and see if the Dominicans can handle it for themselves with this moral support. But we'll have to keep a sharp eye to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Transcript of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.11, Side B, PNO 2 and 3. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. President Johnson placed the call to Bundy; they talked for approximately 10 minutes.

be ready to take stronger action if it looks as if the Communists were beginning to win. Our own people of course have only perimeter defense and evacuation orders. They have taken 2 or 3 hundred people out as of last night. That still means, if my figures are right, 800 odd Americans who aren't ready to leave or who haven't asked to leave or who are not in an area where they can be removed. We have enclaves at the Embassy, Hotel Ambassador, polo field. The Task Force Commander is sending a senior officer ashore, probably has him there now, to be in touch both with the military authorities, the friendly ones and with the Embassy. Our situation in terms of our own position is strong, but the situation on the other side is simply indeterminate. That at least is the way it reads to me after talking to people around town this morning.

President: Do the rebels have much strength? I thought the General [Wessin y Wessin] had done pretty well with his tanks.

Bundy: But one of his tanks got knocked out, and they aren't in a hurry to go through the town as I understand it now. I think that we're in a situation where the rebels are pretty well into pockets. But if the police lose their courage or if the rebels extend their holdings in the city, you could have yourself a very tough cleaning up operation. And it wouldn't be a happy decision to have to ask the Marines to do that, but I don't think it will come to that in the course of the day. I'll be surprised if it does.

President: We want to be very, very careful not to sit here and let them augment their forces. Where are these Castroites coming from? The inside?

Bundy: This is all inside as I understand it so far. And I'm quite sure I think we ought to make sure the Navy is watching. But I will be very surprised if the Cubans try anything in the way of an invasion. We certainly ought to watch for it because it's not a surprise we want to have get away on us.

President: I sure don't want to wake up a few hours later and say we're awaiting developments and find out Castro's in charge. Now who are we depending on to avoid this? Bennett?

Bundy: Bennett and the Agency; we have a double check. Now the Agency was extremely slow in informing us yesterday and we climbed up and down their back. It's not Raborn's fault but some of his technical people were protecting their goddamn codewords and it took one of their very important messages 5 hours to get here. Bennett, fortunately, was not interrupted; it was very, very good work by Bromley Smith who was feeding that stuff into us yesterday afternoon that allowed us to take those decisions so the troops were in before night-fall. It would have been damn hard to have put them in if we hadn't done it that fast. So we just made it yesterday and we've got all those wires who have been skinned and bruised during the night.

President: They tell me they have been expecting this and anticipating it and CIA has been telling us about it every day. Is that true?

Bundy: I'll have to do a check, but I'll have to say that there was nothing in it that gave me any sense of alarm.

President: Let's do that.

Bundy: The first I knew of it was when Bennett came up here.<sup>2</sup>

President: They're already saying I told you so.

Bundy: You can count on it. There's always some bastard who wants to play that game. I'll have Bromley do a re-check on that.

[Omitted here is a short discussion about Bundy and the President's schedule later that day. Bundy tells the President that he is expected in New York for lunch but offers to stay in Washington if that is what the President prefers. Johnson decides that Bundy should go to New York as planned.]

Bundy: I really think we've got the contingencies taped here so that it is a matter of picking off the order. The only tough part is how to be sure which is the right order. But we can't be absolutely sure. We'll never be sure that they wouldn't have won without the United States. We only know that we could not take that chance. That will be the same shape of the decision from now on out.

President: I don't think we could have been wrong yesterday, I think we will be wrong when we don't do enough, or we go in and do too much. We haven't done anything now but evacuate. But if we become a party to the fact . . .

Bundy: Our problem is to have our force operate as potential and not as operational. That's the exact shape of the problem. And, therefore, there ought to be plenty on the scene and visible so the moral effect will be decisive.

President: Why did he [Bennett] just want 400?

Bundy: I guess he feels that's enough at the moment. I honestly haven't seen the detail of his report.<sup>3</sup>

President: It looks like to me that that's the only weakness thing; I can well understand why he doesn't want them buzzing around. I would certainly raise the question if you are going to have any moral effect, if you are trying to dig out our own people, and if you're trying to locate them in the hinterland.

Bundy: . . . if you want it perfectly clear who's strong . . . ,

President: . . . and if you want excellent intelligence, I don't see why you keep them on a carrier where they can't see anything.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 23.

<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

Bundy: The politics of 400 and of 1,500 are identical it seems to me.

President: I would let them get my intelligence. I'd let them know this and that. You might get some of them killed, that's the only thing. I would think we would likely know more about what's happening, likely to be a greater deterrent; seems to me everything would be in favor of having more people aboard because we could get our people out better, and round them up better.

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**41. Transcript of Teleconference Between the Department of State and the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

April 29, 1965, 2240Z.

Participants: Deputy Under Secy. Mann, Ambassador Bunker, Asst. Sec. Vaughn.

Subject: Dominican Situation.

Santo Domingo Ready.

Present: Amb Bennett and Connett.

*Washington Item 1.*

1. Our assessment here is that a rebel victory would probably lead to a pro-Communist government. Do you agree with this?

2. If this assessment correct then we feel it essential to take whatever action required to forestall this result. Do you think that direct military action is likely to be required for this purpose and to protect American lives?

3. If so you should not hesitate to recommend whatever types of action you feel are needed.

4. Obviously we wish to avoid military action as long as there is reasonable chance junta forces can prevail.

5. Please comment.

*[Santo Domingo] Item 1.*

Agreed.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Exdis.

[1.] The extremists might according to some reports we have name Juan Bosch for appearance sake but they would dominate him and probably discard him quickly.

[2.] Communications continue to be appalling inadequate but weakness of leadership and lack of coordination is fundamental in problem. You can see sorry situation we are dealing with. While forces of left know what they want and have performed with great tactical and strategic proficiency.

3. We are in full concurrence with additional Marine landings now taking place. Others more qualified than I to decide nature and size of forces needed but obviously now that we are in this we must do the full job as needed.

[*name not declassified*] has joined telecon along with ArmAtt and NavAtt.<sup>2</sup>

4. Perhaps additional Marine support will spur counter forces on we will continue do our best prod them. *End Item 1.*

*Washington Item 2.*

Define by streets the area controlled by rebels. (Use ESSO map if you desire.) What is strength and morale of rebel forces?

Are there any other significant rebel elements outside this defined area and if so where?

What is disposition of alliance forces, their strength and their morale?

Why have alliance ground forces not closed with rebels?

*[Santo Domingo] Item 2.*

1. Texaco map in Spanish of DomRep, is one we have used and marked. Area under heavy rebel activity bounded to north by Pedro Livio Cedeno, on west by Avenida Maximo Gomez, to south by Caribbean, and on east by Ozama River. Southeast portion of above area is rebel stronghold.

2. There no significant rebel elements outside this area, although there are groups of snipers.

3. TA air force and Wessin forces just west of Duarte Bridge, less than 1000 men. Rivera Cuestas forces are in northern part of city just west of Maximo Gomez Avenue, number unknown. Portion Montas force occupies palace. Another Montas-Peguero force along coast between fair grounds and conservatory of music; [garble—another

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<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Joseph W. Weyrick and Lieutenant Frederick J. Norris, respectively.

principal] concentration of navy force are of 150 at fair grounds; also naval vessels, available for shore bombardment. Morale is generally low among all units.

4. Discussed in some detail under item 1 para 2.

To summarize: Junta ground forces have not moved toward rebels because of tired unfed troops, lack of adequate communications, and interservice bickering. It looks that way as result weakness inefficiency and indecisiveness of local military leadership as indicated in fact they failed today to take any significant action to close out the situation. Wessin has done little or nothing for last three days but now pleads weariness mechanical troubles with tanks many of his people shot up and troops exhausted. Other commanders take same position and Montas shows complete disorganization as supreme chief of forces. De los Santos has been steadfast but reluctant do any more bombing except in direct support of troops and no action of that type "little or no" has been forthcoming. Army Attaché returned short while ago from San Isidro. His report about same as that of Air Attaché who spent last night there and returned early this morning. Army Attaché found everyone there dead on feet and arguing among themselves as to how job should be done. This is repeat of yesterday (snipers are busy at us again and lights have just gone out). Army Attaché gave those present briefing on classic tactics for securing urban areas they appeared interested and heartened by his briefing and as he was leaving they were actively discussing the points he had made. Whether this means they will do more than talk is somewhat problematical in view of inactivity of yesterday and today despite superiority of forces. At this stage their troops have flagging morale and attachés do not doubt they will be defecting in some numbers tonight. Inaction and indecision has been characteristic of most military commanders on junta side during this crisis. There has been also some San Cristobal political activity going on and with Marine landing yesterday I frankly think they have some feeling—at least some people like Montas Peguero and perhaps Wessin that they can sit back now and let us do an efficient job for them. We should resist getting drawn in this way to maximum extent possible which would not cause operation to fail. In sending Air Attaché to San Isidro a few minutes ago to talk with leadership I instructed him to tell them, in connection with our landings this afternoon, that we do not intend to do their job for them. We can discuss more of that later. When they asked Air Attaché to come to San Isidro just now De Los Santos asked him to set down behind hangars at distance from headquarters this might imply further deterioration in relations between De Los Santos on one hand and Montas group on other. We probably won't know more about this until Fishburn returns. Naval Attaché returned short while ago from meeting with Navy Chief Rivera. He was with

Imbert Luna and Col Casado (in charge 200 men in National Palace). Morale of these officers much higher and they attempting clean up attack toward east with or without approval Montas. Officers complaining their forces are not adequately equipped to fight tanks and automatic weapons. They appear eager to fight and if given proper equipment and means of communication.

SecState Item 2

Para 4 was answered in sense that ground forces have not moved toward rebels because of tired unfed troops, lack of adequate communications, and interservice bickering. *End item.*

*Washington Item 3.*

If our forces secure area north and west of area defined by you as controlled by rebels could Dominican forces secure area controlled by rebels? If not, why not?

What is situation in rest of country? Should we consider sending forces to Santiago, for example?

*[Santo Domingo] Item 3.*

1. No, unless remedies are found for reasons stated in item 2 paragraph 4.

2. Situation in remainder of country presently not grave, but dependent on immediate success or failure of junta forces in capital. We should not consider further deployment at this time.

*Washington Item 4.*

1. We are considering plans for Marines to establish an international safety zone that would enclose an area including the Embassy and polo grounds and the water front between those two points. Do you think this is feasible and useful?

2. Purpose of such an international zone would be to assure safe area for all foreigners. What kind of statement would you recommend be made for the Dominican people when zone is established?

3. What other steps would you feel were necessary to give status to this zone?

*[Santo Domingo] Item 4.*

Believe safety zone of kind described would not be desirable as announced policy because area involved comprises residential area inhabited mostly by upper classes, this would discriminate against Dominican residents of poorer districts. Same purpose could be achieved by representing our advance as logical move stemming from presence our forces in western outskirts of city in cooperative effort with

Dominican forces proceeding from other directions. Regardless of how mission publicly represented, believe it would not be possible to establish completely secure area of size contemplated with forces presently available.

Item 4 paras 2 and 3 not applicable in view of foregoing.

*SecState Item 5.*

Correct list of confrees following have just arrived:

Secy. Rusk

Under Secy. Ball

Secy. McNamara

Gen. Wheeler

Adm. Raborn *End Item 5*

*SecState Item 6.*

On basis confused situation do you have a recommendation as to action we should take within next 6 to 12 hours?

Answer this question prior all others. *End Item 6.*

*[Santo Domingo Item 6].*

Most important action which can be taken within next 12 hours is to commit sufficient troops to do job here rapidly and effectively. This should be complemented by immediate action for large scale logistical supply for needs Dominican people, including military, which suffering from critical shortages of food and medical attention and supplies. This need will increase to very large proportions if present situation is prolonged.

*SecState Item 7.*

1. We would like your political judgement and military judgement of task force commander as to feasibility of operation tonight to seal off downtown section containing heaviest Communist concentration.

2. Would additional forces be needed for operation?

3. Political concept would be to create cordon sanitaire thus establishing enforced cease fire. OAS would then be asked to negotiate political settlement between conflicting sides with United States influence applied to avoid Communist solution.

4. Would appreciate your comments. *End Item 7.*

*[Santo Domingo] Item 7.*

1. From purely political standpoint would be very desirable to seal off downtown section tonight. Military judgement task force commander not available to us since he located on [USS] *Boxer* and we can-

not communicate with him rapidly except by non-secure voice channel. Suggest you communicate with him directly.

2. Chief MAAG and NavAtt, both Marine officers, consider additional forces would be needed.

4. [*sic*] We had ourselves been thinking of operation to seal off downtown section, leaving clean-up there to Dominican forces. However, must emphasize that this western section of city is infested with roving bands and snipers. Marines have just killed fifth of latter on perimeter Embassy grounds. As for negotiation political settlement, bitterness of struggle has hardened both sides against negotiation. We should bear in mind that we are dealing with mad dogs now as regards leftist forces. We should avoid any settlement which would give this group status or foothold in arrangements looking toward legitimate government.

Police Chief Despradel tells us he has been informed from La Romana (south Puerto Rico sugar town) that all is secure there. There is some street fighting but situation under control. 175 there have requested evacuation and we will arrange have boat put in there on route Puerto Rico. Despradel states situation Santiago and other areas apparently secure at this time. He has not heard from Fortaleza Ozama and our military see no way supply it with food.

Situation Latin American Embassies slightly improved through information just received that Imbert furnishing two hundred his men as guards. Ecuadoran told me short while ago he had no one at his Embassy despite many asylees then commented perhaps it just as well to have no one outside to draw attention. He was thinking of police.

*SecState Item 8.*

Nothing further from this end.

If you do not have anything further to send us Washington wishes terminate conference as of 30/0035Z

Advise immediately.

Conferees this end wish you all best of luck.

[Omitted here are comments from Santo Domingo indicating that telephone service was to stop at midnight and a query regarding the arrival in Santo Domingo of an OAS committee.]

**42. Editorial Note**

On April 30, 1965, from 8:30 to 10:45 a.m., a meeting on the Dominican Republic took place in the White House Cabinet Room. Until 9:40 a.m., when President Johnson entered the meeting, Rusk, McNamara, Raborn, General Wheeler, Bromley Smith, Bundy, Valenti, Moyers, Ball, Martin, Dick Goodwin, Mann, and Vance discussed the April 29 OAS meeting (see footnote 2, Document 45); U.S. efforts to send an OAS contingent to the Dominican Republic; and the possibility of sending Martin to the Dominican Republic. Valenti's handwritten notes of the remainder of the meeting follow:

"Martin: Has doubts about the Communists in charge—CIA has no doubts. Rebels are not all of the same stripe. With [American] troops in the country it is difficult to talk with the rebels.

"LBJ: I am not willing to let this island go to Castro. OAS is a phantom—they are taking a siesta while this is on fire. How can we send troops 10,000 miles away and let Castro take over right under our nose. Let's just analyze—we have resisted Communists all over the world: Vietnam, Lebanon, and Greece. What are we doing under our doorstep. We know the rebel leaders are Communist, and we are sitting here waiting on OAS. We know Castro will hate us. We got rid of the dictator and we will now get a real dictator.

"Rusk: We can move through the OAS and achieve what you want. Martin can communicate on two levels 1) with rebels, and 2) with groups who can oppose rebels.

"LBJ: (to McNamara) Why don't you first find out what we need to take that island. Rusk, why don't you determine what it takes to make this take on the right color.

"Bundy: We have no international cover. We have no real legitimacy.

"McNamara: Danger of rebel troops and uprising in the countryside.

"Ball: Danger of junta renouncing us because they sense anti-Communist sentiment.

"McNamara: One to two divisions can clean up the island. We can have one division in 30 hours.

"Bundy: We ought to wait a day. By that time we can have some legitimate cover.

"LBJ: 2 dangers: 1) wind up with [illegible] support with Castro government, 2) or Castro-dominated in a short time. We have done little in the past several days.

"Bundy: We have done a great deal. We are talking about a division going in and we couldn't do that several days ago.

"LBJ: I think enough leaders are there to make it Castro. Not all Cubans were Communist. I am ashamed of the little we have done.

"Ball: But we have done considerable; we have put men ashore without real angry response.

"LBJ: I want McNamara to get ready so that Castro cannot take over.

"McNamara: Before we move, open press corps—show evidence of Castro takeover—evidence irrefutable. Until we act, Castro will be in command of the island—China Reds. Call on Latin American countries to join us in support to crush Communist threat. Call on Dominican Republic citizens to organize their own government. Must have some government to get behind. Asked us to come in to save their island from communism.

"LBJ: I want us to feverishly try to cloak this with legitimacy. We cannot stand with our hand in our pocket and let Castro win. Military get ducks in a row. Diplomats see if we can do anything to get observers in here or troops from other Latin American countries. We are willing to do whatever is necessary to put the pistols down. We will have one of 3 dictators: 1) U.S., 2) Moderate dictator, 3) Castro dictator.

"Bundy: Here are some thoughts that may or may not be helpful to you. One thing is clear: a Castro victory in the D.R. would [be] the worst domestic political disaster we could possibly suffer. But in order to quash Castro in D.R. we need above all else to get hemispheric public opinion on our side. We can do it this way: Before we move call an open press conference. 1. Show indisputable evidence that Castro-Communists are in control in the D.R. (CIA ought to prepare full dossiers) Vital that this [be] proven without a doubt. If can be linked to Chinese reds all the better. 2. Call on D.R. citizens to rise up (if at all possible, a group of responsible D.R. Citizens should cry out for us to save them from Castro). 3. Call on Latin-American countries to join with us—if we can announce 2–3 or 4 countries who are with us all the better). 4. Give the choice: stand by [and] do nothing, let Castro take over or with the OAS and local entreaties move in to quell the Castro people and save this island from black darkness. We must lay the public opinion base—a clear choice: freedom versus Castro; citizens cry out for help versus Castro reds." (Johnson Library, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes)

Sections of Valenti's notes were included in an April 30 report to the President on the Dominican Republic. (Ibid., National Security File, Defense, ND 19/CO 62, 1/1/65–5/5/65)

At 10:05 a.m. on April 30 President Johnson received a telephone call from Abe Fortas who reported that he had talked to Munoz-Marin, Jaime Benitez, and Sanchez-Villejo, the current Governor of Puerto Rico, about the Dominican situation. During their 7-minute conversation,

Fortas recommended that President Johnson pursue four specific lines of action: obtain a cease-fire; get OAS observers to the Dominican Republic; form an “international military peace keeping operation under an OAS team to work toward elections;” and get “Castroites” out of the Dominican Republic. (Ibid., Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.12, Side B, PNO 1)

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#### 43. Editorial Note

According to a history of this crisis prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after the April 30, 1965, meeting on the Dominican Republic (see Document 42): “General Wheeler reviewed Admiral Masterson’s (Commander of Joint Task Force 122, directly under CINCLANT) plan and concluded that assigned forces, particularly the ground elements, were too weak for the task. He alerted the MEB and the airborne divisions and, (the entire 82nd Airborne Division with the 101st Airborne Division ready in reserve) with McNamara’s approval, moved some amphibious shipping from Virginia to North Carolina, near the Marine base at Camp Lejeune. The JCS decided that Lt. Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr. USA, should go to Santo Domingo and take command, under CINCLANT, of all US ground forces in the Dominican Republic. At 1130, Gen. Wheeler gave Gen. Palmer an oral briefing. Gen. Palmer reached San Isidro airfield at midnight. The next morning, May 1, Palmer received the following instructions from General Wheeler:

“Your announced mission is to save US lives. Your unannounced mission is to prevent the Dominican Republic from going Communist. The President has stated that he will not allow another Cuba—you are to take all necessary measures to accomplish this mission. You will be given sufficient forces to do the job.”

A footnote to the preceding paragraph reads: “Msg, JCS 1113 to CINCLANT, 30 APR 65, C, CJCS 091 Dominican Republic (DATA Concerning Roles and Actions of DOD). *Stability Operations, Dominican Republic*, Vol. I, Pt. I, Ch. II, p. 1, S, JMF 9128.4 (4 May 65) sec 1A. Interv, W.S. Poole with GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr., USA (Ret.), 4 Sep 84.”

In April 1965 Lieutenant General Palmer was Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, and under orders to become CG, XVIII Airborne Corps in June. On 7 May he formally took command of all Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force units ashore. When he became Commander, US forces in Dominican Republic, JTF 122 was dissolved. (*JCS and National Policy: 1964–1968*, pages 460–461)

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#### 44. Telephone Conversation Between Abe Fortas and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 30, 1965, 10:50 a.m.

[Omitted here is discussion during which Fortas reported that he had just spoken to Jaime Benitez who had in turn spoken to Bosch. Bosch himself had been talking to Caamaño, the rebel leader. Benitez told Fortas that Caamaño had just captured Fort Ozama and 21 tanks. Abe said Bosch had told Caamaño that he would announce “a military victory” from San Juan and also call for a cease-fire. At this point in the conversation, President Johnson excused himself for a moment to try to get McNamara on the line, but McNamara had just left his office.]

President: I had tried to explain to [McNamara] that I hoped for some prospect of internationalizing this thing: a. To get the OAS to meet again today. They just adjourned until tomorrow and said they decided to sleep today. And try to get some of the sympathetic liberal forces in the hemisphere to send an observer or send a military contingent. We’ve been doing all this for a week; they don’t do it. They’re killing our people and as you say they have captured tanks now; they’re taking over the police marching them down the street and they got a hundred of them as hostages. Our CIA says this is a completely led, operated, dominated—they’ve got men on the inside of it; it’s a Castro operation. It started out as a Bosch operation but he’s been moved completely out of the picture. They shoved them out and completely took over.

Fortas: Mr. President this may very well be true. I don’t doubt it. I have a very simple point which is that our first objective is to make it clear that Bosch is calling for a cease fire.

President: Well if we can do that before they take everything they’ve got and set up their government.

Fortas: It [the cease-fire] should be happening right now.

President: That’s good. I want you to tell [McNamara] this.

[At this point Fortas tells President Johnson that Benitez had told him that Bosch had contacted Caamaño and wanted him to accept a cease-fire.]

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.12, Side B, PNO 2 and 3. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. Abe Fortas placed the telephone call to President Johnson; they talked for approximately 15 minutes. This conversation occurred immediately after a meeting on the Dominican Republic in the White House Cabinet Room; see Documents 42 and 43.

President: The difficulty, though, is if Bosch is their [the rebels'] captive. Where are the American interests, what do we do?

Fortas: I think the first thing we should do, Mr. President, is to show that this is a Castro-Communist operation. The most dramatic way of doing this is to have Bosch call for a cease-fire and let those damn guys continue fighting.

President: Not going to be anything to fight though, Abe, because they [rebels] will have it [the Dominican Republic.]

Fortas: This is right now.

President: Yes, as I say, if they got the tanks and if the people are capitulating, and if they got all the police, will there be anybody left to fight? It looks like they will have it.

Fortas: Mr. President, if Bosch calls for a cease-fire and Wessin agrees to it, they'll continue fighting, the Communists [will] continue fighting.

President: They won't; they'll just take charge and start running the government, I think.

Fortas: I don't see how they could do that [inaudible].

President: We're not stopping them from running the government. Since last Saturday,<sup>2</sup> Bosch lasted for a few hours, then Castro started operating; they got 45 more in there last night—trained, Castro-trained, Castro-operated people. We're doing nothing to them. They started firing, they came in here last night and said to me at 7 o'clock that we've got 900 men, the most elite force in Santo Domingo holed up here in prison.<sup>3</sup> Now, what do we do about it? I said let's protect them. "No, we can't do that," because that would be partiality. I said, well let's get them out and evacuate them and get them to another part of the island. Oh, we can't do that because that would be sending our Navy in and the Ambassador says that would be showing partiality. And then I said, let's get the Dominican Navy to evacuate them from the Communists. They said all right, we'll do that. [At] 2:30 they called me and said they couldn't get the Dominican Navy because it was in machine gun fire and the Dominican Navy didn't want anything to do with it.<sup>4</sup> So, I get up this morning and they take 900 of the people who are not Communists, the best police we have got on the island, and the Com-

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<sup>2</sup> April 24.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably President Johnson is referring to an April 29 meeting on the Dominican Republic held in the White House Cabinet Room from 7:30 to 9:10 p.m. In addition to the President, Rusk, Raborn, Mann, General Wheeler, Helms, Vaughn, Bundy, and Moyers attended the meeting. (Johnson Library, President's Daily Diary) No other record of this meeting has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

munists have taken them. So they had added 900 to their strength of 1900 and marched them down the streets of Santo Domingo with guns to their backs and they're taking a hundred of them and saying "we're going to kill you" unless these people quit and give up. They haven't eaten in three days and are about ready to give up. The question is what does the United States do? We've done this now for a week—nothing; we've done nothing because we don't want to be partial. But they are firing consistently every hour on our Embassy and when we can locate a sniper we shoot at them and we kill four or five. But the OAS spent all night denouncing us. We finally got a cease fire out of them.

Here's what I think we ought to do: I think we ought to get the CIA to give us name, address, chapter and verse—I don't mean to surface all that, but I mean to show that we got proof so that a lawyer like you [could] say that this is a case of Cuba doing this job; that's number one. Number two, we ought to have our military forces in sufficient quantity, an adequate number appropriate ready to take that island. If we can get any other forces to join us well and good. Before we act we'll try that, but to take that island so that Castro doesn't take it. Next thing, we ought to try to get a cease-fire. Next, we ought to try to get the OAS to send a team in today instead of sleeping through the day. Next, I think we ought to invite the OAS, any of their countries, or anybody else for that matter who wants to prevent bloodshed and to preserve peace to go in and join with us to be sure it's not just a United States operation. But if all this fails I'm not going to sit here and say I think down the road I can work it out after a Communist government sets up and starts issuing orders.

[Omitted here is discussion between McNamara and Fortas who recounted to McNamara what he had earlier told the President regarding Bosch and his agreement to call for a cease-fire. They also discussed who would contact Latin American Ambassadors such as Venezuela's Leoni to garner their support.]

45. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 30, 1965, 11:36 a.m.

695. Following are high points of US policy towards current crisis:

1. Last night OAS Council called for a cease-fire.<sup>2</sup> You should therefore use your influence to persuade Junta forces that no useful purpose will be served by rash or ill-advised military action. This does not mean of course that they should not defend themselves against attack. Their most important immediate risk is to preserve their existence as organized Dominican force as base for earliest possible effective expansion.

2. Junta should understand that crisis is entering a political phase and they should make every effort to capitalize on their position as the only existing organized authority in the Dominican Republic. They should use this position in order to ensure that OAS action will not result in ascendancy of communist groups to political power in the Dominican Republic. Our tactics will be designed to support Junta in the achievement of this objective.

3. We are seriously concerned with change in Junta attitude regarding role of US military forces. It may be that Junta believes that US intends to attack and eliminate rebel forces in the city. US immediate objective is to establish safety zone referred to in last night's OAS Council resolution. In so far as US military forces in San Isidro are concerned, immediate objective is to secure their position there and Ozama bridges leading to it. Strictly FYI: Subject to later developments, second phase of plan would be to establish a defensive line around rebel held portion of city so as to contain them there and give Junta forces opportunity to rest and re-group and to establish its authority over balance of city and countryside. End strictly FYI.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65–5/31/65. Secret; Flash. Drafted and approved by Mann.

<sup>2</sup> By request of the United States, the OAS Council of Ministers met on April 29 in Washington from 10 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. and adopted two resolutions. The second called for an immediate cease-fire and the establishment of "an international neutral zone of refuge" in the Santo Domingo area. This resolution was introduced by the United States and was adopted by a vote of 16 to 0, with 4 abstentions (Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela). (*American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1965*, pp. 958–959) The first resolution adopted called, in part, for a "Meeting of the Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OAS May 1, 1965" and "to approve as the agenda for this Meeting the serious situation created by the armed strife in the Dominican Republic." This resolution, introduced by Chile, was adopted by a vote of 18 to 1 (Uruguay), with 1 abstention (Dominican Republic). (*Department of State Bulletin, May 17, 1965*, p. 739)

4. You should point out to Junta leaders that OAS last night made an "urgent appeal" to "permit the immediate establishment of international neutral zone of refuge encompassing the geographic area of the City of Santo Domingo immediately surrounding the Embassies of foreign governments". Point out to Junta that our hope is that the establishment of such a zone by US forces will not be opposed by rebel forces and that such a zone will considerably reduce the perimeter which the Junta itself is obliged to defend. Junta cooperation to this end is essential.

5. You should solicit assistance Diplomatic Corps to carry out last night's appeal of COAS for cease-fire and for establishment of safety zone.

Rusk

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**46. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 30, 1965, 12:03 p.m.

696. We have been informed by Mora that Nuncio in Santo Domingo has agreement of Colonel Benoit, Bosch and Molina Urena for a cease-fire subject to following two conditions:

1. Guarantee of personal safety of all individuals on both sides regardless of ideology or band with which operating including those in jail or in asylum.

2. A commission of the OAS should act as arbitrator between the two sides.

Mora asked on behalf of Nuncio that we make available helicopter to transport Nuncio to San Isidro for conversations with Junta representatives. You will recall that Nuncio in trying to arrange cease fire is acting pursuant to COAS request.

We share your apprehensions expressed to Mann this morning by telephone that Nuncio may undermine moral of Junta forces and leaders.<sup>2</sup> We are particularly concerned that Junta may regard Nuncio as

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash. Drafted and approved by Mann and cleared by Grant G. Hilliker (S/S). Repeated to CINCLANT and DOD.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

US spokesman if he covers points other than those mentioned above. You should therefore contact Wessin and key leaders in Junta, including especially those now at San Isidro, and inform them of firm US determination to prevent communist take-over in Santo Domingo and strategy outlined in Deptel 695.<sup>3</sup> Once Junta leaders are fully informed of our position and once you have made clear that we do not know and would not necessarily support all suggestions that Nuncio may make, you should make helicopter available to Nuncio. All of this should be done as quickly as possible as USG does not wish to be in position of impeding Nuncio's efforts to carry out COAS request. Nuncio being advised through Mora to contact you.

**Rusk**

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<sup>3</sup> Document 45.

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#### **47. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 30, 1965, 12:18 p.m.

698. Department just informed that Bosch has, or shortly will, make a radio appeal to rebel forces in Santo Domingo for a ceasefire. Our reports are that he will boast of rebel victory but state that further bloodshed is unnecessary.

If Bosch does appeal for a ceasefire, this will be consistent with our own policy and with strategy outlined in Deptel 695.<sup>2</sup>

You should immediately inform Junta officials, including particularly Wessin, of foregoing and recommend to them that Junta make a similar appeal for a ceasefire including as appropriate expressions of Junta confidence that democracy will prevail and expression of confidence in strength of Junta armed forces.

You should also request Admiral Masterson to send best qualified officer on his staff to Junta headquarters for purpose of improving their

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash. Drafted by Mann, cleared by Read, and approved by Ball. Repeated to CINCLANT and DOD.

<sup>2</sup> Document 45.

morale, act as general adviser on military tactics, and arrange for whatever supplies and equipment Junta may be urgently in need of. Adequate communication facilities between Junta headquarters and Task Force headquarters should be established soonest by US military. Instructions are being issued by Defense direct to Masterson.

**Rusk**

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#### 48. Editorial Note

On April 30, 1965, President Johnson held several telephone conversations with his top advisers between 5 and 7 p.m. on a proposed statement to the press regarding Communist involvement in the Dominican crisis. In the first of these conversations with Secretary of Defense McNamara at 5:05 p.m., McNamara expressed his strong belief that the President of the United States should not be the person to "point a finger to the Communists' participation in this." McNamara thought President Johnson would have "a pretty tough job proving that the Inter-American system was being menaced by powers outside the republic and were trying to gain control." President Johnson responded, "We all know they are. What is wrong with my saying it?" McNamara said, "The rest of us can say things like that and we don't have to prove it, but you have got a handful of people there but you don't know that Castro is trying to do anything. You would have a hard time proving to any group that Castro has done more than train these people, and we have trained a lot of people and he has trained a lot of people. I think it puts your own status and prestige too much on the line. The rest of the statement I think is excellent, but to say you as President [have] personal knowledge that powers outside the hemisphere are trying to subvert this government or those people, I don't think you are in a very strong position to say that."

President Johnson asked if the CIA could document Castro's involvement and McNamara replied that he didn't think so. He thought the CIA might show certain people were trained in Cuba, but not that Castro was directing the training. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, Tape F65.14, Side A, PNO 6)

At 5:40 p.m. McNamara and President Johnson resumed their telephone conversation about the press statement. President Johnson opened the conversation by saying, with a sense of urgency, "I have this feeling if we don't take over that island within the next 24 hours

or before the last man folds, we never will. I may be wrong, but if I am wrong I want you to tell me." McNamara responded by again expressing his objections to a statement that includes a sentence "people trained outside [the Dominican Republic] are seeking to gain control." Bill Moyers, who was in the President's office at the time of this conversation, added that he thought such a sentence was unnecessary and to include it "would raise the prestige and status of the Cubans because it declares publicly that "we believe the Communists are behind this." (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, Tape F65.14, Side A, PNO 7)

By 6 p.m. when President Johnson talked to McGeorge Bundy on the telephone, the final draft of the press statement was still not approved by the President's top advisers. During their conversation Bundy promised the President that he would have a statement before the close of business that evening. President Johnson fearing that would be too late responded:

"I think while we were talking yesterday we ought to have been acting. I think we ought to have been doing yesterday what we did today. I think we finally got some people doing something today. I think they're going to have that island in another 24 hours. I think we've got no basis for any action. I think this statement is a predicate and kind of puts your hand up your dress. Morse has just made his speech; he compliments us but he said our only basis of action is to keep the Communists from taking over. We won't even admit that there's anybody down there, that there is any conspiracy. We have run under the table and hid and told them nothing . . . I know that when we go all day in a hot situation like this without saying anything, and wait until late in the evening until they [the OAS] act, I know that we are going to look like we are just a bunch of interveners and not peacemakers at all."

Bundy replied that he still felt the President could get his point across by "hinting to these things . . . by sticking to our existing position." The conversation ended with the President saying he really wanted to deliver a statement and hoped his advisers would soon reach agreement on a draft. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.14, Side A, PNO 10)

At 6:25 p.m. McNamara placed a telephone call to President Johnson. Again they debated the contents of what would become the fourth paragraph in the final version of the statement. President Johnson informed McNamara that Rusk had voiced his objections to the President's statement saying "there are disturbing signs" in the Dominican Republic because to do so would be to "take on the liberals" and "the Communists." McNamara agreed and advocated that the President deliver a statement without reference to the line in question, even if it was "just a handout to the press." But President Johnson did not completely agree. He said: "What worries me, Bob, is that I'm not being

quite honest with them. I think we do know and every citizen of this country knows that there are disturbing signs there, and there are people trained outside in there, and I think if I don't say so it looks like I'm concealing it and trying to cover up." McNamara said that with or without the sentence in question he thought any statement would be worthwhile. The conversation ended with President Johnson undecided about whether he should deliver the statement. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, Tape F65.14, Side B, PNO 2)

At 6:30 p.m. President Johnson telephoned Rusk to seek his approval on the latest version of the statement. This version replaced the word "powers" with the word "people" in the sentence "powers trained outside the Dominican Republic are seeking to gain control of the rebel movement," a veiled reference to Cuba. Rusk said he agreed with this change because "it separates the Bosch people from the Communists." Mann and Ball who were in Rusk's office at the time of this telephone call concurred. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Dean Rusk, Tape F65.14, Side B, PNO 3)

President Johnson held one last telephone conversation with McGeorge Bundy at 6:35 p.m. before he decided to deliver his statement at 7:07 p.m. in the Theater at the White House. The text of the statement is in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*, Book I, pages 465–466. During this conversation Bundy told the President he still felt that the latest version of the statement might commit the President to a "civil war against Communists that aren't in charge." Bundy said that although the CIA had identified eight Communist-trained rebels, "nobody has yet said that anyone of these Communists is actually in command of a column." Bundy said he "wasn't sure that these Communists were that much in control of this messy movement," and he "wouldn't this evening point the finger that hard at the Communists." After Bundy and the President "doctored down" the language by removing the words "disturbing" and "dangerous elements" from the fourth paragraph, the President asked one last question: did Bundy think delivering the statement would "handicap" them. Bundy said, "no, not too much." With that response the President ended the conversation. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.14, Side B, PNO 4) The portions of the conversations printed here were prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

49. **Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 1, 1965.

*The General Situation at My Desk at 6:30 PM*

1. I talked to Fortas,<sup>2</sup> and he talked to Bosch. His general conclusion is that Bosch is essentially out of control and probably that Colonel Camano is also out of control. Bosch is bitter and lays all of the responsibility to our failure to communicate, to Ambassador Bennett's vindictiveness, our failure to respond to Colonel Camano's complaints of firing by our troops, and to Ambassador Martin's failure to communicate effectively between the Commanding General and Colonel Camano.

Abe told him that all this was irrelevant and that the essential point now is that the rebels are still firing in a time of cease-fire and that no one could answer for the consequences if this firing did not stop. Abe does not think we can expect much from this and suggested a desperate effort by John Martin to re-establish contact in the city and press for observance of the cease-fire. Earlier in the day we sent Martin a flash message to this purpose.<sup>3</sup> Tom Mann is now sending him another.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, both State and Defense have asked their men on the spot for their immediate recommendations on action this evening, but my own belief is that we must stick with the cease-fire, unless all hell breaks loose in a quite literal sense, until after we get the OAS Commission on the spot.

2. We have sent strong personal messages using your name to Gordon in Brazil, to Harriman in Colombia, and to Bernbaum in

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Memos to the President, McGeorge Bundy, Vol. X, 4/15–5/31/65. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> On April 30 at 12:45 p.m. President Johnson informed Mann during a telephone conversation that Abe Fortas was being "transferred" to him. Essentially this meant Fortas was now to work closely with Mann and other top Presidential advisers on the Dominican crisis. (Johnson Library, Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, Jan. 14, 1964–April 30, 1965)

<sup>3</sup> Not found. Former U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic John B. Martin who left Santo Domingo on September 28, 1963, arrived in Washington from Connecticut the morning of April 30 on request of President Johnson, and met with the President and other advisers in the White House Cabinet Room from 8:30 to 10:45 a.m. that morning (see Document 42). During this meeting the President wanted Martin "to help the OAS and the [Papal] Nuncio [Monsignor Clarizio] get a cease-fire, stop the bloodshed and to report the facts to the President." (Martin, *Overtaken By Events*, p. 661) It was decided that Martin would be most helpful if he were in Santo Domingo. Martin and Shlaudeman arrived in Santo Domingo at 4:45 p.m., April 30.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

Venezuela.<sup>5</sup> (Moscoso had his talk with Leoni and went right back to Puerto Rico, to my great astonishment.)<sup>6</sup> We have no answer back but we should know more by morning. Mann has done a similar job in other countries and is sending you a separate report.<sup>7</sup>

3. I talked to Kilpatrick of the *Post* and Frankel of the *Times*, and Bromley talked to Gulick of the AP, to brief on our intelligence that Communists are more and more active and Bosch's own party more and more scattered to asylum and hiding. This was all "Government sources," not White House. Bromley gave Gulick the figure of 58—Gulick had tried 53 on him first.

We spend much of the day trying to find the first Costa Ricans for the right Liberal to speak to, and Tom Mann and I finally settled on John Reilly of Hubert Humphrey's office. Reilly is to go to Costa Rica at once. He is friendly with the men who are said to have most influence with Orlich,<sup>8</sup> and he is to make the strongest possible pitch for token troops—Costa Rica has no Army but a few police would be a great help.

4. The task force you ordered is set up and at work. It met at 3 this afternoon and meets again at 9:30 in the morning. Its members are Bundy, Mann, Vance, Wilson, Helms, with one expert each.<sup>9</sup> This

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<sup>5</sup> A May 1 memorandum from Read to McGeorge Bundy indicates that these messages conveyed a request from President Johnson to Latin American governments for contributions of ground, air, or naval units to the American forces already present in the Dominican Republic. Read informed Bundy that Brazil and Venezuela had agreed to contribute troops to an Inter-American Peace Force, but Chile had not. Read also told Bundy that Colombia's response had not yet been obtained by Ambassador Harriman who had just arrived in that country to speak with its President. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III)

<sup>6</sup> A meeting between Teodoro Moscoso, consultant to President Johnson and former U.S. Representative on the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress, and Raul Leoni, President of Venezuela, took place in Caracas on April 30. According to telegram 1439 from Caracas, May 1, President Leoni favored an "OAS Evaluation Committee" comprised of Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela, and was very interested in the idea of an "OAS Trusteeship" for the Dominican Republic. (Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Dominican Crisis 1965, Background Documents)

<sup>7</sup> Not found.

<sup>8</sup> Francisco Orlich, President of Costa Rica.

<sup>9</sup> A meeting on the situation in the Dominican Republic was held in the White House Cabinet Room on May 1 from 8:40–10:35 a.m. In addition to President Johnson, who joined the meeting at 9:40 a.m., the following attended: Marvin Watson, Rusk, McNamara, Raborn, Carl Rowan, Bunker, Ball, General Wheeler, Mann, Valenti, Moyers, Richard Goodwin, Bromley Smith, McGeorge Bundy, and Averell Harriman, who left the meeting at 9:35 a.m. During this meeting President Johnson expressed his unhappiness with "the CIA information coming in" and wanted a task force made up of Helms, Mann, and Vance to "study the situation everyday." Handwritten notes of this meeting taken by Jack Valenti are in the Johnson Library, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes, Meeting in Cabinet Room, May 1, 1965, 8:40 a.m. Participation in this task force included other high-level advisers on the Dominican Republic from the CIA, the Department of Defense, USIA, AID, and other agencies as necessitated. The "Dominican Task Force" usually met in the morning at the White House and because Bundy was its chairman it was also known as the "Bundy Committee."

afternoon we settled a number of odds and ends like gas and the draft statement. We also ordered contingent military planning for both a tight cordon inside the city and a wider cordon outside the heavily built-up area. On the political side we cleared the revised instructions to Bunker and reinforced existing efforts for longer-range planning.<sup>10</sup> But after considerable discussion we agreed with Mann that the situation on the ground is decisive and we will have to play the political moves by ear, and day-by-day. Mann went off to see Betancourt, and I strongly urged him to give Betancourt encouragement and keep the Betancourt plan<sup>11</sup> in the air. Tom himself is very skeptical on this but he agreed not to throw cold water on the plan.

**McG. B.**

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<sup>10</sup> Not found.

<sup>11</sup> Two telegrams, 010729Z and 810239Z, both dated May 1, from the CIA to the Director of the National Security Agency reported that José Figueres, former President of Costa Rica, and Romulo Betancourt, former President of Venezuela, discussed the previous day the possibility of introducing a motion to the OAS Council on May 1 calling for the establishment of a four-nation (Venezuela, Costa Rica, Colombia, United States) military and governmental command in the Dominican Republic. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III) In a May 1 memorandum on the Betancourt proposal to McGeorge Bundy, Bowdler wrote: "In reflecting on this proposal, I think it is unrealistic to believe that the OAS would authorize a given number of countries to form, in effect, a government to administer the DR. The proposal would be more palatable and sellable to the Latins if it were carried out behind the facade of a Dominican Provisional Government asking for OAS administrative and military support, the lion's share of which we would furnish." (Ibid., NSC Histories, Dominican Republic Crisis 1965, Background Documents)

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## 50. Intelligence Memorandum<sup>1</sup>

OCI No. 1496/65

Washington, May 2, 1965.

### SITUATION AND OUTLOOK IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

#### 1. *Military Position*

The rebel forces continue to dominate the military situation and are apparently using the tenuous cease fire to strengthen their posi-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, CIA Situation Reports, 5/65. Secret; No Foreign Dissem. Prepared in the Office of Current Intelligence. A handwritten notation on the memorandum reads: "President has seen."

tions. Numbering between two and five thousand, they are concentrated in the southeastern area of the city. The rebels appear to be well armed, adequately supplied and determined to continue the fight.

## 2. *Loyalist Forces*

The loyalist forces are completely inadequate even to police the cease fire. Most of the troops under Brigadier General Wessin y Wessin, numbering about 1,250 men, have withdrawn to the east side of the Duarte Bridge for their own safety. Brigadier General Salvador Montas Guerrero with about 200 men has apparently abandoned the National Palace leaving the entire southeastern area under rebel control. Army Chief Rivera Cuesta is commanding about 400 troops in the northwestern part of the city and 1,200 naval combat troops are deployed around the fair grounds. Approximately 2,400 police are defending their headquarters and the police radio station. There are no other loyalist troops in the city.

## 3. *US Forces*

As of 0430 EDT US military forces in the Dominican Republic totalled 7,874—including 2,955 Marines and 4,919 Army troops. Marine casualties are two killed and 20 wounded; Army casualties are one killed, another probably killed and 16 wounded. A large gap still remains between the 82nd Airborne and the Marine phase line in the western part of the city. Many of the Army casualties occurred early last night when a patrol was sent from the Army beachhead at the Duarte Bridge to the Marine phase line.

## 4. *The Interior*

Various reports show that the interior generally remains calm and this may indicate a lack of sympathy for the rebel cause. The longer the present situation exists, however, the greater is the chance that the countryside will grow more restive. A report via ham radio last night from the US Consul in Santiago, the country's second largest city, stated that while all communications are out, conditions in the consular district are generally good, with Dominican military and police units in effective control. The highway to Santiago remains closed since rebels reportedly overran a police post at Villa Altagracia yesterday.

## 5. *General Political Situation*

Neither the rebels nor the loyalists now appear to have the ability or the means to form an effective instrument of national political control. The rebels, aside from their insistence that the "constitutional forces" take over the government, are believed to be thoroughly divided over how this should properly be done and who should play what role. This fragmentation serves only the purposes of the Communists and extremists who now dominate the rebel movement.

Another factor favoring the Communists is an apparent lack of widespread popular support for Bosch himself to return and take over the government. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] yesterday found more enthusiasm for “constitutionality” per se than for Bosch during their talks with Dominicans in Santo Domingo hospitals. In addition, the loyalist force and its junta have no one in whom the public has any confidence.

#### 6. *Latin American Reactions*

Reaction thus far has generally been fairly restrained, except in the case of Castro’s Cuba, but an increasingly active role by US military forces now present in the Dominican Republic would probably result in an almost universal condemnation of the US and in a flurry of violent attacks on US installations around the hemisphere. Most informed Latin American officials at the moment probably have little or no sympathy for the Communists and extremists whom they have learned are dominating the Dominican rebel forces. By the same token, however, neither do they have any sympathy for the military forces such as General Wessin and other officers leading the loyalist forces. Any sudden change for the better in the loyalists’ fortunes would be viewed with deep suspicion by most other Latin American countries.

#### 7. *Conclusions*

(a) Neither of the contending forces in the capital is now capable of imposing its will on the other. The loyalists are weak, disorganized, and lack popular support. The rebels, although strongly ribbed by well-trained extremist leaders and in command of the most populous parts of the capital, cannot significantly expand their position in the city as long as US troops remain.

(b) The rebels probably have two immediate goals: (1) to use the present lull to consolidate their positions in the capital and to stimulate provincial areas to declare for them; and (2) to insure themselves a “large piece” of whatever arrangement the OAS authorities are finally able to put together.

(c) As the present situation becomes more fixed, we believe the status of the rebel forces will receive increasing if grudging support from other Latin Americans. Certainly the international repugnance to any effort to “clean out” the rebel area will grow as each day passes. This could, of course, be reversed if the rebels should become aggressive and persistently violate the truce.

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**51. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 2, 1965.

## SUBJECT

Meeting on the Dominican Republic—May 2, 1965

## PARTICIPANTS

Secretary McNamara, Mr. Vance, Mr. McNaughton, Mr. Mann, Mr. Greenfield, Mr. Crockett, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Gaud, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Helms, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Bundy, Mr. Moyers, Mr. Chase

Attached is a list of the decisions taken at the meeting.<sup>2</sup> The following points were also made, although it should be noted that this may not be a comprehensive report in view of the fact that I was out of the meeting room on several occasions:

1. *Information*—Mr. Bundy and others noted that the President is very keen to get an information operation going at top speed in the Dominican Republic. A number of ideas were discussed. For example, CIA should turn its transmitter over to USIA. *Second*, we should talk to the appropriate people about broadcasting from Puerto Rico; in this regard, we should probably use the station that Bosch is using since people are already listening to it. *Third*, DOD should supply USIA with any additional equipment that USIA might not have readily available. *Fourth*, we should take some action with respect to jamming rebel broadcasts.

One object of the information operation should be to make it clear that we are not tied closely to Wessin. This is hurting us with the Dominican people.

2. *The Military Situation*—It was reported that the President wanted to get two more battalions of troops into the Dominican Republic as soon as possible. In this regard, Secretary McNamara said that the troops in question would be in the Dominican Republic by May 3.

Mr. Vance gave the details on three possible plans to isolate the rebels. *Plan A* would be the tightest perimeter and would close most of the rebels off in the southeast corner of the city. This would take two

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of Gordon Chase, Meetings on the Dominican Republic Planning Group. Secret; Eyes Only; No Distribution. Drafted on May 4 by Chase. This is a record of a "Dominican Task Force" meeting. Although no time appears on the memorandum, Document 49 indicates that a meeting of this group was scheduled to take place at 9:30 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed.

divisions to set up, 7 days to complete, and involve heavy casualties. *Plan B*, which would start a little north of the bridge and move west-southwest, would give the rebels more room. It would take one division to set up, 24 hours to complete, and involve medium casualties. *Plan C*, which would give the rebels all of Santo Domingo, would take 3 to 5 days to complete and one division and one brigade to hold. It would involve the fewest casualties.

Mr. Vance reported that General Wheeler recommended *Plan B*, and after considerable discussion, the group agreed. Among other things, the heavy casualties made *Plan A* unacceptable. Among other things, *Plan C* would give the rebels the whole city; they could credibly declare a provisional government. Among other things, *Plan B* was quick, militarily the soundest, and, in fact, could be accomplished by less than a division. It would close in most of the rebels; if there was a subsequent problem, *Plan C* could be added on to *Plan B*.

3. *Role of the OAS Commission*—The group discussed in detail the ways and means of making *Plan B* politically acceptable. The group agreed that we should try to get the OAS Commission to recommend the establishment of a “line of communications.” This recommendation could be a part of a series of such recommendations as the following: (a) a request for a cease-fire; (b) a call for all civilians to turn in their arms; (c) a request for the provision of relief.

4. *Relief*—The group talked about setting up a relief operation in the city. Tony Solomon was chosen as the man in charge and it was agreed that he should receive energetic support from DOD. In this regard, one of the main objectives of the relief operation is to make it clear that our soldiers do other things besides fire weapons at Dominicans.

5. *Political Problems in the Dominican Republic*—The group discussed the political problems brought about by the present crisis. Here are some of the points which were made:

(a) It might be desirable to get a team of such people as Betancourt and Figueres to go to the Dominican Republic and to act as advisors to whatever government is put together.

(b) As a start towards establishing some order, Mr. Mann mentioned the desirability of establishing three councils of the provinces. One advantage would be to ensure that there would not be places in the hinterlands where the rebels are the only points of authority.

(c) The group discussed the problem of how we move away from the junta. It was generally agreed that, while we need a civilian government and while we are not enamored by Wessin, we may not yet want to go too far in leaning away from the junta; it would probably break completely whatever authority the junta still has.

The group agreed that we ought to guard against giving the rebels any political stature at this time.

(d) In discussing possible Dominican leaders, the name of Tony Imbert came up. Mr. Mann said that, even though he is no jewel, he might be one of the best of a sorry lot. While he has played footsie with the Communists, Imbert is not a Communist, is tough, and could never be accused of being a Trujillo man; in this latter regard, he was the man who pulled the trigger on Trujillo.

The possibility of using Balaguer was discussed. Mr. Fitzgerald made the point that if Balaguer were used as an interim provisional leader, he would be out of the running as a long-term leader in the future; this would be too bad. The group decided, however, that the situation is so critical that options involving Balaguer should be explored further.

(e) The group agreed that Bosch should not go to the Dominican Republic. Instead, he should be requested to broadcast, from Puerto Rico, his call to Dominicans to lay down their arms.

6. *Press Handling*—Mr. Greenfield urged that we more openly discuss the Communist angle of the Dominican situation; our evacuation fig leaf is just not all that credible. Most of the group, however, believed that, on May 3 at least, we should speak relatively softly on this angle and concentrate attention on the relief aspects of the Dominican operation.

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## 52. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 2, 1965, 2:42 p.m.

742. Please get in touch with OAS Commission and Mora soonest<sup>2</sup> and inform them on strictly confidential basis (they should understand clearly that this is secret for time being) that US finds it

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash. Drafted and approved by Mann.

<sup>2</sup> On May 1 OAS Secretary General José A. Mora of Costa Rica arrived in Santo Domingo at 9 a.m.; the next day the OAS Commission arrived in Santo Domingo at noon. This commission comprised members of five countries: Ambassador Richard M. Colombo of Argentina, Ambassador Ilmar Penna Marinho of Brazil, Ambassador Alfredo Vasquez Carrisoza of Colombia, Ambassador Carlos Garcia Bauer of Guatemala, and Ambassador Frank Morrice, Jr., of Panama.

necessary to maintain line of communication (line of communication instead of "cordon" or other words is the phrase that should be uniformly used) between the safety perimeter which contains a part of US armed forces and across to Duarte Bridge and on to San Isidro airfield where other part of US armed forces are located.

This line of communication must be maintained for protection of zone and to maintain access to airfield so as to make possible evacuation of persons of all nationalities. Also overland communication between San Isidro and safety zone is necessary for elementary military reasons.

Endeavor obtain from OAS Commission:

(a) Tacit or if possible expressed recognition that maintenance of essential line of communication is not violation of cease fire and is not aggressive in design.

(b) Request that line of communication between San Isidro and safety zone be maintained.

(c) OAS Commission statement to Dominican people to be made by best means available and to be timed not more than fifteen minutes in advance of departure of US forces from Duarte Bridge towards safety zone.

Hopefully this announcement would prevent forces between the bridge and the safety zone from misinterpreting maintenance of communication line as offensive against them and hence reduce bloodshed.

We leave exact hour of announcement to you and General Palmer inasmuch as we do not yet know the exact hour of departure of US forces from Duarte Bridge. Repeat it is important that announcement be coordinated closely with departure so as not to give excessive advance opportunity to hostile forces to group along communication line.

Strictly FYI. Line of communication will be essentially the one scouted yesterday by 82nd Airborne patrol. Establishment of other possible perimeters have been considered and discarded. We understand that Defense wishes that movement be made in daylight hours. If we receive Commission approval in time to proceed this afternoon, this will be done. Otherwise it is planned that movement will take place tomorrow morning. Would therefore appreciate early estimate on when we may expect word from you regarding OAS Commission's reaction.

We will maintain line of communication irrespective of attitude of Commission. But we think that cooperation of Commission gives us political base and hopefully reduces dimensions of fighting. It would be good if you could get agreement from Commission on all three points but any one of three would be better than none.

Defense is issuing necessary instructions along these general lines to General Palmer. End strictly FYI.

**Rusk**

53. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 2, 1965, 6:44 p.m.

752. In addition to subject of Deptel 742<sup>2</sup> you should in your discretion suggest to OAS Committee that it;

1. Repeat appeal for cease-fire.
2. Request all civilians to turn in arms at place or places to be selected and designated by the Committee (police and regular military personnel on both sides to be exempted for time being).
3. If feasible, offer refuge in safety zone to women, children and non-combatants in rebel-held areas and designate point or points of entry where they can be screened. We are hopeful that food, medicines and some facilities may be available for safety zone but do not know when this can be accomplished.
4. Assume responsibility for provision of relief to people of entire country on basis agreeable to Embassy and US military in coordination with Solomon.
5. Call on both sides for a release of prisoners and hostages and to permit asylees in all Embassies to pass through city in safety for evacuation.

The action suggested in this paragraph on the assumption that such a call will not embarrass Junta at this time. Please check this.

**Rusk**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate. Drafted and approved by Mann and cleared by Vaughn.

<sup>2</sup> Document 52.

54. **Memorandum From the Director of the U.S. Information Agency (Rowan) to President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 2, 1965.

During the last 24 hours I have taken the following actions to explain and win support for United States actions and policies in the Dominican Republic:

1. The Voice of America, which normally does not broadcast in Spanish from 12:30 a.m. to 7 a.m., was put on a round-the-clock basis. The VOA is clearly audible in the Dominican Republic and the rest of Latin America, both from the two medium wave transmitters in the Florida Keys and from our transmitters in North Carolina which constitute the most powerful single shortwave complex in the world.

2. I stayed throughout the night, along with other senior officers, to direct the writing and editing of VOA commentaries which made major policy points such as:

- a. The humanitarian mission of our troops.
- b. U.S. support for and reliance on the inter-American system.
- c. The U.S. goal of enabling the Dominican people to choose freely a government of social justice and democracy.
- d. The widespread suspicion in Latin America that Communists and Castroites are involved in the Dominican upheaval.
- e. The impartial nature of the activities of American troops in the Dominican Republic.

In addition to the specially prepared commentaries designed to meet the major points of misunderstanding, or Communist propaganda, the VOA made heavy and repeated use of your two statements of last night,<sup>2</sup> with particular emphasis on your declaration that the U.S. does not want the return of a brutal and oppressive despotism.

Samples of the commentaries are attached.<sup>3</sup>

3. Our teletype circuit to Latin America was kept open last night so all posts could be serviced with the texts of the OAS resolution and your two statements. Earlier, we had given heavy coverage on the wire-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, USIA Psychological Situation Reports, 5/65. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> The first statement informed the public that the President was sending additional forces to the Dominican Republic consisting of two battalions of the 82nd Airborne Division, approximately 1,500 men, and additional detachments of Marines. The second statement reported on the decision of the OAS to send a committee composed of five member states to the Dominican Republic in an effort to obtain a cease-fire. (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*, Book I, pp. 466–467.)

<sup>3</sup> Attached but not printed.

less file of the facts regarding U.S. provisions of food and medicine for both factions in the conflict.

4. Through arrangements made earlier, several stations in Latin America picked up feeds from the Voice of America and thus helped to spread our story.

5. I reported earlier on the dispatch of a team to the Dominican Republic to coordinate and beef up the psychological program.<sup>4</sup> Last night I dispatched a telegram to Hewson Ryan, head of the team, stressing anew the urgency of his assignment and giving detailed guidance.<sup>5</sup>

Our entire communications complex will continue to give the highest priority to the Dominican problem throughout today and tonight.

**Carl T. Rowan**

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<sup>4</sup> In another May 2 memorandum to President Johnson on USIA activities in the Dominican Republic, Carl Rowan told the President that in addition to the newly augmented USIA team of 9 members, a 58-man psychological warfare team from Fort Bragg had arrived on the scene. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Name File, Box 1-2, Valenti, Dominican Republic) In a May 1 memorandum to President Johnson, in which Rowan had advised the President of the need to "beef up the psychological program," Rowan reasoned, "we must be aware that it will be well nigh impossible to justify the presence of 16,000 American troops simply on the grounds that we are protecting Americans and other foreigners. We shall have to devote considerable effort to providing evidence that our actions are to protect the short-range and long-range well-being of the people of the Dominican Republic and the rest of Latin America." (Ibid., Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III, to 5/7/65)

<sup>5</sup> Not further identified.

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## 55. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 3, 1965.

### SUBJECT

Meeting on the Dominican Republic—May 3, 1965

### PARTICIPANTS

Mr. Mann, Mr. Greenfield, Mr. Crockett, Mr. Vance, General Wheeler, Mr. Helms, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gaud, Mr. Bundy, Mr. Moyers, Mr. Valenti, Mr. Chase

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of Gordon Chase, Meetings on the Dominican Republic Planning Group. Secret; Eyes Only; No Distribution. Prepared by Chase on May 4.

Attached at Tab 1<sup>2</sup> is a list of decisions taken at the meeting. The following points were also made although it should be noted that this may not be a comprehensive report in view of the fact that I was out of the meeting room on several occasions.

1. *The Military Situation*—The group agreed that, with the line of communications established and many troops in place, the military situation was in relatively good shape. General Wheeler said that we will probably not have to go beyond the 14,000- or 15,000-troop level.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Latin American Reaction*—Mr. Mann said that the Latin Americans are going to give us a lot of trouble and went on to make the following points with respect to the Latin American mentality on this sort of operation. *First*, over the years, we and the Latin Americans, in a number of documents and in a variety of forums, have expressed a general belief in the principle of non-intervention. At the same time, the Latin Americans, for many years, have recognized the necessity for collective defense against attacks on the Hemisphere. *Second*, the basic problem is that Latin American theology does not reflect the fact that aggression does not have to be armed military attack; it can also come in the form of subversion. Thus, with unpleasant memories of Marines in mind and not really accepting the idea of subversion as aggression which must be resisted collectively, the Latin Americans tend to adhere to the traditional line on intervention and think that we are engaged again in gunboat diplomacy. *Third*, there are, of course, some sophisticated Latin Americans who know what the score is. Privately, they say “good show” but, publicly, they give us no support. The problem here is that secret support does us no damn good. *Fourth*, the sophisticated Latin Americans, who wish us well, probably did not like to see us dilute our evacuation fig leaf and switch emphasis to the anti-Communist argument.

It was noted that Secretary Rusk had seen and the President would be seeing Betancourt in an effort to gain support for the U.S. position in the OAS.<sup>4</sup> It was also noted that one point we are trying to make to

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<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed.

<sup>3</sup> According to a JCS history of this intervention, on May 2 the JCS approved the deployment of an additional Marine battalion and the remaining five battalions of the 82nd Airborne Division. When these units arrived in Santo Domingo May 3–4, U.S. strength ashore stood at 12 maneuver battalions, approximately 21,000 men. Because Cuban MiG-17s, 19s, and 21s could cover U.S. air transport routes and even reach Santo Domingo, the JCS on May 6 decided to supplement the F-100s at Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico, with faster F-104s. (*The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy, Vol. IX: 1965–1968, Part II*, by Walter S. Poole, Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 1985, pp. 464–465)

<sup>4</sup> See Document 56 and footnote 5 thereto.

the OAS is that the Communists, in trying to subvert the Dominican Republic, are the ones who are intervening.

3. *Information Program*—Mr. Greenfield said that we must do something about proving the Communist intervention in the Dominican Republic; he noted that the press, with Castro in mind, can accept the argument that a few organized Communists can make a big difference in a small country. All we have to do is prove that there really are some hard-core Communists in the Dominican Republic who are trying to subvert the country in an organized meaningful way.

The group agreed that this is a serious problem and that a task force should be set up to deal with it.<sup>5</sup> In searching about for new ideas, Mr. Mann suggested that we interrogate rebels as they come out of the zone<sup>6</sup> while Des FitzGerald mentioned that he thinks he can find some still pictures of rebels wearing Fidel Castro caps.

Mr. Vance said that DOD was getting pictures of the evacuation every day. These are real human interest items. Mr. Greenfield said that he would be very interested in getting copies.

4. *Balaguer*—The group discussed the approach to Balaguer and indicated that there were still some questions about the people listed by him as lieutenants. In this regard, see the State paper at Tab 2.

5. *Information Activities in the Dominican Republic*—Secretary Vance reported that the President wants a detailed report on all the informational aspects of the Dominican problem. For example, how many leaflets are dropped? What are they saying? How many radio frequencies are we broadcasting on? Who is listening? What is the impact? As a general point, Mr. Bundy emphasized that the President has a continuing and real interest in this dimension of the Dominican problem and that we should attempt to keep him fully informed on our activities in this area.

6. *The Junta*—The group discussed the desirability of separating the U.S. from Wessin. Mr. Mann felt that we are not particularly happy with Wessin but that we cannot now go too far in the direction of dumping him.

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<sup>5</sup> According to an attached list of actions to be taken, Adams (State), Califano, and Valenti among others would be members of this task force, whose job was to build "as full and well documented a case as can be developed to support charge that the communists have taken over the revolution in the Dominican Republic."

<sup>6</sup> The international neutral zone of safety set up in Santo Domingo on May 1.

## Tab 2

Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>7</sup>

Washington, May 3, 1965

## BALAGUER

Davidson<sup>8</sup> called Balaguer in New York on Sunday,<sup>9</sup> shortly after noon. Balaguer answered the second question first: He is ready to go to the Dominican Republic when it is felt his presence there will serve a constructive purpose.

Balaguer did not wish to answer the second [*first ?*] question over the telephone and according to Davidson, on his own initiative decided to come to Washington. He arrived at Davidson's home at 7:00 p.m. last night and will remain there at least throughout today.

Davidson reports that Balaguer's main contact with the current situation is the elder General Caamano, father of Lt. Colonel Caamano, the madman of the rebel forces.

## Military Grouping Suggested by Balaguer

Col. Caamano, Jr.	}	Rebel Representatives
Col. Hernando Ramirez		
Maj. Giovanni Guttierrez		
Col. Alvarez Alguin		
Col. Juan Lara Fernandez		
Present Junta (Good career men)	}	Present Junta all acceptable
Major Venicio Fernandez Perez	}	Counter Revolutionaries Force
Major Dominguez—AIF—San Isidro		
Col. Librador Andujar		
Col. Felix de la Mota—Santiago de Cuba		

Balaguer has what seems to be a rather unrealistic plan for establishing an interim government in the Dominican Republic. He says that he would put his weight behind implementing the plan at anytime we give the go ahead and can assure him that non-rebel military forces would cooperate. Presumably he had counted on the elder General

<sup>7</sup> Secret. Drafted by Crockett.

<sup>8</sup> A pseudonym for Abe Fortas.

<sup>9</sup> May 2.

Caamano to ensure cooperation of the rebel military forces through his son, Lt. Col. Caamano.

The plan would go like this:

1. He would want advance written resignations from former President Bosch and Vice President Tamayo which would be presented to as many members of the 1963 Bosch Congress that could be convened.

2. The 1963 Congress would then be recalled to receive and discuss these resignations.

3. Immediately thereafter, a provisional President would be designated. Balaguer suggests the President of Supreme Court or anyone else acceptable to the Congress.

4. At this stage an early date would be set for general elections.

5. Congress would then adjourn and meet again at the pleasure of and on a request from the provisional President.

6. Salaries for all Congressmen that could be located would be paid effective immediately.

Balaguer wants this formula to bring the country back to constitutionality in a way that would cool the passions and emotions of many who are now in the forefront of the action. All forces would be calmed and reassured, according to Balaguer. Balaguer feels that following this procedure would also head off a confrontation between the U.S. and the Dominican people who are seriously concerned over our present role, having been misled to believe that we are supporting the forces of military repression.

The elder Caamano is apparently in regular contact with his son. Davidson reports that they spoke by telephone twice on the evening of May 2 from Davidson's residence. Young Caamano told his father that he is fighting for principles and ideals. He wants to return to constitutionality—free elections—an opportunity for the people to oust corrupt leaders and vote for the candidate of their choice. Young Caamano reports, according to Davidson through the old General, that there is greater and growing anti-U.S. feelings among the young and idealistic men who make up the rebel forces. Young Caamano tells his father he has 50,000 followers who will fight the U.S. Marines to the end.

Crockett has avoided speaking directly with Davidson since Balaguer arrived in Washington but is committed to call him "sometime later today."

## 56. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 3, 1965, 11:31 a.m.–12:24 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Situation in the Dominican Republic

### PARTICIPANTS

*For the United States:*

The President

The Chief of Protocol, Lloyd N. Hand

Donald F. Barnes (Interpreter)

*For Venezuela:*

Former President Betancourt

The President outlined chronologically the events that preceded the sending of Marines to the Dominican Republic: increased chaos on Saturday,<sup>2</sup> convening of the O.A.S. Peace Committee on Tuesday,<sup>3</sup> meeting of the O.A.S. Council on Wednesday,<sup>4</sup> rapid deterioration of the situation on Wednesday afternoon, and decision to send the Marines late that same afternoon. He said that the failure of the O.A.S. to take any steps left the U.S. with no choice but to send in troops, in view of the announcement by the local authorities that they could no longer guarantee the safety of Americans residing in the Dominican Republic. He said that any President of a Latin American Republic would have made the same decision if his nationals were in danger.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, S/S Files: Lot 70 D 217, President's Memoranda of Conversations, January–March 1965. Confidential. Drafted by Barnes and approved by the White House on May 17. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library) Former President of Venezuela Rómulo Betancourt was in Washington to attend various OAS meetings on the Dominican crisis. At the time of this meeting, President Johnson was considering a proposal first suggested by Abe Fortas for a committee of "Wise Men" to act as trustees or overseers of the effort to bring about a resolution in the Dominican Republic. Fortas dictated this idea to President Johnson's secretary on May 1 at 11:15 a.m. Fortas said: "This is a very secret and confidential message. If the OAS does not move, it seems to me you might consider the following after careful checking with Bosch and everybody else, the designation of Betancourt, Figueres and Marín as an interim committee, might be attempted. This is my own idea, not communicated or checked with anyone." (Ibid., Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.16, Side A, PNO 3) The proposal was later abandoned in part because of opposition from some Latin American governments and from the existing five-nation Special Committee of the OAS; see footnote 2, Document 52.

<sup>2</sup> April 24.

<sup>3</sup> At 4 p.m. on April 27 the Inter-American Peace Committee, representatives from Colombia, Argentina, Dominican Republic and the United States, convened to hear Dominican Republic Ambassador Bonilla give a report on the revolt's origins and developments.

<sup>4</sup> On April 28 at 10:30 a.m. a regular meeting of the Council of the OAS was held to discuss the Dominican Republic situation.

The President also said that within hours of the landing of the Marines the U.S. had names, addresses, and other information concerning Communists and Castroites who were in the rebel ranks. The primary reason for the decision to send troops, a decision that had to be taken immediately, was to protect the lives of Americans and other foreign nationals who were in danger.

The mission of the American forces was to guarantee the safety of foreign nationals, including American, to keep bloodshed at a minimum, and to provide medical and food supplies to everybody in the Dominican capital.

Mr. Betancourt said that no matter how urgent the decision to send Marines had been, time should have been taken to call in the Latin American representatives to the O.A.S., even if just to announce to them the need for sending troops. This would have reduced the reaction of Latin American Presidents and Congresses, who have accused the U.S. of unilateral action.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Betancourt said that he had been pleased to hear Secretary Rusk state that the U.S. was not thinking in terms of Wessin y Wessin or of any other Dominican military figure that had been equally rejected by the people as a basis for a government.<sup>6</sup> He said that he, together with José Figueres and Luis Muñoz Marín, would use their good offices to convince Juan Bosch not to run for office again. He felt that Bosch, as he had said before, was a good man and an anti-communist democrat, but was naive, and did not have the ability necessary to govern his country.

Mr. Betancourt said that this Dominican experience should serve to illustrate the dangers of de facto governments in Latin America, and that what had happened on this island could also happen in Ecuador, Honduras, or Guatemala. He said that it was important that the inter-American conference that was to meet in Rio pass a vigorous resolution to have existing de facto governments call for elections, and to discourage those who might be thinking of a coup d'état.

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<sup>5</sup> During a meeting at 10:10 a.m. on May 3 Betancourt told the Secretary that "the United States had committed a serious error; it should have called a meeting of the OAS, be it midnight or dawn, to inform the Latin American Ambassadors that Marines were on their way and why they were being sent . . . to avoid Latin America being faced with a fait accompli." (Memorandum of conversation, May 3; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP) Rusk informed President Johnson of Betancourt's position during a telephone conversation that began at 11:15 a.m. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Dean Rusk, Tape F65.18, Side A, PNO 7)

<sup>6</sup> During Rusk's meeting with Betancourt (see footnote 5 above), the Secretary admitted "privately" that he thought, "no members of the present Junta, or Wessin y Wessin, could form a government, since they had no popular support." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP)

President Johnson said that it was obvious that the O.A.S. did not move rapidly, and that there were occasions, such as the one in the Dominican Republic, when action had to be taken promptly, in view of the danger to the lives of so many people, as well as the menace of the extremists in the rebel ranks. Mr. Betancourt, after listening to the explanation by President Johnson of chronology of events leading to sending of troops to Dominican Republic, agreed that he would have done same thing.

Mr. Betancourt agreed that a communist victory in the Dominican Republic was unacceptable. He said that the events on that island should serve as a warning, to illustrate the fact that the people of Latin America wanted freedom and elected governments. He also said that whatever solution was reached in the O.A.S. required only 14 votes, and that the U.S. should not devote too much effort to obtain the votes of the so-called large countries, such as Mexico and Argentina. If the U.S. had a solution, it could get it approved with the support of Colombia, Venezuela, and Costa Rica, and that no effort should be made to obtain unanimity.

President Johnson asked Mr. Betancourt what possible solution could be found for the Dominican problem, be it a provisional or a trusteeship government. Mr. Betancourt replied that both were possibilities, and that he had considered the idea of a trusteeship government, to include the representatives of Costa Rica (José Figueres), Colombia (Alberto Lleras Camargo), Venezuela (Rómulo Betancourt), with the possible addition of former Governor Luis Muñoz Marín.

President Johnson asked whether Mr. Betancourt could suggest some responsible persons in the Dominican Republic who might be approached in the search for a viable solution. Mr. Betancourt replied that he did not know enough about the Dominican Republic, because of the isolation surrounding the island during the Trujillo era.

The President suggested that any comments to the press speak of the fact that he and Mr. Betancourt had known each other for a long time, that they had discussed Latin America in the twentieth century and the Alliance for Progress. Mr. Betancourt agreed, and said that he would prefer to draft a written press release, which he would send to Secretary Rusk before he gave it to the press.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Betancourt said that he wished to emphasize the information he had received from the Venezuelan consul in Santo Domingo, whom he regarded as a reliable observer, to the effect that communists

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<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

were by no means in control of the rebel forces in the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Betancourt said that he would be available to the President at any time he was called to make a contribution to good inter-American relations. The President said that he would surely call on him, and that he would be glad to see Mr. Betancourt any time he so desired.

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**57. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 5, 1965, 5:57 p.m.

2138. Dominican developments since last sitrep (Depcircletel 2097).<sup>2</sup>

Rebel group has formed government headed by Col. Francisco Caamano. We anticipate group will shortly seek recognition from other American Republics. We believe rebels are heavily infiltrated by Dominican Communists. Rebel group holds only small sector (about one square mile) of Santo Domingo and has no control elsewhere in country. USG opposes recognition of Caamano "government" since it meets none of criteria for recognition.

Bosch partisans appear to have lost control of movement to Castro-Communist elements. There is increasing evidence that Cuban trained guerrilla leaders are now playing a major role in the rebel camp.

Our Embassy reports the continuing lack of any effective government in the Dominican Republic and notes the incapacity of the present military Junta to govern. Country outside Santo Domingo remains peaceful however.

Military situation remains quiet. U.S. troops have established corridor through city to provide access to neutral zone from airfield several miles east of city proper. Army and Marines are assisting in

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Priority. Drafted by Eugene Klebenov (ARA/APU) on May 5, cleared by Crockett, and approved by Sayre. Sent to all posts except those in the American Republics.

<sup>2</sup> Circular telegram 2097, May 1, informed embassies that the Papal Nuncio, Emanuele Clarizio, had successfully mediated a cease-fire to begin at 11:45 a.m. April 30 Santo Domingo time. (Ibid.) At 2 a.m. on April 30, the Council of the OAS adopted a resolution calling for a cease-fire in Santo Domingo and an international neutral zone of safety in the neighborhood of the foreign embassies.

distribution of food to populace and have set up field hospitals to care for wounded civilians. U.S. Forces in D.R. now total 17,000.

Evacuation of U.S. and other foreign non-combatants is continuing. U.S. is assisting any foreign nationals who wish to leave Dominican Republic.

In U.N. Security Council, USSR and Cuba attacked and we defended our actions in the Dominican Republic. The OAS Commission which has been in Santo Domingo since May 2 devoted most of yesterday to attempting to obtain concurrence of Caamano and Junta commands to the "Act of Santo Domingo." Act includes (1) ratification of April 30 cease-fire, (2) establishment of Santo Domingo Security Zone, (3) guarantees of protection and security for all persons in said zone, (4) full cooperation with such international agencies as the OAS may designate for food and medical supply distribution in the Dominican Republic, (5) guarantees for the evacuation of Embassy asylees, (6) respecting of Diplomatic Missions and any asylees who are in them, and (7) recognition of the full competence of the OAS Commission for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the Act.

In the OAS, the U.S. Government has introduced a resolution calling for the creation of an inter-American force to maintain order in the Dominican Republic. As of 1800 hrs, May 4, support for the resolution stood as follows.

Ten L.A., in addition to the Dominicans, have indicated support. They are Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay.

Seven have indicated some opposition. They are Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Colombia.

The MFM has unanimously adopted a resolution urging all member countries to provide relief supplies and trained personnel for the Dominican Republic.

In disaster relief activities, the American Red Cross has begun a program of direct assistance to the Dominican Red Cross.

Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs, Anthony Solomon, is in the D.R. to organize emergency food, medical and other humanitarian relief programs.

**Rusk**

58. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 6, 1965, 3 p.m.

## SUBJECT

Dominican Republic Task Force Meeting—May 6, 1965

## PARTICIPANTS

Secretary McNamara, Ambassador Bunker, Mr. Mann, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Crockett, Mr. Greenfield, Mr. Allen, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gaud, Mr. Helms, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Bundy, Mr. Valenti, Mr. Moyers, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Chase

The following points supplement and, in places, overlap the detailed action memo which is attached at Tab 1.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Third OAS Resolution*—The group discussed the desirability of getting a third OAS resolution which primarily would permit a reconstituted OAS Commission (a) to advise the Dominicans on the running of their government and (b) to eventually bring about elections. Among others, the following points were made during the discussion. *First*, the group agreed that we should try to get Figueres, Betancourt, Lleras Camargo and Munoz Marin to constitute the new Commission.<sup>3</sup> *Second*, the group felt that while we probably would be able to get the resolution we want, there will probably be some opposition. Ambassador Bunker said that the Venezuelans may argue that this sort of OAS intervention will bring about a situation even more amenable to the communists. Secretary McNamara thought that the OAS was a couple jumps away from sending a Commission down to the Dominican

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of Gordon Chase, Meetings on the Dominican Republic—Planning Group. Secret; Eyes Only; No Distribution. Prepared by Chase on May 7. The time of the meeting is from a May 6 memorandum from Vaughn to Rusk. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA Files: Lot 70 D 295, Dominican Republic Coup—Memoranda, Letters, 1965–1967)

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed.

<sup>3</sup> The proposed commission members were: José Figueres, former President of Costa Rica; Rómulo Betancourt, former President of Venezuela; Lleras Camargo, former President of Colombia; and Luis Muñoz Marin, former Governor of Puerto Rico. According to Tab 1 this third OAS resolution should: 1) broaden the powers of the Commission to advise the provisional government, 2) authorize OAS supervision of elections, 3) grant the Commission an effective role in rounding up and exiling communist elements from the Dominican Republic, and 4) give the Commission greater influence in the composition of the eventual Dominican Republic Government. During a telephone conversation between President Johnson and Mann on May 5, 5:46 p.m., they discussed the proposed commission members. Mann informed the President that the OAS had not yet approved of the commission which would require passage of a resolution by two-thirds of its members. Mann thought “the sooner we get that Commission going on down there the better off we are going to be.” (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between Johnson and Mann, Tape F65.20, Side A, PNO 2)

Republic to really govern. *Third*, the group felt that even a relatively weak resolution, gotten quickly, would be helpful. Mr. Bundy noted that the main thing is to get the Wise Men into the Dominican Republic. He added that, in getting rid of the Caamano Government, it would be nice to have people like the Wise Men tell us that this is the right thing to do. *Fourth*, Secretary McNamara thought that we should do some contingency planning in the event we can't get an OAS resolution. Even if we can't get a resolution, it would be good to get the Wise Men to the Dominican Republic.<sup>4</sup>

2. *Unified Military Command*—Ambassador Bunker said that there are variety of countries which seem to be ready to provide contingents for the Dominican Republic crisis—Costa Rica (police), Venezuela (destroyers), Brazil (1000 troops), Argentina and Colombia.<sup>5</sup> The group agreed that the unified command should probably be run largely from the Dominican Republic. In this regard, we can send some lawyers down to the island to help Ambassador Bennett run the U.S. part of the show. The operation will be coordinated with Bill Saunders, the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS.

3. *Withdrawal of U.S. Forces*—Secretary McNamara suggested that we seek opportunities to withdraw some of our forces; this will considerably help our public relations problem. As an excuse, we can say that the effectiveness of the cease fire makes this possible; later on we can say that we are withdrawing because it is clear that the Latin Americans are coming in. The Secretary went on to say that we have 13 battalions in the Dominican Republic and we might think seriously of withdrawing 2 battalions, one at a time, over the next 72 hours.

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<sup>4</sup> McNamara told President Johnson during a telephone conversation at 11:15 a.m. on May 7: We have to "get the 4 Wise Men or somebody down there we can associate with. We cannot remain in association much longer with Wessin . . . the rebels are gaining power, position and prestige every passing day." (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between Johnson and McNamara, Tape F65.20, Side B, PNO 2)

<sup>5</sup> During a May 5 Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OAS the Ministers considered the establishment of an inter-American military force in the Dominican Republic. At 2 a.m. on May 6 the Ministers approved a U.S.-initiated resolution requesting that American states make military and police contingents available to form an Inter-American Armed Force (IAAF) which would operate under the authority of an OAS Unified Command (UC). This resolution was adopted by a vote of 15-5 (Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay), with 1 abstention (Venezuela). Subsequently, on June 2 the Meeting of Consultation adopted a resolution naming the force the "Inter-American Peace Force." According to their own history of this intervention, the JCS had suggested that Latin military contributions consist of small, lightly equipped companies trained in riot control and guerrilla tactics, and that Argentinean and Brazilian battalions be infantry units. Tactical air contributions were not sought but naval contingents were. The JCS asked that these be coastal patrol vessels limited to 1-2 ships per country. The JCS also recommended that the Latin units rely on their own transportation, be as self sufficient as possible, and be capable of receiving and distributing bulk supplies from U.S. sources. (*JCS and National Policy: 1965-1968*, p. 468)

The group heartily endorsed the McNamara view. Mr. Greenfield noted that we will be in a much stronger position if we go to the altar willingly rather than reluctantly. Ambassador Bunker said that it would make his task at the OAS enormously easier.<sup>6</sup>

4. *Junta Forming*—Mr. Mann said that as yet we have not had much luck. When we do get a slate, we should ensure that there are no communists on it, and that we know what the junta prepares to do about the communists in the country.

5. *Communists*—The group discussed at some length the problem of the communists. The communists probably ought to be kicked out of the country; if we don't move fast, however, they will all be underground.

In this regard, we must put more emphasis on rounding up the communists; the problem is that there is no one who can give the order to actually pick them up. About the best we can do is to [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] tail them and Defense, when it can, take pictures of them.

Mr. Bundy pointed out that the communist angle, as well as the eventual problem of disarming the rebel-held part of the city, make it clear how much we need some sort of government on the island.

6. *Public Relations*—Mr. Bundy said that while yesterday's effort with the press took us a long way in our effort to look better in this affair, we still have things to do.<sup>7</sup> *First*, we should thicken the case about the communists in the Dominican Republic. *Second*, we should ensure that the Santo Domingo press corps gets suitable matériel on the communist threat. *Third*, Mr. Vaughn should produce a paper spelling out more sharply the chronology of OAS participation in the Dominican Republic crisis.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In a May 6 memorandum to McGeorge Bundy, Chase recounted information relayed to him by Vaughn who had met with the President earlier that day at 1:36 p.m. (Johnson Library, President's Daily Diary) Chase stated that President Johnson thought it "might be unwise to withdraw any troops from the Dominican Republic [because] . . . it would look as if [the United States] thought it had made a mistake [by] putting too many troops in the Dominican Republic." Chase also wrote that "the President would be swayed by Bunker's judgment . . . that a token withdrawal would help him enormously at the OAS." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III, to 5/7/65) In a May 7 memorandum to Bundy, Chase wrote, "General Palmer reportedly feels that it isn't a good idea to withdraw forces at this time for psychological/political reasons. The rebels could take this as a sign that the internationalist heat is getting to us and that we have to pull out." (Ibid.)

<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>8</sup> Not found; however, an undated 14-page Bureau of Inter-American Affairs report, entitled "Action of the Organization of American States in the Dominican Republic" is in the Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Dominican Crisis 1965, State-DOD-OAS Chronologies and Narratives.

Mr. Bundy also said that Len Meeker's legal memo,<sup>9</sup> which is good, will be beefed up by last night's OAS resolution and by further consultation with the Attorney General, who has a strong background in international law. Once the memo is in shape, it will be released.

7. *Relief*—The group agreed that this is an area in which we can pull out all the stops. We should sharpen up our coordinating in Washington, just as it has been sharpened up in the Dominican Republic. In this regard, Bill Gaud has the coordinating responsibility in Washington.

8. *Moving Junta Headquarters*—Mr. Crockett said that General Palmer and Ambassador Bennett want to let the junta move from San Isidro to the Fair Grounds. The junta wants to be closer to town, and feels it will have better protection at the Fair Grounds. The problem is that the junta will then be very close to the rebels, and if the rebels attack the junta, we will be faced with a very touchy problem; in effect, we will have to decide between letting the rebels beat up the junta and breaking our "neutrality" and intervening in favor of the junta. The group agreed that the junta could move—on the condition that the OAS Commission has no objection.

9. *Peace Corps*—The group discussed the problem of the Peace Corps people in the Dominican Republic who are giving interviews that are damaging our interests. Mr. Moyers said that Sargent Shriver is dealing with the problem. While the group saw certain advantages in bringing the Peace Corps back to the U.S., they also saw a number of disadvantages—e.g., Peace Corps people would hold their interviews in the U.S., which would also hurt; it would be a blow for the Peace Corps people all over the world if we quashed their right to speak freely. The group went on to agree that we should give the Peace Corps people some background on the Dominican situation and leave them there. Mr. Bundy thought that Ambassador Martin and Harry Shlaudeman would be very good on this.

[2 paragraphs (6 lines of source text) not declassified]

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<sup>9</sup> Dated May 7 and entitled "Legal Basis for United States Actions in the Dominican Republic." (Ibid., Country File, Dominican Republic) Meeker was the Legal Adviser of the Department of State. In a May 6 memorandum to McGeorge Bundy, Fortas commented on the memorandum: "I could not recommend its publication or use as a defense of the legality of the United States actions in the Dominican Republic . . . it's soundness as a matter of legal analysis is subject to effective challenge." (Ibid., Vol. III, to 5/7/65)

## 59. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Posts<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 6, 1965, 8:52 p.m.

2161. Subject: Sitrep—Dominican Republic. *Note:* Section One—At your discretion you are authorized to use such information as you feel desirable with local officials. Section Two—FYI only.

Begin Section One

OAS Commission got both sides to sign "Act of Santo Domingo."<sup>2</sup> Although body of document unchanged, added preamble refers to Caamano group as "Constitutional Government" (quote marks appear in document) and Benoit group as Military Junta of Government. Embassy notes reference to "Constitutional Government" gives Caamano group unwarranted status. Caamano group has sent Cirtel to 36 nations requesting recognition. Request makes false claim rebel group "has complete backing Dominican people" and "control over national territory." Depcirtel 2144<sup>3</sup> gives USG political and legal reasons for non-recognition of Caamano group.

There is still no effective government in the DR.

Evacuations of foreign nationals are continuing with 250 put aboard ship yesterday.

Despite cease-fire sporadic sniper fire at US forces continues. Rebels have been using small boats in river as sniper positions. US forces returning fire sank one small boat and set fire to freighter.

Food distribution proceeding with new distribution centers opened poor districts Santo Domingo. 82nd Airborne distributed 20 tons rice May 5. 85 tons rice flown to capital from north of country. 1000 tons PL-480 foodstuffs unloaded Haina. Major effort also being made to distribute foodstuffs in areas outside capital.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III, Cables 5/65. Secret; Priority. Drafted by Eugene Klebenov (ARA), cleared by Crimmins, and approved by William L.S. Williams (ARA). Sent to all posts except Santo Domingo. Repeated to Hong Kong, USUN, US BER, and CINCEUR, CINCPAC, CINCLANT, and CINCSO for POLADs.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 57.

<sup>3</sup> Circular telegram 2144, May 6, 2:29 p.m., reported that Colonel Francisco Caamaño's claim to the Presidency was invalid. The rebel group he headed controlled only a small portion of territory, wasn't capable of functioning as a national government, and based its claim on the Bosch Constitution of 1963, which was superseded by the reinstated constitution of 1962, a constitution put into effect by the governing junta immediately following the ouster of Bosch in September 1963. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. III to 5/7/65, Memos and Miscellaneous)

Four of five member OAS Peace Committee (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala) returned to Washington morning May 6 to report to Meeting of Foreign Ministers (MFM) probably tomorrow. Prior committee's departure group of governors northern provinces called on OAS group to make clear they do not repeat not accept Caamano group as government and to express hope committee would work toward establishment of provisional government made up of respected apolitical leaders.

MFM has approved Inter-American Armed Force for DR.

UN Security Council met May 6 for further debate on Soviet charges. Malaysia recognized that OAS was seized of Dominican question and China supported our position. At urging of Uruguay, Netherlands and Jordan, USSR agreed to postpone until noon, May 7 vote on its resolution calling for condemnation of US and immediate withdrawal from DR.

Section Two—FYI only.

Embassy working intensively on problem of forming viable government with broad base of support. Embassy hopes new Junta will be essentially non-political with three civilian "technicians" participating. Formation of such a Junta being delayed due to desire of civilian nominees to take further soundings before committing themselves.

US forces in DR now total 19,000. Unconfirmed reports indicate three Marines were killed, two wounded and two captured this morning.

Although situation outside Santo Domingo remains generally quiet, reports indicate food shortages causing increasing unrest.

VOA broadcasts improving atmosphere and criticism of US is diminishing.

On matter recognition Caamano group, problem is urgent in Chile where there is strong official feeling in group's favor. Ambassadors Dungan, Harriman scheduled see President Frei 1700 hrs today.

In OAS principal difficulties have been with Chile, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay.

**Rusk**

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**60. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

No. 1120/65

Washington, May 7, 1965.

**THE COMMUNIST ROLE IN THE DOMINICAN REVOLT****Summary**

It seems clear now as it did in the last days of April that a modest number of hard-core Communist leaders in Santo Domingo managed by superior training and tactics to win for themselves a position of considerable influence in the revolt within the first few days. Their influence within the movement grew day by day, and following the collapse of Molina's government on 27 April there appeared to be no organization within the rebel camp capable of denying them full control of the rebellion within a very few days.

At the same time, the rebel cause, enjoying as it did the backing of Bosch and the continued support of several thousand military personnel, seemed likely to prosper in the face of the ineffective and dispirited countermeasures of the loyalists military.

Thus the prospect at the time of US intervention clearly was one in which a movement increasingly under the influence of Castroites and other Communists was threatening to gain the ascendancy in the Dominican Republic.

[Omitted here are 12 pages that describe in detail the Communist role in the Dominican Republic and two annexes: "Cuban Involvement in Dominican Revolutionary Activities" and "Communist Participation in the Dominican Rebellion."]

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Name File, [Valenti File Re: Dominican Republic]. Secret; No Foreign Dissem. Another copy of the memorandum indicates it was sent under cover of a May 7 memorandum to Moyers by Ray S. Cline, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, who wrote: "You may find helpful as a ready reference the attached report, which is a wrap-up of the political evolution of the Dominican Republic revolt. It is based on all the relevant intelligence available to us as of 7 May." (Ibid., Dominican Republic-Communist Participation in Current Dominican Republic Rebellion—5/65)

61. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 8, 1965, 2:25–3:35 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting in the Cabinet Room at 1400 on 8 May 1965

PRESENT WERE

The President

For State: Messrs. Rusk, Ball, Mann, Harriman, and Vaughn

For Defense: McNamara and McNaughton

For AID: Mr. Gaud

For USIA: Mr. Wilson

For the White House: Messrs. Bundy, Chase, and Valenti

For CIA: Messrs. Raborn and Helms

1. This meeting on the situation in the Dominican Republic covered the following items:

A) The military contributions of various Latin American countries to the Inter-American Force at Santo Domingo.

B) An assessment of Balaguer and Bosch in which it was brought up that Balaguer has a longer-term usefulness, whereas Bosch's excessive statement appears to be damaging his cause and going against him.<sup>2</sup>

C) The relief effort in the Dominican Republic was outlined.

D) Mr. Mann presented the scenario of United States Government consultation with the Organization of American States.

E) The President approved a statement explaining why the United States Government would not grant immediate recognition to the Government of General Imbert but emphasized that the wording should be used as a guide for oral briefing, not for official issuance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Helms) Files, Job 80–B01285A, Folder 13, Chron as DDCI and DCI, 1 January–31 December, 1965. Secret. Drafted on May 13. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library) Another record of this meeting is *ibid.*, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes.

<sup>2</sup> The United States wanted Bosch to recognize the danger of a Castro-Communist takeover and the need to eliminate it, to call for an end to the killing and a resumption of public services, and to accept the presence of U.S. forces for the minimum period needed to maintain order in the Dominican Republic. Instead on May 3 Bosch said that the pattern of 1916 was being repeated: "the U.S. Marines occupy . . . the sacred soil of Juan Pablo Duarte," . . . "force exercised by a powerful country against a weak nation." (Martin, *Overtaken by Events*, p. 679)

<sup>3</sup> This statement has not been found. Telegram 872 to Santo Domingo, May 7, reported: "we welcome formation of Council of National Reconstruction and agree they should assert right to recognition." However, "we regard this as an interim grouping" and "recognition of Council by U.S. would make collective responsibility and action impossible." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP)

F) Ambassador Harriman reported on his visit to eight Latin American countries during the preceding week.<sup>4</sup> He underlined the extent to which various chiefs of state and chiefs of government were personally behind President Johnson's action in the Dominican Republic but identified in each case the reasons why local domestic problems prevented these government officials from making public statement to this effect.

G) In the context of discussing other Latin American countries which might have revolts in the immediate future, the President emphasized that he wants important intelligence items marked up for him in such a way that he will be obliged to read them on a priority basis.

(On 9 May, the undersigned met with Messrs. Cline and Graham, of DDI, and with Mr. Lloyd George, of DD/P, to get them to work devising a system, in consultation with Mr. Bundy, as to how priority intelligence items should be brought to the President's attention.)

H) Ambassador Harriman asked, and the President approved, that the Agency circularize all Latin American embassies with the CIA write-up on Communist involvement in the Dominican revolt.<sup>5</sup> It was also agreed that a sanitized version of the first twelve pages of this publication would be promptly made and given to appropriate agencies of Government for use in background briefings.

(As a result of this meeting, extra effort was placed on finishing the sanitization, which was put on the wire by 1900 on 8 May with instructions for its use in the field by Ambassadors and by our Station Chiefs.)

I) The subject of photographing and fingerprinting Communist activists in the Dominican Republic was discussed at various times during the meeting.<sup>6</sup> After much argument pro and con, the President finally approved the working out of an operational plan in conjunction

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<sup>4</sup> According to Valenti's notes of the meeting, Harriman visited Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Panama. Harriman reported that Brazil and Panama were "very friendly," and Argentina and Colombia would "probably send troops." The remaining countries would not contribute troops, but would help in other ways. (Johnson Library, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes)

<sup>5</sup> Document 60.

<sup>6</sup> In a May 8 briefing memorandum to the President, Bundy wrote that Raborn thinks fingerprinting of suspected Communists would be very helpful to the CIA in trying to get solid data on Communists. "All the rest of us think there are severe propaganda disadvantages in having U.S. forces fingerprinting Dominicans on Dominican soil. I have asked Raborn to produce a plan at the meeting which would meet his purposes with absolute minimum visibility, and this matter is one which you will have to adjudicate because there are differences on it at the top levels of the different agencies." (Johnson Library, National Security File, McGeorge Bundy Memos to the President, Vol. X, April 15-May 31, 1965)

with General Palmer whereby a small percentage of those hard-core individuals would be photographed, and, where possible, fingerprinted, as they passed through check points or were detained elsewhere. The President indicated that he wanted the Secretary of State to approve the procedure and desired that, to the extent possible, we get OAS blessing on this approach. It was agreed that in working on this problem we would do everything possible to devise covers for holding people long enough for photography and fingerprinting and that we would do everything possible to engage the cooperation of the Dominican police both in Santo Domingo and throughout the countryside.

**Richard Helms**<sup>7</sup>  
*Deputy Director*

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<sup>7</sup> Printed from a copy that indicates Helms signed the original.

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**62. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 10, 1965, 0555Z.

1558. Pass White House. From Martin.

A. We have gone through two stages here since my arrival—(1) military cease-fire to stop slaughter; (2) formation of GRN as an entity to counter rebel Caamano “government.” Have now entered third stage: politico-propaganda struggle between rebels and GRN.

B. Rebels Today: Virtually impossible assess rebel situation with confidence. Nuncio and Mora and others believe Caamano realizes defeat inevitable and wants out but is virtual prisoner of hard-core Communists.

On other hand, sources equally reliable and in some ways better informed say that rebels are confident of victory. Is not impossible both views contain truth and change hour to hour.

I have opened several lines to Caamano and one to Aristy and am helping with quiet effort to arrange Caamano’s surrender or at least

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Received at 3:16 a.m. and passed to the White House, DOD, CIA, CINCSO, and CINCLANT at 4:20 a.m.

negotiation with Imbert. Am dubious, as of this hour, but intend pursue vigorously.

Unquestionably, rebels hold propaganda initiative principally through Radio Santo Domingo, and importance of this cannot be overstated. Rebels are organizing large (1200–1500 people yesterday) demonstrations center of town, with speakers emphasizing not Bosch but anti-Americanism, plus pro-constitutionality, anti-Wessin, and pro-Caamano. Rebels, well led, are succeeding in linking in minds of uninformed masses “constitutionality” with food and jobs. In short, rebels are working to consolidate political position as champion of masses against US military—San Isidro military-upperclass and middle-class government. And unquestionably, they are ahead of GRN in this propaganda political war.

C. GRN Today: I spent four days helping form GRN, running through scores of names and pressuring dozens of men to join it. Finding it impossible obtain truly broad-spectrum political group, took what we have. Needless to say, Ambassador concurred throughout. Imbert, though suspected of dictatorial ambitions, is symbol of Dom fight for freedom, since he assassinated Trujillo, and will not double-cross USG on truly basic issues. Benoit seems unusually reasonable, intelligent Dom Rep military man. Postigo was close personal friend Bosch and has irreproachable reputation as civic leader. His personal sacrifice in joining GRN is enormous. Grisolia, though former UCN senator, is stable, reasonable, and cannot be bought. Zeller, though briefly in Reid government, is virtually unknown engineer. Basic advantage of GRN: it provides an entity to counter rebels’ “constitutional government” and it divorces USG from odious San Isidro old general group. Basic weakness GRN: it is attackable—and is under attack by rebels, who call it “*junta civico militar*”—as simply another reactionary business-class “civico” government with military strong-man overlay.

To counter all this, Ambassador and I helped arrange, and attachés helped carry out, deportation today of old generals and tomorrow or tonight that of General Wessin y Wessin<sup>2</sup> who, rightly or wrongly, has become symbol of military opposition to constitutionality and aspirations of masses. (We have no desire to destroy Dom armed forces but to restructure it, and we have told Imbert he cannot put his stooges in and must deport one his closest friends among military. He has done

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<sup>2</sup> Bennett reported in telegram 1575 from Santo Domingo, May 10, that he and General Palmer had met with Wessin the afternoon of May 10. During this meeting Wessin said he would agree to step down now that his pre-conditions had been met—the resignation of seven generals and a Navy Commodore as specified in a May 9 letter he gave Bennett. (Ibid.) On May 9 Wessin gave Bennett a letter promising his retirement if other generals whom he specifically named would do the same.

latter today.) Believe removal Wessin will on balance strengthen GRN's political position. Later on, we can urge, and I believe GRN will carry out, reforms that will benefit people and strengthen GRN.

D. However, the basic political problem remains: the present revolt against the Reid government was, at the outset, almost surely an attempt by PRD leaders and others to reverse the coup against Bosch of September 25, 1963. At the time of that coup, the people did not protest. The ideas of social and economic justice which Bosch promulgated, however, mobilized latent and legitimate revolutionary aspirations of Dom people, particularly among young, they will not down. They are now being mobilized once more by rebels. GRN might meet this problem by instituting reforms and by divorcing self from discredited politicians and generals. Imbert can provide strong hand needed now. All this is good program temporarily.

Looking to future, however, we should consider these alternatives: (Note—all these possibilities assume no rebel surrender.)

1. Full support, including recognition soonest possible, of GRN for indefinite period. (Imbert's influential wife has mentioned four years.)

2. Acceptance of GRN as no more than interim phase in process of taking country to elections, and reconstituting it as soon as practicable by adding to it (or replacing two of its civilian members with) two men who, if not physically in rebel domain now, are unquestionably sympathetic to rebels; possibly obliging GRN to then adopt 1963 Bosch constitution and hold completely free elections (including by name Bosch and Balaguer) under that constitution on schedule December 30, 1966. (In order persuade pro-rebel men to join GRN, it would have to demonstrate its good intentions by deeds.)

3. Acceptance of GRN as interim government which would be followed by major OAS effort (commission of good offices), with our full support, to form politically broad-based or politically independent provisional government to take country to elections.

4. An in-between policy for now: All-out support for GRN short of recognition, meanwhile waiting to see of new political constellations or figures emerge, free of Communist domination, that might mobilize people's aspirations.

My previous experience with commitment to fixed election date or even totally free elections themselves convinces me that such commitment is dangerous in present circumstances. My previous experience with Bosch and Balaguer makes me equally unenthusiastic about them. Since alternative 3 has never been tried in hemisphere to my knowledge, I find it harder to assess but tentatively suggest that while it would help take us off the hook, even high-level OAS commission might find it impossible to form either a broad-based political coali-

tion or an independent government here, given difficulties and deficiencies, so well known to me, in Dom people, and now so harshly exacerbated by recent events. More plainly, I doubt it would work.

Recent holocaust has disrupted if not destroyed old parties and political figures. I would hope new leaders and political groupings might emerge. I therefore recommend we adopt for short run (week or two) alternative 4 above to see if something or somebody turns up. In present unstable situation I suggest we should not get locked into any policy more firm than that. But we should spend that time seeking means of adding non-Communist revolutionary elements to GRN.

Of course, if Caamano surrenders, I recommend we recognize GRN quickly, first getting whatever commitments from it that we want.

E. US Troops: Even though cloak of OAS multilateral force helps greatly, recommend we get US troops out soon as possible and make every effort to avert full-scale military occupation, even under OAS auspices, unless nothing else can prevent Communist takeover. By "soon as possible" I would hope for six months or less—as long as it takes for a Dom Govt to restore order and for us to help it retrain and restructure its own armed forces.

F. Though it may be self-evident, I wish to emphasize that whatever Dom Govt emerges, we shall not only have to keep troops here but also and for much longer period shall have to continue playing strong political role here. Landing our troops prevented country from disintegrating totally. But troops can build nothing politically, and process of disintegration has gone so far that this country cannot alone reorganize its affairs for a long time without vigorous assistance.

G. My Own Plans: Subject to shifting situation and USG instructions, I am thinking of staying only few more days, until (a) Wessin leaves, (b) I have had opportunity discuss immediate courses action with GRN; (c) I have finished talking quietly to US newspapermen; (d) I have exhausted all really promising avenues of quick surrender or accommodation with rebels. End of Martin.

**Bennett**

63. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 10, 1965, 10:22 p.m.

949. Ref Embtel 1558.<sup>2</sup> Of the four alternatives described in Embtel 1558 from Martin, modified second alternative seems to us to be best. Embassy should put its full resources to exploration of possibility of establishing coalition regime in which Caamano and possibly one other non-communist member of his group (acceptable to Imbert and his group) could be added.<sup>3</sup>

Purpose of this would be to split Caamano and hopefully Bosch partisans in rebel zone away from extremists. This would be a further step toward establishment of a provisional government which hopefully could gradually consolidate its control over entire country with broad popular support.

We recognize this is delicate operation from Imbert's point of view, but assume from your messages that idea of coalition not unacceptable to him.

From Caamano's point of view our guess is that more can be gained by appealing to his patriotism and to need for avoiding blood-letting than by any other tactic. However, if additional inducements from us already known to you would in your opinion be productive this could be mentioned also. Caamano's group may be waiting for arrival of "Wise Men" (Betancourt, Munoz-Marin/et al). You may inform him that after several days effort we have not been successful in obtaining OAS agreement to this. All of this is a matter for your own on-the-spot discretion.

In any case we should work for provisional coalition government which could, after establishing control over entire national territory, return the country to normalcy and eventually, under OAS supervision, guide country to a non-communist constitutional government.

One of the issues which apparently has great appeal to Dominicans at this time is constitutionalism. We do not have any clear opin-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Drafted and approved by Mann and cleared by Vance and Vaughn. Repeated to London.

<sup>2</sup> Document 62.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 1626 from Santo Domingo, May 12, Bennett reported that negotiations with Caamaño's forces to form a "broadened collective government" had "produced little reason for immediate optimism," but that moderate PRD member Antonio Guzman had offered to be the "middle man in an effort to form a broad-based junta." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Miscellaneous Reports on the Dominican Situation [2 of 2])

ion about what concessions it would be prudent to make such as proposal 1962 or 1963 constitutions be adopted. This would, of course, be without Bosch or his designee as president. A preliminary investigation here suggests that all previous constitutions contain provisions for suspension of constitutional guarantees under circumstances similar to those which exist now. Clearly this would be necessary at this time. We would like your opinion on this possible bargaining position with Caamano and such others which may occur to you as compatible with our objectives, i.e., prevention of commie takeover and later elections and constitutional regime.

You should take this line with OAS Committee. We will broach this line of thought to those OAS Committee members still in Washington before their departure tomorrow afternoon.

Rusk

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#### 64. Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of Defense McNamara and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 12, 1965, 11:20 a.m.

[Omitted here is discussion not related to the Dominican Republic.]

President: Now, Bob, are we, are our military people, the brains that we have, meeting and planning and thinking of every step that might be needed to take so we got adequate contingencies? Let's assume that Abe goes out of business tonight and we know that they are building each day and increasing each day and getting stronger each day, and let's assume then that our people are fired upon, or we're attacked, or we're involved some way or we have to get the radio station. How we do it, and what we do, and whether we can go to get an OAS flag if we had to have it? Or do we just sit there and let events take place? Are we considering every possible thing that might occur and what we do about it?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, Tape F65.22, Side A, PNO 6 and Side B, PNO 1. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. President Johnson placed the call to McNamara; they talked for approximately 12½ minutes.

McNamara: I believe we are, Mr. President. We have laid out the plans. They are in considerable detail. The problem is that every one of them is bloody—and very bloody.

President: Yeah.

McNamara: For us and the Dominicans.

President: Yeah. Well, I think the time is going to come before very long when we have to kind of make up our choice to either let Castro have it, or take it. It's—we're hoping that he doesn't have that much influence, but I rather believe he does.

[Omitted here is a query from McNamara regarding a meeting between Abe Fortas and Bosch the night before. President Johnson explained that this meeting did not take place yesterday but would later today.]

McNamara: Well, we're prepared militarily, Mr. President, every way, I believe, we can be.

President: Well, now suppose they—the Caamaño forces and Bosch and them say there is nothing we can do that we could accept. Then suppose that Palmer and Bennett and our other people, Mann, say we got to have the radio station. Have we thought about what we do and how we do it?

McNamara: Yes. Cy—I don't believe he's come back yet; he went to the 10 o'clock meeting this morning<sup>2</sup> and he and I agreed that we should set up a special group that does nothing but work on that radio station. It's, at the moment, a split somewhat between CAS–CIA and Defense. But this is a small project that we ought to be able to, I think, take over ourselves, and that was my suggestion to Cy and he's going to work with the group on it this morning.

President: Now, another thing I wanted to call to your attention. I don't think there would be any question that you will have some extensive grilling on what warnings you had from the services and from the CIA.

McNamara: Yes.

President: And I see from the columns in the *New York Post* yesterday, and others, that they are after the invisible government and they are after the CIA and they want to kind of make a goat out of it like they did with the Bay of Pigs thing. I don't know what the facts are, do you?

McNamara: Well, I know that we had enough warning as far as our military requirements were concerned Mr. President, because, based on, not so much the CIA warnings, but just the events that took

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<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to a meeting of the Dominican Republic Task Force chaired by Bundy each morning at the White House. No record of this meeting has been found.

place down there, you issued the orders to alert our forces in ample time for us to have them ready to move quickly and close promptly when you wanted them to and you got that.

President: Preceding that; preceding the Saturday<sup>3</sup> take-over, did anybody ever tell you or did you ever envision that this was a very explosive thing?

McNamara: No.

President: That might blow?

McNamara: The answer is definitely no, Mr. President. And one of the reasons is that I rely primarily upon the President's Intelligence Digest, the daily summary which you go, for my information. I have other sources as well that I dig into. But I use that as the primary checklist. And when I see something dangerous in there, then I go and get more detail on it through the other sources. But that, the President's Daily—and checklist—Intelligence Digest, did not carry anything relating to the situation until either the 17th or the 24th, and then it was just an innocuous little item.<sup>4</sup> So the fact of the matter is that we were not properly alerted through that means for the general political problem. But I differentiate here between the alert required to take effective action politically and the alert required to take action militarily. We got ample warning in what we needed for our effective military action, but we got it not from the CIA source, but from the pressure of events down there as reported in the press. And that was why on the Saturday preceding the Wednesday<sup>5</sup>—I don't recall the exact circumstances—but I know we talked to you about it and you said, "Go ahead and put whatever you think is required on alert." We did it on Saturday and Sunday. And the result was, when we had to move Wednesday, we moved within a matter of—we closed within four hours after you issued the order. So militarily we weren't handicapped. Politically, frankly, I think we were very seriously handicapped by lack of notice.

President: Well, now, don't you think that's something that you and Raborn and I ought to talk about pretty soon—what did happen there, and let's get it brought up to date and let's see what Bennett knew, if he knew anything before Saturday. Because we are going to have to tell them what we know, if anything.

McNamara: Yes, yes.

President: I have refused to make anybody a goat. And I have said that we held back to the last moment. Bennett said, "I will not recommend troops at this point, although they are firing on the Embassy."

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<sup>3</sup> April 24.

<sup>4</sup> [text not declassified]

<sup>5</sup> April 28.

But within a couple of hours, he said, “I got to have them to preserve life,” and we did it. And at that time, CIA told me that there were two Castro leaders involved. And a little later, they told me 8, and a little later, they told me 58. Do you remember now—in that room that afternoon—we met at roughly 4:30.<sup>6</sup> I was 5 or 10 minutes late. We talked, we got the message delivered to us, the 3-something message delivered somewhere around 5.<sup>7</sup> We actually made the decision around 6 sometime. Now, where was CIA in that picture? They weren’t meeting with us, were they?

McNamara: No, they weren’t.

President: Did they—they didn’t participate in the decision?

McNamara: No, they did not.

President: Well, where did we get—we got—somebody told me that there were two Castro leaders and then there were eight.

McNamara: I think, Mr. President, that . . . .

President: We must have done that on the phone.

McNamara: Well, either on the phone, or about 7 when you had the Congressional leaders there.<sup>8</sup>

President: I know he did at that meeting.

McNamara: And I think he did it at that meeting.

President: Uh, huh. So the important thing is for me to see if I talked to CIA before that meeting.

McNamara: That, that’s right, sir.

President: Uh, huh.

McNamara: But Red’s [Raborn] own analysis of what CIA had reported in these reports confirms the statement that I made a moment ago that you had not received anything other than a very brief notice in either the April 17th or April 24th President’s Digest, and I can’t remember which it was.

President: Mac says it doesn’t say anything except that there’s some problems.

[Omitted here is discussion on potential problems in Bolivia, Colombia, and Guatemala.]

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<sup>6</sup> Reference is to an April 28 meeting, 4:45–6:01 p.m., among President Johnson, Rusk, McNamara, Ball, Bundy, and Moyers in the lounge off the Oval Office. (Johnson Library, President’s Daily Diary) In a telephone conversation with Raborn on May 12 at 4:05 p.m. (see Document 65) President Johnson recalled that they had talked about “Vietnam troops” at this meeting. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and William Raborn, Tape F65.23, Side A, PNO 1 and 2) No other record of this meeting has been found.

<sup>7</sup> See Document 32.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 35.

President: Now, if we don't have a political solution to this thing and we can't get any agreement from Caamaño's people, how long can we wait until he gets that powerful and he gets that sentiment up and he gets where he gets aid from Castro and maybe from foreign sources before we clean up that city?

McNamara: Well, Mr. President, I think we've got to get a political situation.

President: Well.

McNamara: I can't answer your question how long we can wait; but we can wait another 24 or 48 hours.

President: Oh, yeah, we know we got to do that.

McNamara: And in that period, we just have to move ahead. It's not reducing our military capability to take over those rebels by waiting 24, 48, 72 hours.

President: I believe everyday you lose it. I believe you lose—I don't think you lose any of your capab—any of your strength, but I think they get a good deal stronger.

McNamara: Well, maybe.

President: They are going back to work now.

McNamara: Well, I think they get stronger politically, Mr. President, but militarily, they aren't getting much stronger, and therefore.

President: Well, do we know that? Do we know they aren't shipping them stuff?

McNamara: Well, we have a pretty fair check. I can't say that they are not getting any guns, but I can say they are not getting many. And I don't believe that the relative military balance is shifting very much day by day. It's moving a little bit in there.

President: Should we move down there and suggest to them again—the suggestion somebody made yesterday—to try and buy up their arms?

McNamara: No, I think that is unimportant at this point.

President: All right.

McNamara: But I do think we ought to keep pushing on buying Caamaño and keep pushing on Bosch. We just have to get a political situation here.

President: Well, if they are controlled by the Castroites, they are not going to give it to you.

McNamara: I don't think they are. How the hell can 58 people control them when they've got several hundred. I just don't believe the story that Bosch and Caamaño are controlled by the Castroites. I don't mean to say they aren't influenced, Mr. President, not at all. But I don't believe that 58 people—or 200 people for that matter—can militarily control, physically control, this other bunch.

[Omitted here is brief discussion on *The New York Times* and its influence on the American people.]

McNamara: That's all I'm saying about Caamaño. And therefore, it's still worthwhile to push and work on him. And I haven't really dug deeply into who is talking to Caamaño—who is offering him the money and so on. But I think that maybe later today Cy or I ought to get into this.

President: I wish you would, with Raborn, and see if anything is being done.

[Omitted here is a short discussion on whether Martin had met with Caamaño the previous night.]

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## 65. Editorial Note

At 4:05 p.m. on May 12, 1965, President Johnson telephoned Raborn and recounted the chronology of meetings on the Dominican Republic leading up to the decision to land U.S. Marines. Johnson asked Raborn if he had been informed of the intensifying problem in the Dominican Republic prior to his swearing-in as the new CIA Director and Raborn replied, "yes." The President asked if McCone, Helms, and others were surprised by the Dominican crisis and Raborn responded, "No, sir." The President asked, "They knew this?" Raborn replied, "Yes, sir. They were alerting the entire intelligence community by established means of this." President Johnson said, "Now if this was that explosive, and if they knew it, we have got to set up a better means of notifying me." Raborn said, "I agree." President Johnson said there needed to be "a better means of interpreting to me or preparing me for [them] because quite frankly I don't want to blame anybody, I want to take the blame, I'm big enough and broad enough and man enough to take anything, but I sure do want to know it." Raborn said he agreed and would work to find a solution to this problem. Toward the end of the conversation President Johnson asked Raborn for a complete chronology of intelligence on the Dominican Republic prior to U.S. intervention. Raborn replied that such a document (see footnote 4, Document 64) had just been delivered to Valenti. President Johnson said he would review it. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and William Raborn, Tape F65.23, Side A, PNO 1 and 2)

In a May 12 memorandum to the President received at 6:05 p.m., Bundy recounted that he had met earlier in the day with CIA Deputy Director of Intelligence Ray Cline who was informed of the President's

dissatisfaction with the current system of getting information to him. Bundy and Cline agreed to try a new method. The President would receive "all really good" intelligence by a faster ticker which would be delivered to him via his secretary's office. In addition, twice a day the President would receive a more general assessment, once in his evening checklist and again in a morning summary ready at 7:30 a.m. in the Situation Room. (Ibid., National Security File, McGeorge Bundy Memos to the President, Vol. X)

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## 66. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 12–13, 1965, 11:47 p.m.–1:15 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Meeting in the Executive Mansion at Mid-night, 12–13 May 1965

### PRESENT WERE

The President  
For State: Messrs. Ball, Mann, and Vaughn  
For Defense: Secretary McNamara  
For the White House: Mr. Bundy  
For CIA: Messrs. Raborn and Helms

1. The President opened this meeting, which was held in his private quarters, by reconstructing from hand-written notes a telephone conversation he had had earlier with an emissary whom he identified as Mr. C.J. Davidson<sup>2</sup> and whom he had sent to San Juan for conversation with Juan Bosch.<sup>3</sup>

2. According to the President, the emissary had had a most difficult day with Bosch, achieving a break-through toward the end only when he succeeded in convincing Bosch that Caamano was "unconstitutional" as head of a government in the Dominican Republic. Having

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Helms) Files, Job 80–B01285A, Chron as DDCI and DCI, Folder 13, January 1–December 31, 1965. Secret. Drafted by Helms on May 13. The meeting was held on the second floor of the Executive Mansion. The time and place of the meeting are from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> A pseudonym Abe Fortas used on a secret mission to Puerto Rico to meet with former Dominican Republic President Juan Bosch. Fortas departed Washington the morning of May 12 and returned the afternoon of May 16.

<sup>3</sup> From Puerto Rico Fortas placed a telephone call to President Johnson at 10:50 p.m., May 12. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.23, Side B, PNO 1)

conceded this, Bosch then nominated two followers whom he would find acceptable to become President of the Dominican Republic:

A) Emilio Almonte Jimenez, Minister of Public Works under Caa-mano and a hydraulic engineer by profession.

B) Silvestre Antonio Guzman, former Minister of Agriculture under Bosch.

3. Further, Bosch proposed that Julio Postigo Arias have a position in the Cabinet and that Colonel Rafael Fernandez be made Chief of Police. Bosch went on to state that he personally would not return to the Dominican Republic and that he would not want either Caa-mano or Imbert connected with the proposed government. He indicated that he would like to see Balaguer in the Cabinet and that he felt Balaguer would support the nominees he had identified. Bosch was agreeable to having United States Marines remain for a period of time, provided that a substantial number were withdrawn from the present complement. (No distinction was made between Marines and United States Army personnel.) Bosch also indicated that the Dominican Republic would need \$100,000,000 during the next seventeen months, at which time an election would be held according to the provisions of the Constitution.

4. Immediately following the President's exposition, the undersigned excused himself for the purpose of starting traces on the individuals whom Bosch had nominated. Therefore, the undersigned was not present for a period of time during which Admiral Raborn can identify the matters discussed.

(Traces and biographical material as requested were available to the White House, Department of State, and the Pentagon in time for the daily 1000 meeting in the White House on 13 May.)<sup>4</sup>

5. After considerable discussion of the problems confronting the United States Government in working with Bosch on his proposal, the President put in a telephone call to Mr. Davidson in San Juan, permitting Messrs. McNamara, Mann, and Bundy to listen in on various extensions.<sup>5</sup> The President asked Mr. Davidson to remain in San Juan and to have further conversation with Bosch on 13 May with respect to a more balanced Cabinet, and particularly to try to work out a more precise statement as to how the proposed government would deal with Communists and Trujilloistas. (On 13 May, the White House received a dictated statement from Mr. Davidson on this last point.)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>5</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>6</sup> See attachment 3 to Document 67.

6. The meeting adjourned with the understanding that further moves would be made on the morning of 13 May when traces on the men proposed by Betancourt would be available.

**Richard Helms<sup>7</sup>**  
*Deputy Director*

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<sup>7</sup> Printed from a copy that indicates Helms signed the original.

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## 67. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 13, 1965, 5:10–6:40 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Meeting in the Cabinet Room 1700, 13 May 1965 on the Dominican Republic

### PRESENT WERE

The President  
For State: Messrs. Ball, Mann, and Kennedy Crockett  
For Defense: Messrs. McNamara and Vance  
For the White House: Messrs. Bundy and Moyers  
For CIA: Messrs. Raborn and Helms

1. The President opened the meeting by reading aloud the three attachments to this memorandum. On attachment number 2, the President thought that the second sentence should be omitted at least until the OAS had declared itself.<sup>2</sup>

2. Traces were requested on Colonel Coromines,<sup>3</sup> the brother of Colonel Enrique Coromines. The undersigned stepped out of the meeting to start this process with both State and the Agency.

3. Admiral Raborn identified the possibility that the Communists in the Dominican Republic might resort to violence when and if an announcement is made that Colonel Caamano has been ousted. He also mentioned the contingency that at some juncture Dominican Communists might cross the border into Haiti in an effort to unseat Duvalier

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Helms) Files, Job 80–B01285A, Chron as DDCI and DCI, January 1–December 31, 1965, Folder 13. Secret. Drafted by Helms on May 14. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> Not attached.

<sup>3</sup> A candidate under consideration for Secretary of State for the Armed Forces.

and set up a Communist state there. This in turn led to a colloquy between the President and the Department of State representatives as to what consultations or contingency plans should be made in the event that coups occurred in other Latin American countries, with particular reference to Haiti.

4. The remainder of the meeting was absorbed by two conversations with Mr. C.J. Davidson in San Juan, the first conducted by the President,<sup>4</sup> and the second by Mr. Bundy.<sup>5</sup> From these conversations, it emerged that Bosch was sending a Colonel Hernandez at 6:00 A.M., 14 May, by plane to Santo Domingo for the purpose of having a conversation with Colonel Caamano, hopefully leading to his accepting Bosch's solution to the political problem. The President was clearly doubtful that Colonel Caamano would agree to quit. Nevertheless, if Colonel Caamano does agree, then Bosch would talk with Guzman in an effort to persuade him to assume the presidency, after proper support from the Dominican Congress. This would be followed by an approach to Guzman from Mr. Bundy who would also undertake to insure that the five-man OAS committee would approve this approach. It was also decided to give Ambassador Bennett some small insight into the purpose of Colonel Hernandez' trip.<sup>6</sup> It was left to the Department of Defense to arrange by what aircraft and with what arrangements Colonel Hernandez would proceed to Santo Domingo.

**Richard Helms**<sup>7</sup>  
*Deputy Director*

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<sup>4</sup> President Johnson placed a telephone call to Abe Fortas on May 13 at 5:35 p.m. During this 16-minute conversation Fortas outlined in great detail a plan, which is summarized here for the establishment of a coalition government in the Dominican Republic. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.24, Side A, PNO 1 and 2)

<sup>5</sup> McGeorge Bundy telephoned Abe Fortas on May 13 at 6:30 p.m. to finalize plans for the transportation of the two Dominican military officers from Puerto Rico to Santo Domingo, and discuss arrangements once they arrived. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between McGeorge Bundy and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.24, Side A, PNO 3)

<sup>6</sup> In telegram 1018 to Santo Domingo, May 13, Mann, without naming Fortas, informed Bennett and Palmer that an "intermediary" had arranged for two Dominican military officers in Bosch's confidence, Colonels Hernandez and Herrera, to contact Caamaño once they arrived in Santo Domingo. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP)

<sup>7</sup> Printed from a copy that indicates Helms signed the original.

**Attachment No. 1<sup>8</sup>**

San Juan, May 13, 1965.

*Dictated by Mr. Davidson 4:15 PM—5/13/65*

It is understood that Juan Bosch will support the following objectives:

1. For President, Silvestre Antonio Guzman
2. Juan Bosch proposes that he talk with Balaguer
  - A. To enlist his support for the plan and the new government, and
  - B. To inquire whether he would serve in the Cabinet or would suggest one of this associates for the Cabinet.
3. Juan Bosch will support for the Cabinet Julio Postigo.<sup>9</sup>
4. J.B. recognizes that the Cabinet might include a person—whether or not a military officer—who would have a special appeal to the San Isidro forces, and he will endeavor to suggest name or names.
5. J.B. is of the opinion that Colonel Coromines—not his brother, Lt. Col. Henrique Coromines—could be a satisfactory Chief of the Army. Bosch thinks that Coromines is now commander of the Mao fortress.
6. Communists. Last night's paper sets forth the understanding.<sup>10</sup> The detailed procedures will have to be worked out with the new President with the object of accomplishing an effective job utilizing the resources available to all concerned.
7. OAS and the President of the US would appear jointly as functioning to bring this about in cooperation with the Dominican people.

**Attachment No. 3<sup>11</sup>**

San Juan, May 13, 1965.

*Dictated by Mr. Davidson*

Concerning active Communists and Trujillistas, it is agreed that they present the problem for democratic government in the Dominican Republic and that effective measures must be taken by the

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<sup>8</sup> No classification marking.

<sup>9</sup> Julio D. Postigo, a close personal friend of Juan Bosch, and a member of the Imbert government.

<sup>10</sup> Not further identified; however, see attachment 3 below.

<sup>11</sup> No classification marking.

constitutional government to protect the Dominican people from their subversive activities. These measures will involve their separation from the Dominican community. They may take the form of their internment in some isolated area under Dominican jurisdiction or their departure from the island, identification of such persons to be effective promptly by mutual consultation, and prompt action will follow as aforesaid.

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## 68. Intelligence Memorandum<sup>1</sup>

OCI No. 1754/65

Washington, May 14, 1965.

### THE SITUATION IN THE INTERIOR OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

#### Summary

The calm which has generally prevailed in the Dominican countryside may be misleading. Under the surface there is a good deal of popular support for the Bosch–Caamano movement and there is little positive support for the Imbert Government of National Reconstruction. At the same time, lack of food or its high cost and the general economic dislocation are stimulating discontent.

This situation is made to order for radical agitations, and it is clear that both pro-Bosch and Communist elements in the rebel movement are attempting to exploit it, particularly through inflammatory broadcasts over Radio Santo Domingo. Disturbances have already occurred in some localities, most significantly in the relatively conservative city of Santiago on 13 May. The chances of growing unrest, confusion, and rebel gains in the interior are almost certain to increase if the political stalemate is prolonged in Santo Domingo.

1. Developments in the provinces of the Dominican Republic have normally been dominated by what is going on in the capital city. Santo Domingo is not only the political, military, and financial center of the country; it is also the hub of the country's commercial, transportation, and communication systems. It is the Dominican industrial center. All major industries, except for chocolate manufacturing and mining, are

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65–5/31/65. Secret. Prepared in the Office of Current Intelligence of the Central Intelligence Agency.

based in the capital.<sup>2</sup> Even more important is the fact that Santo Domingo is the location of the country's major wholesale houses, which provide domestic and imported goods to local merchants all over the country. Well over ten percent of the Dominican population lives in the capital.

2. Political and military decisions reached in the capital have historically been accepted in the countryside. Most Dominicans want to be on the winning side. During the crucial days of the insurrection prior to the landing of US military forces, it was apparent that the bulk of the populace in the interior was simply waiting for an outcome in the capital before joining forces with the winner. There is little doubt that if the rebel forces in the capital had won, most of the military commands throughout the provinces, as well as the provincial and local government bodies, would have swung to the rebel side. A few ranking military officers would have recognized that a rebel victory signified the end of their careers, and these officers might have tried to resist, but it is more likely that they would have run away. The conservative business class in the Cibao area would have been opposed to the rebellion, but its reaction probably would have been ineffectual and passive.

3. What actually happened after the landing of US forces was that the wavering and waiting Dominican military commands in the interior suddenly stiffened and became "loyalist." They evidently believed that the coming of US troops had significantly reduced the chances of a rebel victory. It must be assumed, however, that "loyalist" control in the interior at present is only as secure as it is in the capital. If the situation in the capital should shift toward some other group, those now exercising control in the countryside would probably follow suit.

4. There is one element in the present political-psychological situation which could cause some shift from the traditional pattern. This new element is that *potential* rebel strength—in the interior as well as in the capital—is probably much greater than is apparent on the surface. There is little doubt that the Caamano government does represent to many people throughout the country the forces of "constitutionalism" and of general revulsion against the old "establishment." In this sense, there are elements of a genuine popular revolution in the Bosch-Caamano movement.

5. In addition, Caamano personally has shown some of the qualities of a charismatic leader. The Imbert Government of National

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<sup>2</sup> In the city are food processing plants, the country's only cement plant, the largest flour mill, a shipyard, a foundry, a brewery, a distillery, and plants producing nails, vegetable oils, textiles, batteries, fertilizers, asbestos products, shoes, soap, and explosives. [Footnote in the source text.]

Reconstruction, on the other hand, has as yet no base of public support and, where it is respected, it is respected as the source of authority and police control. The Imbert government is, rightly or wrongly, regarded by many Dominicans as the defender of the discredited military establishment and of the conservative economic oligarchy.

6. The issue of Communism in the Caamano government is not well understood by most Dominicans. Reports from a number of interior towns during the course of the insurrection reveal that the young people throughout the countryside were the ones most ready to commit themselves to the rebel cause. Groups of young men left their home towns on the first two days of the insurrection and traveled toward Santo Domingo to fight for the rebels. Many of these youths subsequently drifted back home during the first week of May. They remain an as yet unorganized but potential source of active rebel support in many towns throughout the country. There were 200 such young men in the town of Santiago Rodriguez alone who left for the capital.

7. Given the degree of Communist influence which is believed to exist in the rebel movement, the potential for Communist exploitation of the existing pro-rebel sentiment in the countryside and for Communist organizational efforts must be regarded as considerable.

8. There are reports, from clandestine sources in or close to extremist groups, of Communist preparations to organize guerrilla warfare in the interior. Communists are stockpiling weapons and planning to exploit popular sentiments, using the customary nationalistic and reformist slogans to enlist the militant non-Communist revolutionaries. These reports must be taken seriously.

9. The Communists have a fertile field. It is quite possible, over the coming months, that they may succeed in developing a broadly-supported paramilitary capability at certain points in the interior. Such an effort would threaten to complete the job of stealing the revolution from its former moderate leaders. The result might become effective pressure from the countryside on the city—a reversal of the traditional pattern, but the identical pattern which did, in fact, occur in Cuba in 1958 and 1959.

10. At the same time, discontent has been stimulated by the economic disruption throughout the country caused by the rebel control of most important portions of the capital city. Santo Domingo is now unable to supply the goods needed to maintain the local economies. This condition is exacerbating the already chronic unemployment problem in many towns and cities. Small industries have been forced to close down because they have received no raw materials from Santo Domingo. The commercial banking system, headquartered in the capital is inoperative throughout the country and there is little money to pay the workers who do have jobs. The traditionally passive

campesinos are bringing some locally produced foods into the towns and cities, but it is not enough.

11. Worse yet—because of its serious social and political implications—is the fact that local Dominican merchants—who seem to have even less social awareness than the usual Latin Americans in this class, have raised their prices to levels at which the poor in some areas cannot obtain food even though supplies exist in local stores and warehouses. That this is an explosive problem is demonstrated by the food riots that have taken place this week in almost every location where charitable organizations have set up free food distribution centers. The extremists are being handed a perfect issue with which to rouse public hatred against the middle class.

12. Against this background, the propaganda which the rebel government has been able to broadcast throughout the country over the transmitters of Radio Santo Domingo, at least through 12 May, can only serve to arouse more public discontent and more support for the rebel cause.

13. A possible foretaste of things to come occurred in Santiago on 12 May when Communist and other pro-rebel elements tried to organize a demonstration in a city park. In this case, the local military authorities reacted vigorously in breaking up the small groups which attempted to demonstrate, and one demonstrator was shot when he threw rocks at the police. On the same day members of the medical and law associations in Santiago were canvassing for signatures for a petition against the US military intervention.

14. It is apparent that the longer the political stalemate continues in Santo Domingo, the greater the chances of disturbances and pro-rebel gains in the interior. Also, as the impasse is prolonged, more of the relatively moderate rebels or rebel sympathizers are likely to adopt increasingly extremist attitudes.

15. The one possible development which could significantly undercut extremist potential in the countryside, as well as in the capital city, would be the establishment in Santo Domingo of a government which is more representative of popular aspirations for revolutionary change, less burdened by the ineffective and outmoded traditional Dominican military establishment, not beholden to the old economic oligarchy, and not perverted by Communist influence. The formation of such a government is complicated by the short supply of qualified leaders who can fill the bill.

**69. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 14, 1965, 5:51–8:13 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting in the Cabinet Room, 1745, 14 May 1965 on the Dominican Republic

PRESENT WERE

The President

For State: Messrs. Ball, Mann, and Vaughn

For Defense: Messrs. McNamara and Vance

For the White House: Messrs. Bundy, Moyers, and Valenti

For CIA: Messrs. Raborn and Helms

1. This meeting consisted of a two and a half hour discussion of a variety of matters affecting United States Government policy toward the Dominican Republic.

2. At the start, Mr. Bundy indicated that he had heard from Mr. Davidson and that the approach to Caamano had gone a hundred percent.<sup>2</sup> In other words, Caamano had accepted the proposition conveyed to him by the two Colonels representing Bosch. Mr. Bundy also noted that the search was on to locate Guzman. At about 1930, another call came from Mr. Davidson to the President in which Mr. Davidson stated that Guzman had agreed to serve as president of a provisional government.<sup>3</sup> It was further indicated that Guzman was proceeding to San Juan for the purpose of meeting with Bosch. At this juncture, there en-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Helms) Files, Job 80–B01285A, Chron as DDCI and DCI, Folder 13, January 1–December 31, 1965. Secret. Drafted by Helms on May 15. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> Fortas telephoned President Johnson at 2:45 p.m. on May 14 to inform him that "the entire plan has been accepted." They also discussed the next step in the plan, which was to locate Guzman. (Ibid., Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.25, Side A, PNO 1 and 2)

<sup>3</sup> Fortas telephoned President Johnson at 7:29 p.m. on May 14 to tell him Guzman had agreed to accept the position. Fortas suggested that a "professional," such as McGeorge Bundy be sent to San Juan to meet with Guzman. President Johnson asked what Bundy would do, and furthermore, why was it necessary for him to go to San Juan since Fortas was "good of a man as I've got" down there. Fortas thought it was essential for someone else to "talk to the future number one man, . . . to do a belly-to-belly understanding of everything." Fortas reasoned, "it would be better to have someone who will have a continuing role establish the relationship" since as an intermediary he would be leaving the scene eventually. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Abe Fortas, Tape F65.25, Side A, PNO 4, and Side B, PNO 1)

sued considerable discussion of which United States Government official should proceed to San Juan, to meet with Guzman, and to re-enforce on the part of the United States how Guzman was to handle the problem of Communists in the Dominican Republic. The President finally decided, after considering McNamara and Harriman, to have Vance fly to San Isidro first for conversations with Ambassador Bennett and General Palmer, then proceed to San Juan, probably on 15 May, for the desired talk with Guzman. It was further agreed that Kennedy Crockett would go to New York for a private and unofficial conversation with Balaguer in order to insure that Balaguer would play ball if and when he received a telephone call from Bosch. It was emphasized that Balaguer was not to let on that the United States Government had approached him since Bosch has indicated that he is very touchy on the point of having this matter handled by himself only.

3. One part of the meeting dealt with the deteriorating economic situation in the Dominican Republic. There was considerable discussion of this problem, and it was finally decided to send Gaud, Solomon, and a team of twenty-odd economy experts to Santo Domingo in an effort to get the economy of the country moving again.

4. The President was most anxious to have Davidson persuade Bosch that Radio Santo Domingo should stop its inflammatory broadcasts. He indicated that we were prepared to have the Loyalists cease their incendiary statements if Radio Santo Domingo would do the same.

5. Secretary McNamara was asked to organize sabotage teams from the Special Forces to take out the radio transmitters of Radio Santo Domingo if this eventuality appeared necessary.

6. There was a lengthy discussion of actions to be taken if the Davidson mission were to fail. There was acrimonious argument about a Mann proposal to pull United States troops across the bridge to San Isidro and permit the city of Santo Domingo to become a political and economic whole. There was opposition to this suggestion from others present. Bundy advocated having United States troops clean out the northern section of Santo Domingo. There was also reluctance to accept this recommendation. In addition, the role of Balaguer in the present and future of the Dominican Republic was canvassed in depth.

7. The problem in the countryside was much discussed, but it soon became related to what one should do about Santo Domingo since that city is the political and economic heart of the country.

8. During the meeting, the President spoke on the telephone with Mr. J. Edgar Hoover. A part of the conversation related to a

request from the President that Mr. Hoover improve coverage on Balaguer.<sup>4</sup>

9. The meeting adjourned at 2015.

**Richard Helms<sup>5</sup>**  
*Deputy Director*

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<sup>4</sup> President Johnson telephoned Hoover at 7:05 p.m. on May 14 to ask if he had any information on Balaguer. Hoover replied he did not and President Johnson said he wanted Hoover to “get right after [Balaguer] in New York,” and that he “sure wanted [Hoover’s] operation stepped up wherever it is for the next 48, 72 hrs. unless [he] wanted to have another Castro.” (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and J. Edgar Hoover, Tape F65.25, Side A, PNO 3)

<sup>5</sup> Printed from a copy that indicates Helms signed the original.

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## 70. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 15, 1965.

### SUBJECT

Contact with Dr. Joaquin Balaguer

During the evening meeting of the Bundy Committee held May 14<sup>2</sup> it was decided that the time has come for a direct meeting with Dr. Balaguer. He should not be caught unawares by the recent turn of events in the current maneuvering aimed at resolving the political impasse in the DR.

I was instructed to carry out this mission observing the following ground rules:

- 1) Dr. Balaguer was not to be told about our negotiations with Juan Bosch;
- 2) Dr. Balaguer was not to be told anything about the nature of the new political grouping which we hope will emerge;
- 3) Dr. Balaguer was to be reassured insofar as our attitude toward him is concerned;

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 15–1 DOM REP. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Crockett.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this meeting has been found; but the President’s Daily Diary (Johnson Library) suggests that this meeting probably took place at the conclusion of the 5:51 p.m. meeting in the Cabinet Room on the Dominican Republic, see Document 69.

4) Dr. Balaguer was to be made aware that he is likely to receive a telephone call with relation to the currently evolving situation.

5) He was to be given no indication from whom this call would come nor, for that matter, what the subject might be;

6) I was to obtain Dr. Balaguer's assurance of full cooperation when the time comes for him to bring his own influence and that of his followers into play.

7) The meeting was to be arranged so that it would remain completely secret.

I have not been in direct contact with Dr. Balaguer except on irregular occasions. In order to arrange a secret meeting, it was therefore necessary to work through my intermediary of the last few months, Washington lobbyist Irving Davidson.<sup>3</sup> There was no other way of going about this, particularly in the time frame called for by my action assignment, since I do not have Dr. Balaguer's home address nor know how he can be reached except through Davidson.

On May 14 I called Davidson at home at 8:30 p.m. and told him that I wanted to arrange a secret meeting with Dr. Balaguer for that same evening. Davidson reminded me that Balaguer is always surrounded by people like Enrique Garcia and other hangers-on. If a truly secret meeting was to be carried out, we would have to make some unusual arrangements. After some discussion, Davidson and I agreed on the following plan:

1) Davidson would contact Balaguer in New York by telephone and tell Balaguer that a mutual friend (of Davidson's and Balaguer's) wished to come to New York to see Balaguer that evening;

2) That the nature of the discussion to be undertaken would be such that it would be necessary for Dr. Balaguer to meet with Davidson and the mutual friend at some place other than Balaguer's headquarters;

3) To this end Davidson would suggest to Dr. Balaguer that he wait for Davidson and "the mutual friend" in the lobby of the Regency Hotel at 11:45 p.m. May 14;

4) If Balaguer was willing to go ahead on this basis and would not insist on the "mutual friend" being identified, the deal was on;

5) Davidson and Crockett would take the 10:00 p.m. Eastern Airlines shuttle to New York to arrive at the Regency Hotel no later than 11:30.

Davidson called back very shortly to inform me that he had been able to make arrangements with Balaguer in strict accordance with the terms on which agreement had been reached, as outlined above.

Davidson was not sure, but gathered from a comment Balaguer made during their conversation, that Balaguer probably thought the

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<sup>3</sup> A pseudonym used by Abe Fortas.

“mutual friend” who was coming was General Gleason. In any event, Balaguer did not question the arrangement but readily agreed to it.

I met Davidson just in time to catch the 10:00 p.m. Eastern shuttle to New York and we worked out a scenario for the meeting during the course of the flight. We both agreed that the talk should be informal and leisurely, in keeping with all of the earlier meetings I have had with Balaguer. We also agreed that Balaguer should be suitably impressed by the surroundings in which the meeting would take place. To this end we arranged for a rather elaborate suite of rooms at the Regency.

Davidson and I made it to the Regency before Balaguer turned up and I went immediately to the suite we had reserved (room 1061). Davidson waited in the lobby for Balaguer to make sure that he had, in fact, come to the meeting alone before bringing him up to see me. Balaguer and Davidson joined me at about midnight.

After an exchange of the traditional formalities which the proprieties require in meeting with a Latin American and particularly one who has been a president of a country, I opened the conversation by apologizing to Dr. Balaguer for having asked him to come to me. I told him that I regretted very much the necessity of arranging the meeting in this manner since it would have been much more proper and respectful on my part to come to see him at his own headquarters. I asked that he forgive this impropriety and that he understand that I suggested we meet in this manner only because I felt it would be dangerous for Dr. Balaguer for me to come to his headquarters at this time and in the current circumstances.

To prepare the way for getting into the substantive stage of our conversation, I asked Dr. Balaguer if he would be kind enough to: a) give me his views on the current situation as it has evolved in the DR over recent weeks and b) outline to me any program which he felt might offer promise of contributing to the solution of the current political impasse there. I told him that I and the people with whom I work have a great deal of respect for him as a statesman and that we felt it would be very much to our advantage to have his thoughts on these and any other points he might like to cover. I stressed at this point and on various other occasions during the course of the conversation the importance which I attached to our meeting and the substance of our discussion being held in complete confidence between only the two of us. He not only agreed, but said that he, too, felt this would be in everyone’s interest.

As Dr. Balaguer is an intellectual and a gentleman, productive talks with him must be carried out with dignity and tact. The introductory exercise which I have just described took the better part of 45 minutes.

Dr. Balaguer opened his presentation by recalling his announcement earlier this week to the effect that he and his people would cooperate with the OAS in every way in order to restore tranquility in

the DR. He said that the first indispensable step must be formation of some sort of national coalition which can command respect and qualify for recognition. While Dr. Balaguer and his group would be willing to work with Imbert and/or Caamaño to this end, Dr. Balaguer was afraid that neither Imbert nor Caamaño could organize a government which would command support in the country as a whole.

I told Balaguer that while we wished to avoid making judgments on any political figures or groupings in the DR, except the communists with whom we could not work under any circumstances, I felt his assessment of both the Imbert group and the Caamaño group was quite close to our own. At the same time, I pointed out that Dominican figures of prestige who possess real leadership potential have been extremely reluctant to take any active part in Dominican politics. I asked Dr. Balaguer if he thought there was any realistic prospect for bringing men of stature, good faith, and high motivation together in this hour of great trial for his country.

Dr. Balaguer felt that prospects for achieving this were probably better now than at any time in the past. He pointed out that the DR stands on the edge of a precipice and faces the dire prospect of ceasing to be an independent nation. Unless Dominicans can find some way of working together in governing their own country, they will be governed by someone else, such as the OAS, Muñoz Marín, Betancourt, or perhaps even as a UN trusteeship. He therefore felt that the point has been reached when it would be impossible for Dominicans of stature to refuse a call to serve their country.

I responded that Dr. Balaguer's views were most heartwarming to me. I asked him if he had any particular people in mind who might be willing to come forward in the circumstances he has just described.

Dr. Balaguer said there were many, ticking off a list of perhaps a half-dozen names, none of which were very inspiring as far as I am concerned. I consequently made no comment on the names but sought to turn the discussion in another direction.

I told Dr. Balaguer that I was sure he understood the great price the US had paid in reaching its decision to land US forces on Dominican soil. I "guessed" that it was probably the hardest decision with which this country has ever been faced in its dealings with Latin America. I told him that one of our primary objectives is to help promote, by all means at our disposal, the creation of a stable and prosperous Dominican Republic so that we may withdraw our forces at the very earliest possible date.

Dr. Balaguer interrupted at this point to say that while he, too, was heart-sick over the fact of his country's occupation, he nonetheless recognized that there had been no alternative to the landing of US troops under the circumstances. He felt that it would be a mistake for the US

to withdraw its forces prematurely as the communists would surely gain control of the country if we did. Further, Dr. Balaguer felt that the time has now come for a complete restructuring of the Dominican armed forces. Once this has been accomplished, then the time will have come for a gradual withdrawal of foreign forces.

In response to my query, Dr. Balaguer outlined his views on the most desirable form that a restructured Dominican armed force might take. His ideas were so close to those we have developed in the Bundy Committee meetings that I have wondered at one stage whether someone might not have already briefed him about what we have in mind. Consequently, I reacted to his proposal only to the extent of nodding my head affirmatively as he outlined it. At the end of his presentation I told him that it seemed to me this was something for Dominicans themselves to work out but I was sure the DR could count on the full cooperation and support of the US if, in fact, events should evolve in the way he had just outlined.

At this point, I got down to the business of carrying out the remainder of my assignment. I told Dr. Balaguer that:

- 1) We are aware of diplomatic initiatives now underway aimed at breaking the present impasse;
- 2) We hope these will bear fruit because we are in general agreement with Dr. Balaguer's assessment of both the Caamaño and Imbert groupings;
- 3) We anticipate that Dr. Balaguer will be approached very shortly and asked for his collaboration in and cooperation with the diplomatic initiatives to which I had just referred;
- 4) Since this is a highly sensitive negotiation, we entreat Dr. Balaguer to keep completely secret the discussions he and I are conducting;
- 5) We believe that Dr. Balaguer and his group have a large part to play in the interim and long-term political evolution of the DR;
- 6) We are prepared to support Dr. Balaguer and his group in their constructive efforts;
- 7) We fervently hope that if Dr. Balaguer is not able to respond affirmatively to the approach which we feel will shortly be made to him, he will at least not respond negatively until he has again given us the opportunity to consult with him;
- 8) I sincerely regretted finding myself in the position of asking so much of Dr. Balaguer while I was limited by my instructions to tell him so little;
- 9) I reiterated the extreme importance, both from his standpoint and ours, of keeping our meeting entirely secret;
- 10) Without naming any names, I said I was sure he would understand how difficult it was to deal with some of the individuals who must be involved in any meaningful solution. I again underscored the delicacy of this entire operation from that standpoint.

At this point, I asked Dr. Balaguer if he felt we had understood each other, despite the elliptical nature of our conversation. If not, did he have any questions to ask?

Dr. Balaguer said that he felt there was a clear understanding between us and that he had no doubts as to the meaning of my various comments and suggestions nor, for that matter, my failure to react to some of his comments and suggestions. He said that the really serious problem from his standpoint was a basic one for which he saw no solution. He protested that he is a man without ambition and that he is beginning to feel the weight of his years (salt to taste).

I took this up immediately by repeating my earlier statements, emphasizing the Dominican Republic's great need at this time for the help and support of its leading statesmen. I said that for my own part, Dr. Balaguer headed that list. I was confident he would not fail his country in this hour of need despite the heavy price I realized he would have to pay in again taking up an active role in Dominican politics.

I really think Dr. Balaguer swallowed this one hook, line and sinker. At least tears came into his eyes.

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## 71. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 15, 1965, 1930Z.

1228. "From: The President. For Bundy and Vance."<sup>2</sup>

1. After Bundy's telecon with Moyers this am,<sup>3</sup> it was decided in full review here to approve your recommendation to return, Bundy to come back to Washington Wednesday<sup>4</sup> morning and Vance to remain, pending arrival of OAS Foreign Ministers committee.<sup>5</sup> We hope that

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic State & CIA Cables. Secret; Flash; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> Bundy, Mann, Vance, and Vaughn, the "Bundy-Vance Mission," departed Washington for Santo Domingo at 7 a.m. on May 15 on President Johnson's instructions to help establish a government of national concord. They arrived in Santo Domingo May 16 after a stop in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>4</sup> May 19.

<sup>5</sup> OAS Commission members Colombo of Argentina and Carrisoza of Colombia arrived in Santo Domingo on the morning of May 15. The other three members were already in Santo Domingo.

this committee will be constituted at the OAS Foreign Ministers meeting which begins Thursday.<sup>6</sup>

2. It desirable for Bundy, Vance and Mora review situation with Caamano this afternoon outlining what US has successfully done to date and pointing out that we will continue to cooperate with OAS in all undertakings. We hope that OAS will continue the effort to establish a government of moderate, progressively oriented, anti-Communist elements representing a broad spectrum of Dominican opinion and all our info is available to them together with any information they may desire.

3. Desirable Bundy, Vance and Mora have talk with Guzman and Imbert in order also to impress them with the need for restraint pending arrival of OAS representatives.

4. Bundy is to brief Benitez so that Benitez can return to San Juan to advise Bosch as to US efforts and intentions, emphasizing need for restraint during very critical next few days.

5. Press treatment could be as follows: in order coordinate with our briefings here:

(A) At 3:30 pm this afternoon, Washington time, Bundy and Vance will give backgrounder in Santo Domingo.

(B) Rusk will have on-the-record press conference Wednesday morning in Washington.

(C) In describing function of Bundy–Vance mission, you should take following line:

(1) Compliment the 5-man OAS Commission and point out that their presence in Santo Domingo laid the basis for the achievement of a cease-fire which is now being better observed.

(2) The 5-man committee felt that its mandate limited its activities essentially to fact-finding and reporting. It did not feel that without further instructions from the meeting of foreign ministers it had a mandate to search for a liberal non-Communist provisional government of conciliation.

(3) The activities of the Bundy group have been exploratory in nature and designed to assist the efforts of the OAS at a very critical time. At all times the Bundy group has worked closely with and supported

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<sup>6</sup> The Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics was held May 20 at the OAS Headquarters in Washington. The ministers adopted a resolution to entrust the OAS Secretary General, Jose A. Mora "to negotiate a strict cease-fire in accordance with the Act of Santo Domingo," and "to offer his good offices to the parties in conflict, with a view to the establishment of a climate of peace and conciliation that will permit the functioning of democratic institutions in the Dominican Republic." (*American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1965*, pp. 981–982)

the OAS representative—first the 5-man OAS mission and later Dr. Mora.

(4) Mora has done a good job. There is more observance of the cease-fire agreement reached by the 5-man OAS committee. The Inter-American force is now under the command of a Brazilian officer. Several Ministers of Foreign Affairs plan to attend personally the meeting of Foreign Ministers scheduled for May 27 in Washington.

(5) Between the efforts of the Bundy group and the OAS representatives a number of avenues have been explored for establishing a provisional government of reconciliation representing all non-Communist, responsible political groups in the country.

(6) The US however has no special candidate of its own. The Dominican people with the assistance of the OAS must find a way to bring about the creation of a broadly based government committee to reform and to elections. In particular the US does not support extremists either of the left or of the right.

(7) In view of the progress which has been made, the time has come for Bundy to return to Washington in next day or so. He will report fully to the President and the Secretary of State prior to the Foreign Ministers meeting which meets on May 27. Vance will stay on to be of assistance to the Inter-American forces until such time as the decisions of the meeting of Foreign Ministers have been taken. At that time, he too, will return to Washington. Hopefully this will be within the next few days. Stonewall<sup>7</sup> anxious you stress following accomplishments to date:

1. Americans and other foreign nationals have been evacuated without loss of any lives.

2. Under the authority of the OAS an international safety cease-fire has been established and continues to be maintained as a haven for all of those who wish to use it.

3. A small but highly disciplined and armed Communist minority has been prevented from imposing itself on the country.

4. Large scale beachhead has been prevented by first the US force—now the Inter-American force—along the line of communications which separates the two contending forces.

5. Large quantities of food and medicine have been distributed to provide for the hungry and sick as a result of the efforts of many American countries.

6. An Inter-American force has been established for the first time in American history thus making it possible for the US to reduce the

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<sup>7</sup> Presumably a reference to President Johnson.

number of US forces—details concerning the reduction of the US forces will be made available soon.

7. With the efforts that have been made thus far by Mora, the commission and the Bundy–Vance mission, the stage has been set for the OAS to address itself to the question of finding a definitive political solution to the problem and we hope to the consideration of corrective machinery for dealing with these problems in the future. These matters are under OAS consideration. We hope that the OAS will continue to be the principal instrument in this hemisphere for this current, independent and democratic effort in the Western Hemisphere.

*Washington Post* today carried story FBI sending team of agents to Santo Domingo to help identify and locate Communists. Agreed-upon statement by Reedy this morning was ‘the only thing I will say is the FBI and CIA are working jointly as they customarily do on activities that are connected with the welfare of our own country, and any further information will have to come from the FBI.’ You should simply reply back to the White House statement if queried about this.

On Guzman role the agreed-upon statement by State at noon today was ‘We do not have full information about Mr. Guzman’s role at the bank or his activities while director and we suggest you ascertain this from him directly.’ Stonewall anxious avoid direct or indirect endorsement Guzman by USG officials.

One final note from Stonewall: Your effort should provide clear, sharp note of confidence that from the Sunday<sup>8</sup> morning when we first moved ships to horizon until now, we have met with success in our program. Specific objectives (evacuation, averting commie takeover, cease-fire, OAS participation, etc.) achieved. Present step only continuation of that program. Turning now to OAS not admission of defeat but logical consequence previous developments.”

**Rusk**

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<sup>8</sup> April 24.

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## 72. Draft Memorandum of Meeting<sup>1</sup>

San Isidro Air Base, Dominican Republic, May 15, 1965.

### PARTICIPANTS

Commodore Francisco Rivera Caminero, Secretary of State for the Armed Forces,  
Government of National Reconstruction (GNR)

Brig. Gen. Juan de los Santos Cespedes, Chief of Staff,  
Dominican Air Force, GNR

Brig. Gen. Jacinto Martinez Arana,<sup>2</sup> Chief of Staff, Dominican Army, GNR

Commodore Ramon Emilio Jimenez, Chief of Staff, Dominican Navy, GNR

Under Secretary of State Thomas C. Mann

Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett, Jr.

Assistant Secretary of State Jack H. Vaughn

Lt. General Bruce Palmer

Lt. Colonel Thomas Fishburn

Lt. Colonel Ralph Heywood (USMC)

Harry W. Shlaudeman

Under Secretary Mann opened the meeting by thanking the Dominican officers for their courtesy in attending. It was necessary, if inconvenient, to assemble at San Isidro in order to avoid publicity and potentially damaging speculation in the press.

Mr. Mann explained that he had been sent to the Dominican Republic by the President of the United States and was speaking for the President. A solution to the Dominican conflict must be found quickly. It was particularly urgent to get the Dominican economy going again. In this context, the Dominican officers were surely aware that basic Communist tactics aimed at bringing the economy of a target country to a standstill so as to promote general chaos and suffering.

If order could not be restored rapidly, Mr. Mann continued, fighting might break out in the provinces. The United States would then

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/DR Files: Lot 70 D 442, POL 15-1 Head of Government. Secret. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. The exact time of this meeting has not been determined; however, during a brief telephone conversation between Bromley Smith and President Johnson at 11:25 a.m., May 15, the former told the President that Mann and Vaughn were expected to arrive at the San Isidro Air Base at approximately noon. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Bromley Smith, Tape F65.26, Side B, PNO 2)

<sup>2</sup> General Martinez Arana arrived after the meeting had been underway for approximately thirty minutes. He came from the northern zone of the city where he had been leading troops in the assault on rebel positions along Maximo Gomez Avenue. Martinez reported the going to be tough and progress slow, in part, he asserted, because cooperating units of the National Police were proving [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. [Footnote in the source text.]

probably have to use force to a much greater degree and a full-scale occupation could result. Faced with this problem, the United States Government had been giving careful and continuing study to various means of ending the fighting. It was recognized that the use of force to clear the rebels from Santo Domingo might ultimately be necessary. However, the United States Government was not prepared to consider this alternative except as a last resort. The rebel forces included many well-intentioned youngsters who had been tricked by the extremists. The Communists were now in the background while these innocents played an increasingly important role. The shedding of their blood would be a tragedy.

Finally, Mr. Mann said, the United States Government had come to the conclusion that the Dominican people were tired of government by oligarchy, unjustified privileges for the few and general corruption. They wanted equality, reforms and constitutionality. President Johnson, for himself and for all of his government, had made United States support for these aspirations absolutely clear. At the same time, Mr. Mann commented, the Dominican officers should have no misapprehensions regarding the anti-Communist commitment of the United States Government. He personally could speak with full authority and excellent credentials on this point, having been subjected to incessant attack by Castro and all his supporters.

Rivera Caminero spoke at this juncture, first summarizing Mr. Mann's remarks as he understood them and then expressing doubts as to the validity of the argument against using military action to end the rebellion. It was his opinion that such action offered the most rapid and practical way to a solution.

In responding, Mr. Mann pointed out that the creation of martyrs was a basic element of Marxist-Leninist tactics in any conflict situation. He further explained that complicated international problems made it essential to search for a peaceful solution. Obtaining a bare two-thirds vote in the OAS for the concept of an Inter-American force had been a difficult struggle. The intervention had been attacked heavily in the United Nations, and the United States and its allies were hard put there to defend the right of the hemisphere to deal with its own affairs.

Mr. Mann then turned to specifics. In view of these various considerations, the United States Government had decided that the best solution lay with the formation of a government of national unity. Unofficial contacts with Bosch and Balaguer had led to a concrete proposal for such a government to be headed by Antonio Guzman. No firm agreement had yet been reached, but it now appeared close. The patriotic support of the Armed Forces would be needed and the United States Government expected that support to be forthcoming in the best interests of the Dominican Republic and the hemisphere.

There were to be no reprisals or vengeance, Mr. Mann continued. Bosch would have the responsibility of controlling Caamaño and the rebels. The Communists were to be eliminated from the political life of the nation—this being a firm condition for United States support of the proposal. For their part, the Armed Forces would accept and support the new government in return for the recognition of the principle of the integrity of the Armed Forces. The right of the military to exist as an integral institution with a voice in the future of the nation was to be clearly established with the formation of the new government. As added insurance, it had been agreed that a man specifically acceptable to the Armed Forces would be chosen for a Cabinet or sub-Cabinet position.

Mr. Mann emphasized that under this formula the Armed Forces would be in a solid position to defend the security of the nation. The United States would assist in this task, President Johnson already having made clear his determination to prevent the Dominican Republic from falling to communism whatever the cost. The United States would also be prepared to help the Armed Forces to reform and modernize. The Dominican Navy obviously needed patrol boats, not overage destroyers; the Army required mobile units with modern arms, not masses of untrained men; in general, it was time for the Dominican Armed Forces to reorient toward professionalism and the modern age. Perhaps training under Inter-American auspices could be arranged.

Returning to the question of the proposed new government, Mr. Mann described Antonio Guzman as a moderate, honorable and stable man who could give the country responsible leadership. Balaguer had promised to participate, perhaps not personally, but at least through one or more representatives in the Cabinet. This would give the new government balance and help insure its commitment to national unity.

General De los Santos asked if the proposal meant reinstatement of the Constitution of 1963. Commodore Rivera described that Constitution as "atheistic" and said any new government that might be formed should write its own constitution.

In reply, Mr. Mann observed that politics is always the art of the possible. The 1963 Constitution was obviously not ideal but its acceptance seemed to offer the only way to pacify and unite the country. In any case, Mr. Mann continued, it was difficult to believe that this question had very great importance. Various methods would be available to change the Constitution if that proved necessary. The Dominican officers should turn their attention to fundamental issues. The proposal dealt satisfactorily with these: the Armed Forces would be preserved; the country would have a moderate president and a balanced Cabinet; the way would be open to maintain the Inter-American force

until peace could be assured; a beginning would be made on the crucial task of economic development; and the means would be at hand to deal intelligently with the Communist threat.

Mr. Mann also pointed out that what was actually under discussion was a provisional government of approximately 17 months duration. Under the 1963 Constitution, elections would then be held. The OAS would supervise these elections, making certain they were truly free. There were strong indications that Dr. Balaguer could expect to do very well indeed in honest elections.

In addition, Mr. Mann emphasized, the Dominican officers must realize that national unity was essential. He well understood the profound hatreds caused by the conflict, knowledge of his own family's experiences in the American Civil War having prepared him for such understanding. He also understood, however, that the country could only go forward if hatreds were laid aside. As part of the process of creating national unity, the Armed Forces would have to accept the reincorporation of the rebel officers and men. In the end, this would be the least painful course they could adopt. Finally, the reunited Armed Forces would have to change their ways. The goal must be a respected, honorable institution enjoying the support of the people and dedicated to the role of guardians of the nation. When this goal was achieved, the Armed Forces could count on the support of the United States, not before.

Commodore Rivera said he could not accept Caamaño back because Caamaño had sacked his house. Mr. Mann observed that vengeance should be avoided and the law applied in cases of this kind. He also stressed that Caamaño would not be in the new government. In response to a question from De los Santos regarding the political composition of the government, Mr. Mann said that it was not yet known in detail which specific parties and men would participate. The important thing was to have a broad government of national unity. General De los Santos remarked that the Communists always call for governments of national unity. Mr. Mann again explained that the establishment of the government was conditioned on the removal of the Communists from the political arena.

He also reiterated the absolute commitment of the United States to prevent a Communist takeover in the Dominican Republic. The Dominican officers should attempt to understand that their best guarantee in this regard was provided by the determination of the United States to protect its own national interests. A Communist victory in the Dominican Republic would have doubled the potential capacity of the Soviets to kill North Americans. It was not a question of ideology but of security against Sino-Soviet aggression.

The discussion then turned to the problem of the leadership of the Armed Forces under the new government. Mr. Mann mentioned that

Bosch had suggested a Colonel Miguel Angel Corominas Martinez as a possible candidate for Secretary of State for the Armed Forces. General De los Santos objected that Corominas was a friend of Rhadames Trujillo. Commodore Rivera added that his wife was a prominent leader of the PRD. The former went on to remark that it was none of Bosch's business who headed the Armed Forces, while the latter expressed the opinion that the Armed Forces should select their own chief. The Dominican officers all agreed with this point of view. Mr. Mann replied that Corominas had only been a suggestion and observed that there could be no objection to the Armed Forces coming up with their own man, always providing he was apolitical, respected, honorable and professional.

Mr. Mann then returned to his thesis that the Dominican officers should concern themselves with fundamentals. The proposal he was advancing offered the Dominican Republic a chance to return to security and peace. The integrity of the Armed Forces would be preserved and the Communist threat would be eliminated. It would be well to think back to the immediate past—to how the country arrived at this crossroads. The revolt created a vacuum; Communists—armed Communists—filled that vacuum. For a time they were the only real organized force. In order to meet this danger, the United States had taken and was continuing to take great risks. It would be a disgrace for the Armed Forces and Dominicans in general if the United States was forced to extend its intervention. The Dominican officers understandably found it difficult to make concessions but under the circumstances they must.

General De los Santos asserted that the 1963 Constitution could not be accepted because its reinstatement would force all decent Dominicans as good Catholics to emigrate. Commodore Rivera added that to accept the 1963 Constitution was to accept the government of Juan Bosch, an impossibility. Mr. Mann suggested that acceptance could be provisional. If persecution of Catholics resulted, Bosch and his supporters would be put on the defensive and corrective action could be taken. He once more pointed out that elections would be coming in 17 months and that there was reason to believe the majority would not vote for Bosch. The latter claimed to be the voice of the people. Why not let him try to prove it? In addition, Bosch and Caamaño had made the 1963 Constitution a symbol. Why not accept this symbol—only a symbol—in order to end the fighting?

At this point, Mr. Mann repeated his explanation of the international difficulties posed by the Dominican crisis. He described in detail the difficult situation in the United Nations where the United States had to counter attempts by the Soviet Union to mix in the Dominican affair. The Dominican officers should bear in mind these important factors, realizing that the fight against communism is not just a narrow, national struggle.

General Martinez Arana responded with the observation that he had nothing personal against Bosch but [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]. Guzman, in his opinion, was an honorable man and might be acceptable if he were not under the influence of Bosch. Mr. Mann observed that the United States would have considerable influence with the new government and, again, that elections would be coming, with Bosch's chances to win distinctly poor. It was important to separate Bosch from the Communists. The establishment of a new government under Antonio Guzman would accomplish that purpose. General De los Santos objected that the Communists would somehow get into and exploit the elections. Mr. Mann assured him this would not be possible, emphasizing again that the United States had just as much interest in preventing such a development as did the Dominican military.

He further urged De los Santos and the others to think in flexible terms. Why could not they be as clever as the Communists in protecting their long-term interests? Here was an opportunity to take the initiative for once. Nothing would be frozen. On the contrary, acceptance of the proposal would bring a great opportunity to work for truly basic solutions to the country's problems.

Finally, Mr. Mann asked, what were the alternatives? The Dominican Armed Forces did not have the capacity to restore order by themselves. The general situation was increasingly serious. Every hour lost was crucial to the future of the country. Ambassador Bennett at this point added his personal plea. Obviously, given the vilification to which he had been subjected by the rebels, the proposal was difficult for him, just as it was for the Dominican officers. Nevertheless, he recognized as they should that peace must be restored and a beginning made on the task of reunifying the country.

General De los Santos said he still could not understand why it was necessary to accept the 1963 Constitution. To do so would put the Armed Forces in an "undignified position." The Armed Forces had deposed Bosch. Giving in now on the question of the Constitution would leave them "naked" and logically lead to the dismemberment of the Armed Forces. Commodore Rivera added his opinion that to accept the 1963 Constitution would be the equivalent of declaring the cause for which he and his comrades had fought to be unjust—that the rebels had been right. Also, it was well known that Bosch was an enemy of the Armed Forces and that the Communists were behind the PRD. It was the opinion of Commodore Rivera that the best political party was the Union Civica Nacional.

Mr. Mann responded that he still held the view that the constitutional question meant very little. The real cause, the real mission—both of the Armed Forces and the United States—was to preserve the Dominican Republic from communism. What he proposed would serve

that cause. The Dominican officers should look to the future, keep their people together, keep the chance to give the country a decent future. Otherwise, all might end in chaos and hatred—hatred for the military and for the United States. Now was the time to act.

General De los Santos predicted that the proposed new government could only last three months and that by the time it reached its end he and his colleagues would have been eliminated. Mr. Mann conceded that this might happen and that there were, in the very nature of the difficult Dominican situation, possibilities for other unfavorable developments.

Commodore Jimenez then proposed that he and his fellow officers withhold judgment until more specific details of the proposal were available, including the names of those who were to serve in the government. He said the Dominican officers recognized the sacrifices made by the United States and were deeply grateful. He felt it necessary, nevertheless, to point out that the formula proposed by Mr. Mann posed a number of difficult problems. The political parties not involved would resist the formation of a Guzman government, as would many democrats and non-Communists in general.

There was agreement among the Dominican officers that Commodore Jimenez was correct in urging delay in reaching a final decision until more detailed discussions could be held. At this point, Mr. Mann asked to speak privately with the officers, and the meeting was adjourned.

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**73. Telegram From the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Vaughn) to the White House<sup>1</sup>**

Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico, May 16, 1965, 0622Z.

68. May 65. For White House from Mann and Vaughn. For Acting Secretary of State<sup>2</sup> (RUEHC). This afternoon and this evening Vaughn,

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Top Secret; Flash; Exdis. Also sent to Rusk and McNamara. The telegram, sent over Defense communications channels, was received in the Department of State at 3:47 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> On May 15 Rusk was in Vienna to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the Austrian State Treaty. George Ball was Acting Secretary.

Shlaudeman and Mann had three principal conversations. First with the Secretary of State for Armed Forces Rivera Caminero, Chief of Staff of Air Force de Los Santos Cespedes, Chief of Staff of Navy Emilio Jimenez, and Chief of Staff of Army Jacinto Martinez. In two hour discussion we outlined our views of current situation and expressed opinion. This was moment for government of national unity which would hold office for 17 months period preceding next elections. We said we are exploring with Bosch and other political leaders possibility of a coalition but made clear we did not yet have firm agreement. The four expressed opposition to Bosch or to 1963 constitution. Objected to reintegration of or any other accommodation with rebel officers. Specifically rejected Corominas. Said he was former Ramfis Trujillo's chauffeur with fourth grade education. Our feeling is that all four are opposed to proposed coalition but will ultimately go along. Question is whether they will really try to control their officers in the three services and if they do, whether they can succeed in bringing armed forces along.

Personal hatreds obviously run very deep. These officers are, in opinion of Embassy, cream of the crop and the only ones among top officers willing with Imbert to take personal risks to actively oppose rebel movement.

We did not see Wessin, whose staff said he was fighting, but who we are informed by Rivera was hiding from us. We do not believe we should overestimate Wessin's strength as he has lost stature as a result of his vacillating timidity and indecision. Wessin is described as having said he would prefer to be pushed out rather than voluntarily resign and believe it probable that this could be accomplished if necessary.

Imbert made good impression. Shlaudeman says that whatever his faults—and they are considerable—he is man that has never double-crossed us. Imbert strongly expressed his disappointment. He said that he had no political ambition (probably only partially true) and would have stepped down yesterday morning, if he had been told. Said his forces had taken three hundred and forty prisoners; made considerable advance north of Loc yesterday and today and inflicted numerous casualties. Said this cut his ties with all anti-US elements and left him in isolated and exposed position. Said he had spoken to Embassy of possibility of resigning before and would do so at any time. Said occupation by US troops was preferable to Commie take over, that if his loyal forces suffer another serious setback they would cease to exist as effective fighting unit and we would then be faced with necessity of occupying entire country for many months to come. Claimed rebel forces were weary and dispirited and that without excessive bloodshed he will be able to take capitol within four or five days. Denied there was any unrest in countryside. We believe there is substantial unrest in

countryside and while giving Imbert credit for pulling armed forces together and instilling fighting spirit doubt that he has strength to do anything more than achieve stalemate in the city at probable cost of weakening loyalists military strength in interior.

Imbert is obviously very pro US but is typical Latin American reactionary in his approach to political, economic and social problems. We told Imbert we are merely consulting and promised to let him know Washington's views tomorrow. Meeting with OAS committee was depressing. Argentinian and Colombian representatives expressed their displeasure at lack of creature comforts. Committee obviously deeply hurt that UN has intervened in situation.<sup>3</sup> Said they plan to return tomorrow to Washington to discuss with meetings of Foreign Ministers. Questioned whether they had legal authority to do anything other than investigate and report. I made obvious answers and urged that OAS could best reply to UN initiative by doing effective job instead of debating legalistic and theological problems in OAS. I informed them of opportunity which our current efforts to establish coalition government might give them to reestablish OAS prestige by reporting success instead of failure. Promised to get in touch with them again tomorrow and hope to be able to keep them on the job.

It is obvious they shrink from assuming responsibility and almost pathetic in hope that non-violent solution can be found. Doubt they will approve use of force by US or loyalist forces without full and lengthy debate and meeting of Foreign Ministers in Wash and without detailed instructions from their government. Their mood is one of depression and defeat. Have not seen Vance and Bundy yet although understand they made progress with Bosch. Will meet tomorrow at 7:30 Washington time and will report joint appraisals. Meanwhile it is clear we must make our decision very soon or risk falling between stools.

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<sup>3</sup> At 10:30 a.m., May 14, the UN Security Council met and unanimously approved a resolution calling for a cease-fire and inviting Secretary General U Thant to send a representative, Jose Mayobre, to observe and report on the situation. The Secretary General's advance team arrived in Santo Domingo the afternoon of May 15; Mayobre arrived on May 18.

**74. Telegram From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Vance), and Abe Fortas to President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico, May 16, 1965, 0745Z.

69. May 65. From Davidson, Vance and Bundy. Nine hours with Bosch, Guzman and Benitez leave us moderately encouraged.

Most important result is specific agreement that suitable persons of our choosing would work with their official to develop plan and come to agreement as to how to handle Communists and our people will continue to participate for such time as necessary. We agreed that while internment or departure of Communists would be among the possibilities for dealing with them, these are not exclusive since other techniques may be preferable in light of practical situation.

Second good result is agreement that Minister of Armed Forces must be agreed between rebels and loyalists. Guzman and Bosch are surprisingly hopeful that such agreement can be reached. Third, proposed cabinet, after two of our challenges were accepted, goes further toward national unity than we anticipated. Names are being sent separately for expert review. Guzman is clearly pro US. He is a decent man with more political sense than political energy. He does not seem to us very strong, but we believe his repeated assertion of convinced anti-communism. His great devotion to Bosch is plain, and we had little chance for separate talk with him. But he repeatedly expressed genuine determination to accept full responsibility himself and we believe he means it, at least for now.

Bosch mystique shows strongly in Guzman's own admiration and in his plausible report of other respected persons of various backgrounds who will serve in cabinet only if Bosch approves. Whole discussion shows solid base of your basic policy: Constitution si, communism no.

Sunday,<sup>2</sup> Vance and Bundy will go to Santo Domingo to see what can be done to improve prospects for this general plan there. They will continue Tom Mann's efforts<sup>3</sup> and also try to get OAS to help clear Radio Santo Domingo for possible Bosch speech or agreement. Bosch will

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Top Secret; Flash; Exdis. Also sent to Rusk and McNamara. The telegram, sent over Defense communications channels, was received in the Department of State at 4:21 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> May 16.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 72.

call Balaguer, also probably Sunday and Davidson will come home arriving about noon.

Probable return for the rest of us will be late Sunday night. We expect our arrival in Santo Domingo will be noted by press one way or another although Mann and Vaughn apparently escaped unseen today.

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## 75. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 16, 1965, 6–8:43 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Meeting in the Cabinet Room at 1800, 16 May 1965

### PRESENT WERE

The President

For State: Messrs. Rusk, Ball, Harriman, Bunker, Solomon, and K. Crockett

For Defense: Secretary McNamara

Special Consultants: Messrs. Acheson and Davidson

For the White House: Messrs. Valenti and B. Smith

For CIA: Messrs. Raborn and Helms

1. At 1815 the President called Messrs. Rusk, McNamara, and Raborn to his office, where they were joined at 1845 by Messrs. Ball and Acheson. It is my understanding that this meeting in the President's office dealt largely with Vietnam.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Raborn) Files, Executive Registry Subject Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302. Secret. Drafted by Helms on May 17. The concluding time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library) Valenti's handwritten notes of this meeting are *ibid.*, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes. During the course of the meeting Bundy telephoned the President from Santo Domingo at 6 p.m. to report on the negotiations there. (*Ibid.*, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.27, Side B, PNO 2 and 3) This conversation was frequently interrupted by technical difficulties and even cut off forcing Bundy to call back at 6:16 p.m. During the second conversation with Fortas and the President on the line, Bundy resumed his account of the efforts being made to assist the OAS and other factions in the formulation of a coalition government that would be acceptable to both sides and still maintain the coordinating role of "constitutionalism si, comunism no." (*Ibid.*, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.28, Side A, PNO 1 and 2)

<sup>2</sup> A record of this segment of the meeting is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. II, Document 304.

2. While the aforementioned meeting was in progress, Mr. Davidson gave a historical run-down on his negotiations with Bosch in San Juan. Also during this period an opportunity was given the undersigned to review the tenor of the activities involving Messrs. Bundy, Vance, Mann, and Vaughn both in San Juan and Santo Domingo.

3. At 1950, the President and others entered the Cabinet Room and the meeting on the Dominican Republic began. The President expressed his concern over the "beating" which we are taking in other countries and noted that we have got to make clear what we have been doing and why. There then ensued a lengthy conversation between the President and Mr. Davidson over the complicated problem of obliging Bosch–Guzman to keep the agreement about picking up the Communists and Trujillistas as soon as a new government is announced. Guzman has been opposing immediate action of this kind.<sup>3</sup> There was also discussion of the very important posts in the Cabinet of Minister of the Armed Forces and Chief of the Army.<sup>4</sup> Davidson stated he thought the United States should take a tough line in insisting on men for these two jobs acceptable to us. Davidson described Guzman as a good and decent man but pointed out that he is not a strong character. The President asked if it might not be better to make Bosch the new president. Davidson replied that Bosch has categorically refused to become president again and that it is even doubtful whether he will ever return to the Dominican Republic.

4. There was considerable discussion of the Solomon mission<sup>5</sup> and when it should depart for the Dominican Republic. It was finally decided on balance to have it proceed on Monday, 17 May.

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<sup>3</sup> In another memorandum for the record of this meeting, drafted by Raborn on May 17, the following appears on this point: "Abe Fortas said that Mr. Guzman felt it would create a lot of Communist sympathizers if the known Communists were too abruptly picked up after a semblance of peace was restored to the Island. On the other hand, it was agreed that internment or departure would be strongly imposed on the Communists and this had been agreed on by Bosch and Guzman." (Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Raborn) Files, Executive Registry Subject Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302)

<sup>4</sup> This topic was discussed for 18 minutes during a telephone call placed by Bundy to the President at 7:12 p.m. on May 16. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.28, Side B, PNO 1 and 2) Notes taken by Valenti of this telephone conversation are *ibid.*, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes. Raborn's May 17 memorandum records this subject as follows: "All the names for the new government were acceptable to Bosch and Guzman but there could be little hope that they would be acceptable to Caamaño—although General Imbert of the junta had generally approved the list with the exception of the latter two positions." (Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (Raborn) Files, Executive Registry Subject Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302)

<sup>5</sup> A team of 32 led by Solomon arrived in Santo Domingo May 17 to provide food, clothing, and other necessities to Dominican Republic citizens.

5. Mr. Ball proposed that we make some reduction in our troop strength as soon as other Latin countries have made contributions to the Inter-American Force. Davidson recommended, and the President agreed, that no United States troop reductions should be made until the new government is formed, at which point significant withdrawals should be made even though it was understood that some troops will stay in the Dominican Republic indefinitely. Troop withdrawal is regarded as a significant gesture in the Hemisphere.

6. The President inquired of Bunker whether we should do more propagandizing of Latin American countries about what we are doing and why. Bunker pointed out that those countries which oppose us do so because of domestic problems and that there is nothing much we can say which will lead them to change their public positions. At his request, we agreed to send Bunker our material on Caamano which shows that there is a history of insanity in his family.

7. During the meeting, candidates for various Dominican Cabinet posts were named and the undersigned was on the phone getting the traces started.

8. It is clear that one of the stickiest problems facing us is how we work out with a new Dominican government who is or is not a Communist. The practical application of a joint approach to this problem was discussed inconclusively.

**RH**

*Deputy Director*

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**76. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 17, 1965, 0605Z.

1752. For the President from McGeorge Bundy.

First day in Santo Domingo persuades all of us that even a temporary settlement will be hard to get. With great pain and difficulty Davidson has built a long bridge out from Bosch to this brutalized and fanatically divided island but a day of most intense discussion shows

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 2:48 a.m. and passed to the White House at 3:23 a.m.

that this bridge has no solid pillars on the opposite bank yet. Moreover Imbert and other right-wingers are trying to knock it down before it is built.

First disconcerting experience was violent rebel rejection of yesterday's agreed principle that Minister of Armed Forces should be chosen by joint agreement of contending forces. With Hector Aristy reportedly in the lead rebels appear to have insisted violently to Guzman on Montes Arrache who holds this post under Caamano and is totally unacceptable to loyalists. When I repudiated this wild notion Guzman fell back upon Rafael Hernandez. I pointed out that by agreement we were already asking loyalists for their list of acceptable names and injection of any single rebel name would produce justified and violent charge of bad faith. Guzman then asserted with every show of conviction tinged by relief that in that case there was no further chance of his success and he should give up. No question that rebel military leaders shook him badly. In this situation I suggested possibility of delaying appointment of defense secretary and retention of his powers by president himself. Guzman revived remarkably and went off to try this on the rebels.

He returned shortly with their agreement, but agreement only masked dangerous concession by him to rebel leaders which led to my telephonic reports.<sup>2</sup> He was offering rebel control over nomination of Chief of Army Staff, while masking this proposal with offer of equal privilege to loyalists on Navy and Air Chiefs. When questions revealed his unwillingness or unacceptability to name prospective Army Chief, I took time out. Washington calls and our own deliberations now persuade us that only possible solution is in our own pressure for particular names which on some of the evidence are digestible by both sides. We find no such name for Minister of Armed Forces but we (a) will probe that acceptability of Nelton Gonzales and Sosa Estrada with loyalists tomorrow though latter is known to Embassy as a thief and (b) await reaction of Bosch on two of names given by loyalists and passed to Davidson. Our own belief is that most promising pattern now is temporary vacancy in this Ministry and a slate of de Leon for the Army, Jimenez for the Navy and Nelton Gonzales for the Air Force. We plan strong effort for this ticket tomorrow.

Meanwhile loyalists' generals spent most of Vance's day on extended and passionate arguments over folly of our planned compromise, with focus on their violent objections to 1963 constitution. This seems foolish but Vance and Mann join in first-hand judgement that it is literally a fighting matter to loyalist leaders. We are correspondingly

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1, Document 75.

grateful for prompt and imaginative legal help from Davidson and bespeak his help with Bosch again tomorrow. Meanwhile we have heard nothing about planned approach by Bosch to Balaguer. We shall need Balaguer's help both with general public and with rich and respectable who now fear U.S. sellout to Commies' best friend Bosch.

Foregoing deals only with bargaining details. Underlying questions are those reported by telephone: with Guzman we shall have no quick end to Communist threat, but equally no quick Communist takeover. We shall have long contest with Communists not unlike battle in France after 1944 but with no French civilization and no deGaulle. If instead we back loyalists to the limit, we could certainly "win", but I doubt if we could remove U.S. troops for years. This island is cockpit of senseless hate where no strong and responsible leadership has yet emerged and where energy is largely polarized to extreme left and extreme right.

My own firm conclusion is that we should persist in present effort to establish Guzman promptly but without any concessions whatever in basic agreed position, since some entrenched elements in rebel command are sworn enemies to us, and to Guzman himself in the long-run. Right now net of short-run pressure runs against rebels so we have some leverage if only we can keep our honest farmer from going happily home.

Your motto is still right but both "si" and "no" must be somewhat qualified no matter what course we take. The guns are in the streets, and there is no Dominican will or way to get them back soon.

**Bennett**

**77. Telephone Conversation Among the President's Advisers on the Dominican Republic and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

May 18, 1965, 12:01 a.m.

Bundy: Mr. President, we have [met] with both sides tonight and by the use of the very strenuous verbal measures with the loyalists military we have a bargain. We want you to know that we have in effect said that we are taking the responsibility—this is what they said to Cy—that they accept the fact that we have the power to do so, that they themselves will accept it but they cannot vouch for their forces. There is a sadness on their side which is shared by many of us. The fact remains that within the basic terms State worked out over the last three days, we are in a position now to go ahead. While we differ in our enthusiasm, I think it's fair to say that that is our basic recommendation. It's certainly mine. We have a number of specific things which I propose to say to Mr. G[uzman] within the next half hour, not in a way that will engage him in a lot of negotiation with some of the people he has to be careful about, but in a way which I hope will engage him to you. In return for which I will say: while these things are going on, he can expect you to move in the two directions in which Mr. Davidson discussed with you this afternoon with respect to troops and assistance.<sup>2</sup> The most important thing I will get clear with him is just as we have defended the "si," we expect him now to work continuously on the "no." And that we will be with him and that he will be with us and that we will be watching this in all its manifestations in terms of internal political activity, in terms of attempts to worm into the bureaucracy, in terms of party relations, and indeed across the board. We have no doubt of his good faith, but his skill and energy are another matter. We will press very hard for both public attitudes and real performance with respect to an outbreak of vengeance which we expect to appear primarily from what are now the rebels, but also individual cases of revenge from the other side. I don't know how to describe to you the levels of personal hatred we have encountered as we have gone around to the different factions in recent days. We want both

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation among President Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, Tom Mann, General Bruce Palmer, Tapley Bennett, and John Martin, Tape F65.30, Side B, PNO 1, Tape F65.31, Side A, PNO 1, and Tape F65.31, Side B, PNO 1 and 2. Secret. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. McGeorge Bundy placed the call from Santo Domingo to President Johnson in Washington; they spoke for approximately 48 minutes.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

his posture to be, and our practice to be, that we are going to protect individuals whose lives in this sense are in vengeful danger.

This may involve us, it will involve us, in asking General Palmer to offer local asylum, which he is already doing, and also in our offering asylum within the United States, possibly by special waivers under the Immigration laws. We will be expecting by press also for the maximum Inter-American Force presence in terms of Inter-American relations—at least in scope and size for as long as needed and we think it will be some time. We expect to press for maximum OAS participation within the Inter-American law which means essentially observation of the referendum. This is something which will help us with the soldiers with which Cy Vance has been talking.

We expect to press for OAS participation in the announcement that we are considering now—at what time to turn around the chicken-livered lazybones that went home this afternoon because they wouldn't believe us.<sup>3</sup> We hope to wake them up at the hour that is most inconvenient for them.

We will plead for magnanimity in public expression towards those who have held temporary roles on both sides. This is something which we need very much for those who feel or will feel more and more as the thing comes out that we have merely used them in a stop-gap role. Finally, or next to last, we will reinforce in him a conviction which he has expressed to me at least six times that the most important practical task in the government is to find ways to bring arms in out of the hands of the civilians and into the hands of authorities, and that we share this view and that our means will be available to him. We are inclined to think that in the first stages people may be much more ready to give their weapons to General Palmer than to any other Dominican, and in later stages there may be a matter of bounty in which we would be willing to take into account.

We will stress to him what I am sure he will understand because it has been the spirit of our discussions for the last 3 days that everything we are asking of him is within the terms of what we have understood and that everything we are able to do for him will necessarily be related to continued performance so that we enter into a continuing partnership in which their dependence upon us becomes continuous to their doing what we hope and believe and urge needs to be done. This conversation I believe will have about 80 percent success in specifics and 90 percent success in attitude and I think it will then lead us off to the practical matter of how we announce it and who says what and that and at what time during the next 24 hours. But before we

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the 5-man OAS Commission; see footnote 2, Document 52.

move to that, I would like to ask you if this basic line of argument and operation is satisfactory to you.

President: Yes, it sounds all right. What he had agreed on for the army, the name we gave?

Bundy: We agreed on the young man whom we were checking this afternoon J[uan] L[ora] F[ernandez].

President: All right. Are you all pretty well satisfied on all these people so far as the second part of our slogan is concerned?

Bundy: As far as the “no,” yes—we are satisfied about all three of them, but I should tell you that there are some other people whom—I didn’t mention one other thing we wish to do which is to arrange to have the most hated men on both sides go on agreeable military assignments outside the country, and a couple of those if we can work it will be bad hats, but I can’t be sure that this will be done in the first day or so. There are people whom we have to be watchful of. This is known by Mr. G[uzman], but there is a problem of timing here on which I cannot give guarantees, but the public names and the official responsibilities which we have agreed to, are without exception, clean as far as we know.

Fortas: What did you do on the top minister?

Bundy: We couldn’t get him, we have none. I have tried very hard to get them to reconsider that because it would help a lot but I don’t exclude that down the road he may want to make an appointment of his own in that area.

Fortas: You mean Mr. G[uzman] will hold that.

Bundy: No. No one will hold it. The Constitution makes him the Commander-in-Chief. He thus avoids being in the position that Reid Cabral was which was very unpopular with everybody. Now, our notion of the announcement, if you’re ready to move on to that.

President: Yes.

[Omitted here is discussion on the timing of the OAS announcement and concurrent announcements in Washington.]

President: How does it look to you?

Mann: Well, I recommend it.

President: When you precede it with a “well” it makes me think you’re less than—

Mann: No, I recommend it wholeheartedly. I want to underscore what Mac [Bundy] said that the hatred here is almost ancestral and the most savage that I have ever seen on all sides, and we’re just not going to have peace and harmony, in my opinion suddenly, out of a thirty year tradition of this kind. It’s just a tough situation.

President: Now, we’re not getting into any position where the people can truthfully or effectively say that we sold out and turned it over to the Commies?

Mann: No, no they can't say that truthfully, and we've done a great deal of talking about this and this is something that will have to be done—we'll have to watch it and continue to work on it and have our best people working on it. It can be accomplished gradually.

President: What can we say to the right-wingers, up to the end that we have insured against their running the government?

Mann: Well, we have in this work an undertaking in several parts. One, is to fight them politically all across the board—on labor unions and the places—education—the places where they usually concentrate. Two, not to take any of them into the government into positions of power, including the armed forces and the police, and in general to consider them as political enemies and not political allies. Now we expect to have that kind of an understanding.

President: Are they going to let you bring in J. Edgar Hoover's man<sup>4</sup> to come in as legal adviser to the Embassy to advise Mr. G[uzman] on the bad characters and have him watch them?

Mann: Yes, they have agreed to that.

President: How are you going to get Mr. Imbert to quit making these inflammatory statements?

Mann: We may get some more.

President: I thought Mac said you were going to take care of it.

Mann: I'm going to do my best.

President: You know us right-wingers are supposed to hang together, Tom.

[Laughter]

President: I thought we gave him what we wanted when we said we'd give him a referendum.

[Omitted here is an update by Bundy on news that Imbert would hold a press conference the next day.]

President: What is your [General Palmer's] assessment of the relative strength of the two forces—the loyalists versus the rebels?

General Palmer: I would say in the northern part of the city, there's an even stand-off and in the southern part where the rebel's main strength is, which is the strongest part, I don't think that the loyalist forces are strong enough to take them on.

President: What would you envision if we didn't have an agreement?

General Palmer: If we just let them continue to fight, sir?

President: Yes.

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<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

General Palmer: I don't think the loyalists could do it.

President: Well, is it better to let them demonstrate that?

General Palmer: How do you mean, to let them continue to fight, sir?

President: Yeah.

General Palmer: This could go on, but, I don't think they can clean up the northern part for several days at least and I feel quite certain that they could not take the rebels in the South.

President: All right, now, would it be better from the reaction in this country and in the world, if we let it come to more or less an impasse. Would it look like now we sold out pretty quick?

General Palmer: No sir, I don't think it would look this way.

President: Do you recommend what they are suggesting?

General Palmer: Yes, I do.

President: Do you think we have insurance against the Communists taking control of the government?

General Palmer: I believe we could block that, sir. I think the danger is what Mr. Bundy pointed out.

President: Is this the way to block it? Is this agreement the best way open to us at this stage to block it?

General Palmer: Yes sir, it is. I think this is the best way to handle it.

President: What is your judgment if these Chiefs say they'll go along as to whether their troops will follow them or not or will we have a lot of sporadic fighting under somebody else's leadership.

General Palmer: We can't really tell. I don't believe that this will cause much trouble unless very strong leaders come forward and, I don't think they will come forward.

President: Are you impressed with the strength of any of the people in the government that we are proposing?

General Palmer: Yes.

President: Do you think they are honest?

General Palmer: Yes.

President: Do you think they are anti-Communist?

General Palmer: Yes. There's always going to be sleepers in there, but this is a chance you run regardless. In this situation, you're going to come to a conclusion like this sooner or later whether you control all the cities or not.

President: Are you going to be in a position if we make the agreement to control the loyalists' equipment?

General Palmer: You mean to block them?

President: Yes.

General Palmer: Yes. We can physically keep the Air Force from taking off, and the Navy.

President: What about the tanks?

General Palmer: I don't think there's enough of them to worry about. We can block them too.

[Omitted here is a brief report by Palmer on the number of Dominican troop casualties and the economic situation in the Dominican Republic.]

President: Is your country team down there pretty generally in agreement that this is the thing to do?

General Palmer: Yes, sir. I would say they would agree that this is the lesser of many evils, sir. There is no approved solution to this, Mr. President.

President: Well, it doesn't look like to me there's much evil in this if we (a) get reasonably honest people, if they're anti-Communist, if we're going to have a popular referendum in two months on the basics of the machinery, the constitution, and if we're not going to let the men go back in office who were thrown out illegally some time ago. Now, I don't know what else you can do. We can pick a dictator and just say, well, to hell with the constitution, or we could pick the constitution and say, to hell with the people. We're not going to let them decide on it one way or another, but doing neither, and it looks like to me that we're being about as democratic as you can be and we're giving them protection and we're giving them food and feeding them and giving them supervised elections, while whatever elements of democracy they have in the country are permitted to function. I don't know what else we could do if we stayed there a million years.

General Palmer: I agree with that assessment. As you say we either go to do it today or 10 years from now, you can't delay the issue today.

President: What does Bennett think about this agreement?

Bennett: Well, I feel frankly that we we're running a risk, keeping a lot of our assets without getting anything very firm, but I think we've gone into it and we have to go ahead.

President: Is there any better, more hopeful alternative to us at this stage?

Bennett: I don't see much quite frankly. I think this is best in our own interests and that is what we have to think of at this stage.

President: Well, if that's true, then it would be better in the country's interest too, wouldn't it?

Bennett: Well, that's our hope, yes sir.

President: What does Ambassador Martin think of the agreement?

Martin: I concur. I think it's probably the best of a bad bunch of alternatives. I think that the side that was militarily winning is now in fact going to be declared the winner. I think that same side has the kind of popular support throughout the country that we can read it and for that reason also I think it's correct. I do feel very likely that Mr. G[uzman] may not prove strong enough to hold this place together and we may have to go under ground later on, but I think that would be true of almost any solution that we found. I think that Mr. I[mbert] will denounce us and say that we double-crossed him, and he's right to a considerable extent. He'll make trouble in statements tomorrow and may try to make other trouble which we can stop. He will make trouble for Mr. G[uzman] in the future. I think trouble of this kind is probably inevitable in this. This is about the way I feel about it.

President: You recommend the agreement, you think it's the best we can do under the circumstances and it gives us something to work for.

Martin: That's right sir.

President: You believe we have the best man that we can get that'll take over?

Martin: I think in the present set of circumstances, that that is the best we can do sir.

President: Do you think there are any Communists in the crowd?

Martin: I do not think this would be a major problem. No, sir.

President: The answer is no?

Martin: That's right.

President: The country team, the AID people, the attachés, and Admiral Raborn's people—do most of them generally share your views?

Martin: Insofar as I know.

President: Is there anyone representing the United States that is violently disagreeing with us?

Martin: No, I think not.

[Omitted here are comments by Johnson praising Martin for his efforts and warning him not to work too hard.]

President: How many people are going to wind up in this Cabinet?

Mann: We do not have a complete Cabinet yet.

President: How many do you think will wind up in it?

Mann: I would guess eight or ten. There's a total possible slate of 15 cabinet slots. We just heard that one of the naval secretaries may not serve as Chief of Staff which is really not Cabinet but it's very important. So, I would say we don't have more than four or five of the top posts with agreed candidates at this point.

President: Are those people who are taking it are they agreeable to doing it?

Mann: As far as I know all of those we have talked about were agreeable except one which might not go along.

President: What's his problem?

Mann: He just doesn't like it. It's the feeling that this is not going to be good for the country and that it is going to bring instability and create a danger from the military point of view of a left-wing take over—an anti-Bosch feeling.

President: I thought he had been agreed upon.

Mann: Well, Mr. President, that is true at one time or another, but that depends on what hour you talk to people. The emotions are running very high. They have in the past agreed on Mr. G[uzman], but they have also said that he is nothing but a puppet. We don't think that is necessarily true, but the political emotions here are just at this particular time absolutely indescribable. I've never seen anything like it. I don't think any of our group has.

President: All right. I guess we've talked long enough. Everybody down there seems to think that it is the best thing to do, so I think that you and Bennett ought to go out and put on your Sunday-go-meeting clothes and take this Imbert and give him the best that you've got.

[Omitted here is a short discussion on the timing of the announcement.]

President: What's your evaluation of this?

Vance: My evaluation is, Mr. President, that this is the best that can be done, and we ought to do it.

President: Do it even if the Chiefs went against us?

Vance: Yes, because I think that this depends on a meeting with Mr. Imbert later on tonight that they will not actively oppose it, but will accept it under protest. Now they say they cannot speak for their troops, but it's my evaluation that they will not actively oppose it. They might in words, but not in deeds.

78. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 18, 1965, 1900Z.

1776. From: Bundy, Mann, Vance, Palmer, Bennett, Martin.

A. Three basic difficulties we have encountered from outset here in seeking pol solution are that (1) it has not been clear that men we are negotiating with truly represent real power; (2) each side, like Chinese warlord, has true mil force and can and has used that force to disrupt every pol move we have attempted if it thought disruption was to its advantage; (3) we have not had true control because we have not in fact physically interposed our superior mil forces between the contending mil forces.

B. To meet these difficulties and improve atmosphere in which pol negotiations are conducted, we propose that we physically interpose our mil forces between the contending DOM mil forces.<sup>2</sup> We would first consult with both sides and decision to proceed would depend on reactions. This would be done through SYG–OAS Mora, supplemented by approaches through our own channels. We would also ask Amb Bunker to give OAS Comm in Wash an opportunity to concur in proposed action. Bunker would explain to Comm that this action is essential because of continued heavy fighting in north side of city.

C. The advantages to this course are (1) it would show the world we are truly neutral, truly humanitarian, truly desirous of stopping the killing; (2) it would give us more control since we could prevent either side from shooting pol negotiations out from under us and, hopefully, would limit radio capabilities of both sides; (3) it would enable us to pursue pol negotiations with reduced pressure of threats from either side to resume mil action; (4) if taken with OAS Comm endorsement, it will serve to demonstrate that OAS is acting effectively to enforce a cease-fire and this will reduce pressure in UNSC for further UN involvement.

A bonus of significant value would be demonstrable indication to local U.S. and international observers, including press, of neutrality of U.S. forces with respect to both DOM sides. Since loyalist forces are

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received at 3:23 p.m. and passed to the White House at 3:52 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Bundy introduced this proposal to President Johnson during a telephone conversation at 11:55 a.m., May 18. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.33, Side A, PNO 3)

able to concentrate in NW part of city, while bulk of the rebel forces are confined to southern part of city through presence of U.S. troops, present mil situation definitely favors loyalist side in area north of LOC. Thus, U.S. is credibly open to charge of greatly favoring loyalist side.

Military Plan: Operation involves establishing a new corridor starting from intersection of present LOC with Avenida 30 de Marzo and extending to NW along this road to intersection of Avenida San Martin with Avenida Maria Montes, then north along latter to 28th Street, thence west to Avenida Maximo Gomez and finally north along latter to Peynado Bridge. First part of new corridor would include seizure of studios of Radio Santo Domingo which is currently heavily defended and inoperable. As an alternative, Radio Santo Domingo could be bypassed by establishing detour one or two blocks south of Avenida San Martin in area of radio studios.

From intersection of Avenida San Martin with Avenida Maria Montes north to Peynado Bridge, corridor is presently held by loyal DR forces. Thus this operation must be based on at least accepted replacement of those forces by U.S. troops and withdrawal to west of any loyal forces east of Avenida Maria Montes. A brigade of 3 bns from 82nd ABN Div would be used for this operation with 2 bns moving north in column from a line of departure at LOC where it crosses Avenida 30 de Marzo and linking up with 1 bn helicopter lifted into the area south of Peynado Bridge.

The above operation would provide (1) an effective interposition of U.S. forces between loyal and rebel forces which would prevent either side from attacking the other; and (2) an effective sealing off of rebels in city since, in addition to corridor operation, the far bank of Isabela River would be screened from Peynado Bridge to its junction with Ozama River and latter screened south to its mouth flowing into sea; and (3) positive security of major industrial area of city.

Finally, this operation seems to us likely to increase whatever chance there is of agreement on lines we have sought. It would show rebels we can and will ensure cease-fire and it would greatly reduce possibility of armed action by Imbert after agreement is announced.

**Bennett**

79. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 18, 1965, 2055Z.

1778. For the President from Bundy.

1. Though I remain least pessimistic senior officer here, I am deeply shaken by this morning's monkey-wrench.<sup>2</sup> It forces reconsideration of question of basic control of a possible Guzman government. You can judge better than I the role of Bosch, but the stooge's role of Guzman in this episode is clear and unless your evidence to the contrary is conclusive, my own guess is that military command initiated this proposal, whoever concurred in it.

2. Since military command arrangements of yesterday proposed to put a relatively unknown colonel over a group of men whose collective energy and determination is amply demonstrated in recent weeks, and since Guzman obediently telephoned a clearly absurd ultimatum to Embassy, none of us can responsibly recommend that agreement all but completed yesterday is now safe for the United States. Evidence is strong that it would put real control of all Dominican ground forces in hands of those who now have this control downtown. At the very minimum, and on optimistic assumptions about influence of Bosch and impact of office on Guzman, we should have a very hard up-hill road requiring constant energy and skill in daily infighting.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received at the Department of State at 5:23 p.m. and passed to the White House at 5:28 p.m., and to DOD exclusively for McNamara at 6 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> In a telephone conversation with President Johnson at 11:55 a.m., May 18, Bundy reported that Guzman sent him a message explaining the reasons for the sudden impasse. Bundy read Guzman's message to the President: "I have the obligation to suspend conversations and agreements until there has been a total cease-fire. This is because yesterday the Constitutionlists troops permitted the troops of San Isidro to penetrate the city, [at this point Bundy inserted: 'this is a description of the action in the north in their terms'] so the press and the representatives of the United Nations could see for themselves that these advances are protected by the Americans. It is established that the United States is giving arms, ammunition, and all kinds of military help to the anti-constitutional forces. [Bundy inserted: 'That's not so incidentally.'] The troops of San Isidro and Imbert have been permitted pass through the line of communication and in some case they have even been protected with helicopters. This has obliged me to terminate the conversations and the agreement until a cease-fire has been achieved." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of a telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.33, Side A, PNO 3)

3. Apparently all of us in Washington and here agree that there are men in rebel command who prefer continued struggle to any agreement they do not control. In the light of the last days's events, I do not think Guzman's government on presently negotiated basis is good enough for us to bet on. Nor do I think time is running out down here.

4. In this situation I believe that when negotiations are reopened we should advance new requirements which combine advantage of testing basis of authority and limiting role of present military command in new government. I think of two such provisions.

5. The first is elimination of three least desirable members of rebel command by appointment abroad. This is parallel to plan already accepted by loyalists and I would nominate Aristy, Tavaras, and Monte Arache.

6. Second, I would reopen question of Minister of Armed Forces and insist on re-establishment of Bosch agreement that a man acceptable to both sides be found.

7. I pressed both of these ideas yesterday but did not insist in face of absolute refusal because we wanted agreement and hoped it would work. Now I believe that strong and sustained pressure for these provisions is essential:

- A. To test the source of power,
- B. To strengthen our confidence in Guzman government, and
- C. To attempt wedge-driving in a dangerous cabal.

8. Unless otherwise instructed I shall take this line in my first talk with Guzman. If eventually we decide to take less for agreement, I can always fall back.

**Bennett**

## 80. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 18, 1965.

### SUBJECT

Contact with Dr. Joaquin Balaguer

### REFERENCES

My Memoranda for the Record of May 15<sup>2</sup> and May 17<sup>3</sup>

At about noon on May 17, Mr. Arnold<sup>4</sup> called me by telephone to say an unexpected crisis had arisen in connection with our negotiations. At his request, I met with him in the Situation Room at the White House as soon as I could get there. Mr. Arnold briefed me on recent developments and we reached agreement on the strategy for attempting to prevent a break-down in the negotiations. The text of our agreement as written up at that time is quoted below:

### BEGIN TEXT

#### *Situation*

San Isidro group will accept deal only if new government, at the time it takes office, adopts 1963 constitution but concurrently calls for a plebiscite on the constitution to be held within 30–60 days.

#### *Problem*

To get Balaguer's support in swinging this with Bosch.

#### *Tactics*

1. Brief Balaguer on problem, emphasizing its delicacy insofar as dealings with Bosch are concerned.
2. Get Balaguer's assurance that he will keep completely secret the fact we have briefed him.
3. Get Balaguer's commitment to support plebiscite plan if Bosch broaches it to him.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. IV, 5/12–19/65. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Crockett. Copies were sent to Mann, Vance, Helms, Vaughn, and Bromley Smith for Bundy.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 70.

<sup>3</sup> In the May 17 memorandum Crockett describes steps taken that morning to arrange a meeting between Balaguer and Bosch in Puerto Rico later that evening. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. IV, 5/12–19/65)

<sup>4</sup> A pseudonym for Abe Fortas.

4. Develop with Balaguer a “safe” means whereby Balaguer will bring this subject up in his discussion with Bosch (if Bosch does not broach it) in such a manner that Bosch will have no suspicion that Balaguer is serving as our instrument in executing this tactic.

The nature of the plebiscite is not yet finally decided, but it would probably be a yes or no vote with the 1962 constitution coming into effect automatically in the event the vote goes against continuation of the 1963 constitution.

Mr. Arnold and I agreed that it would be necessary to tell Balaguer that tentative agreement had already been reached on Guzman as a single interim president to serve out the remainder of Bosch’s term.

With respect to item 4—Tactics, Balaguer might bring this subject up himself (if Bosch failed to do so) in the following manner:

After he and Bosch had reached general agreement on a plan for establishing a government of national concordance:

a) Balaguer would say that it would be highly desirable to give the people an opportunity to express their satisfaction with the arrangements.

b) It would also be highly desirable to bring the people around to thinking about “constitutional acts” rather than acts of violence.

c) Since no election will be held until 1966 under the arrangement that has been agreed to, a referendum or plebiscite might serve both of the foregoing objectives.

d) Since the establishment of the government would be a *fait accompli*, a referendum or plebiscite could be held on the question of acceptance or rejection of the 1963 constitution.

e) Given the popular sentiment in favor of the 1963 constitution, the outcome of the referendum or plebiscite would be a foregone conclusion.

f) However, there would be some limited campaigning of a political nature which could serve as a safety valve to relieve tensions which have developed because of the armed conflict.

g) People could make speeches, get a little practice in politics, and once the constitution had been ratified the government would have additional claim to complete legitimacy and constitutionality.

Only one question arose in considering the practicality of this approach: At the time it was being developed, neither Mr. Crockett nor Mr. Arnold knew whether Dr. Balaguer was for or against the 1963 constitution.

END TEXT

It was 1:30 p.m. by the time the foregoing agreement had been reached. If Balaguer was to be contacted to enlist his cooperation prior

to his departure from New York at 5:00 p.m. (en route to Puerto Rico), it was necessary for me to catch the 2:00 p.m. Eastern Airlines shuttle. Even this would allow very little margin in the time frame in which the mission had to be carried out. Accordingly, I called Irving Davidson<sup>5</sup> and asked him to stand by his telephone for the next half hour. I asked him to locate Balaguer in New York and have him stand by his telephone also. Meanwhile, Mr. Arnold sought clearance for the plan through Mr. Moyer.

At 1:45 p.m., Mr. Moyer informed Mr. Arnold that approval had been granted for execution of the plan. I called Mr. Davidson to tell him that I wished to meet with Dr. Balaguer in New York prior to his departure for Puerto Rico. I asked Mr. Davidson to arrange for Dr. Balaguer to meet me in the lobby of the Regency Hotel in New York at 3:45 p.m. Balaguer was to be alone at the time of our meeting. I would undertake to deliver him to Kennedy Airport in time to make his 5:00 p.m. plane to Puerto Rico.

By holding the 2:00 p.m. Eastern Airlines shuttle to New York for a few minutes, I was able to get aboard.

As the Eastern shuttle approached New York, the Captain called me into the pilot's compartment to tell me that a representative of the New York Port Authority would meet me when the plan landed to give me a message. I was to get off the plane before any of the other passengers and go to the Port Authority's offices for this purpose.

The message turned out to be a request that I telephone Mr. Arnold at the White House. When I was able to get through to Mr. Arnold, he informed me that the plebiscite problem had been resolved. It would not be necessary to sell Balaguer on this. I should limit my talk with him to providing him with a background briefing on where things stood as of that time. "Do it lightly and get him to go along if you can. If not, at least get him to agree not to raise objections."

I arrived at the Regency Hotel at 3:40 p.m. Dr. Balaguer was not there. At 3:50 p.m. he had still not appeared on the scene, but Irving Davidson had some how managed to get to New York and joined me in the lobby of the Regency Hotel.

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<sup>5</sup> Another pseudonym for Abe Fortas. In a telephone conversation with Bundy at 11:55 a.m., May 18, President Johnson instructed Bundy to refer to Abe Fortas "hereafter, under all circumstances as . . . Mr. Arnold, nothing else, ever." According to the President "a lot of confusion" had surfaced over the use of Fortas' pseudonyms in the reports he had seen. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson, and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.33, Side A, PNO 3) For a detailed account of the confusion over Fortas' pseudonyms, see Bruce Allen Murphy, *Fortas: The Rise and Ruin of a Supreme Court Justice* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1988).

Balaguer turned up at about 3:55 p.m. I told him time was short—I had a cab standing by—I would brief him on developments since our last meeting as we drove to Kennedy Airport. Balaguer said we would have to wait until 4:00 p.m. as his suitcase was in the car which had dropped him off at the hotel and it would not be back until 4:00 p.m. He suggested we ride out to Kennedy Airport in “his car”. I objected, pointing out that I did not want to have anyone else listening in on our conversation. He said this would not be a problem as “his car” had been provided by the FBI at his request. I let my cab go.

“Balaguer’s car” turned up at 4:00 p.m. sharp. It was driven by Special FBI Agent Nick F. Estame. The senior Special Agent accompanying him was Heinrich Von Eckardt.<sup>6</sup> After examining each other’s credentials, we all climbed aboard and started for Kennedy Airport. I briefed Balaguer along the lines agreed upon with Mr. Arnold and invited Balaguer’s comments and/or questions.

Balaguer wanted to know how Guzman would be selected or elected, as the case might be. I told him I wasn’t sure, but given Bosch’s strong feelings on the question of constitutionality, it might be necessary to have whatever there was left of Bosch’s Congress “elect” Guzman. This didn’t seem to present a problem for Balaguer. However, he had some very firm ideas about the plebiscite or referendum.

Balaguer said that he saw two serious problems in holding a plebiscite. First, if the plebiscite went in favor of the 1963 constitution, as he supposed it would, then the 1963 constitution would be set in concrete for the future. Balaguer thought some of its provisions should be modified. He agreed that except for a few sections, the 1963 constitution wasn’t really a bad document.

Balaguer felt much more strongly about the holding of a plebiscite of any kind than he did about its possible consequences as far as it might affect prospects for future amendments to the constitution. According to Balaguer, politicking, electioneering and voting should be avoided at all costs until 1966. He felt that far from serving as a means of letting off steam, a vote and the preliminary politicking that would have to precede the plebiscite would increase passions and should be avoided at all costs.

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<sup>6</sup> At 3:02 p.m. on May 17 Hoover telephoned President Johnson to inform him of Crockett’s meeting with Balaguer in New York City. Hoover told President Johnson that an “I. Irving Davidson” arranged this meeting and described Davidson as “a con man in Washington.” Johnson explained to Hoover that “Davidson” was a pseudonym for Abe Fortas who was under his orders to work the “left wing” and Tom Mann to work the “right wing” in the Dominican Republic negotiations. Hoover replied that he did not know this. President Johnson further explained that he wanted the FBI involved to “check the people” referred by former Governor of Puerto Rico Munoz-Marin and other Fortas contacts. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and J. Edgar Hoover, Tape F65.30, Side A, PNO 2)

I argued that this was a matter of judgment and in any event, the plebiscite was a condition precedent set by the San Isidro group for going along with the whole deal.

Balaguer said he could swing the San Isidro group away from this position without any trouble if this was necessary. As for the question of judgment on the ultimate consequences of politicking and voting under present circumstances, whoever it was that thought this would reduce passions rather than exacerbate the situation just didn't know his (the Dominican) people. I pressed the point, making a strong case against his trying to un-stick something that had already been agreed to in the delicate state of negotiations as they then existed. He agreed that both Imbert and Bosch are not rational men, although they are irrational in different ways. He thought he could bring them both around and outlined his ideas of how to go about this.

If the San Isidro group could not be budged from its position on the holding of a plebiscite, then Balaguer would go along. But he would go along on the basis of an agreement with Bosch that he (Balaguer) would join with Bosch in supporting ratification of the 1963 constitution, provided Bosch would agree to two conditions:

- 1) The plebiscite would confirm the 1963 constitution as the law of the land for the remaining period to be served out by Guzman.
- 2) When a new congress took office in 1967, it would be free to amend the 1963 constitution in whatever manner it might see fit.

Meanwhile, Bosch and Balaguer would reach a private agreement that certain controversial provisions of the 1963 constitution would not be implemented during the interim. By doing it this way, the plebiscite might be carried out without doing too much damage and the country would be protected from those provisions of the 1963 constitution which inhibit private investment and are otherwise unacceptable to the men whose cooperation must be obtained if the national economy is to be resuscitated.

I was unable to bring Balaguer any further along on this particular point and had little time left to cover the remaining ground before we reached Kennedy Airport. I therefore decided to change the subject, but before doing so, I got Balaguer to promise that he would consult with me before breaking off talks should he reach an impasse on the issue of the 1963 constitution and the plebiscite in his discussions with Bosch. I offered to come to Puerto Rico for this purpose if necessary.

Balaguer then raised the problem of how to deal with the communists and the "agitators". I told him what I understood had been more or less agreed to. He immediately spotted the weak point, i.e., the problem is not where you put them, but how you identify them and reach agreement on the definition of a communist and/or an "ag-

itor" (Balaguer's term) who may not be a communist but who is more dangerous from the practical standpoint than a clearly identifiable communist. After much discussion, I had to fall back on the point Mr. Mann made to me when we discussed this by telephone (KY-9), i.e., the key is the man or men who do the job. Balaguer agreed that this might be the answer. He pointed out, however, the men can be appointed or removed very easily once a government has been installed.

I attempted to counter this by pointing out that we would have a great deal of leverage, given the magnitude of the aid program we planned for the Dominican Republic once an acceptable government had been installed. Balaguer picked this up immediately. He said massive aid was really not much of a lever. It would, however, help the Bosch-dominated Guzman government consolidate itself through patronage and otherwise, thus amounting to a US subvention of the forces against which he would have to contend in the 1966 elections. I attempted to reassure him as best I could, taking into account that there were three other people in the car at that time, at least one of whom spoke fluent Spanish. Balaguer understood, but was not perceptibly reassured.

We arrived at the airport at about that point in the conversation and it developed Balaguer had a reservation but no ticket and no money. Irving Davidson bought Balaguer a round-trip ticket.

There was opportunity for me to speak completely alone with Balaguer for about five minutes before he boarded his plane. I stressed two specifics during this brief interlude:

a) Balaguer must respect my (our—the USG) confidence in talking to Bosch. He gave me categorical assurances which I believe were sincere.

b) Balaguer must have confidence in my (our—the USG) conviction that he was the man of the future in the DR and we would do nothing that did not take into account both his short and his long range value for both the USG and the Dominican people—these interests being in every way compatible and consistent in our view.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Fortas informed Bundy that Bosch and Balaguer were to meet in Puerto Rico between 10 and 10:30 p.m. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation among President Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, and Abe Fortas, May 17, 2:50 p.m., Tape F65.30, Side A, PNO 1) At 3:36 a.m. on May 18 Munoz-Marin telephoned Fortas to report on the conversation between Bosch and Balaguer. Munoz-Marin said he learned Balaguer would not accept Bosch as a member of the new Dominican Government but would accept a friend of Bosch whom Balaguer did not identify. Under this condition Balaguer would support the new Dominican Government. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between Abe Fortas and Luis Munoz-Marin, Tape F65.32, Side A, PNO 2) President Johnson reiterated this understanding to Bundy during another telephone conversation on May 18 at 3:47 a.m. (Ibid., Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F65.32, Side A, PNO 3)

81. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 19, 1965, 1620Z.

1805. From Vance, Palmer, Bundy and Bennett. In the event negotiations fail today, we recommend that full modification of plan proposed in ourtel 1776<sup>2</sup> be carried out ASAP, H-hour to be determined by Gen Palmer:

Loyalists have now moved beyond line proposed in 1776 and have taken Radio Santo Domingo. They are somewhat flushed with success. If they are permitted to take all of area north of LOC, Imbert will be increasingly difficult to deal with. Proposed plan would deny to him area east of Avenida Duarte, extending to Isabela and Ozama River. Hard core of rebel forces north of LOC is located in area extending from Radio Santo Domingo to Villa Consuela. Proposed plan would leave hard core between loyalist forces and LOC. Thus, rebels would be faced with choice of fighting in place or leaving their weapons and retiring to area south of LOC. We believe recommended plan would establish better conditions both for true cease-fire and for pol settlement since it interposes U.S. forces between loyalists and rebels, except in Villa Consuela. We also believe this action would give evidence of a credible position of U.S. impartiality. Disadvantages of plan are: (1) risk of further alienating Imbert and loyalist mil leaders; (2) action might be interpreted by Caamano forces as strengthening their position by protecting their weak forces from superior loyalist forces. But this is not all bad, given probable conflict among rebels on pol proposals.

We believe plan could be carried out with minimum difficulty and that casualties, both mil and civilian, would be light. Estimated time to carry out plan in daylight is four hours. If done at night and surprise is effected, it might be accomplished in less time.

We feel OAS should be notified shortly before execution, but not so far in advance as to tip off loyalist and rebel forces. We do not believe UN should be notified in advance.

We should not discuss this plan on open telephone as both sides are monitoring.

**Bennett**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 12:34 p.m. and passed to the White House at 12:45 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Document 78.

82. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 19, 1965, 0102Z.

1824. From Bundy.

1. The following are uncleared draft texts of two understandings.  
2. These documents are only drafts not yet reviewed in detail with Guzman because of one day without diplomatic relations. They nevertheless reflect faithfully what he and I have orally agreed. I hope to discuss them with him this evening.

3. First document is "public" and second is "private" as explained below. First purpose of "public" paper is for Guzman to get agreement of all on his side to this basis of government, but paper is also drawn with a view to possible publication.

4. "Private" document repeats some of public paper, but it is more precise on:

- A. Management of Communists,
- B. Disarmament of civilians,
- C. Departures of officers in uniform, and
- D. Possible immediate withdrawal of one US battalion.

I have presented it as a private understanding "at the presidential level" to cover Guzman from having to show it to the whole downtown crowd.

5. You may want more about OAS in public paper, and I can probably arrange it. But except for some good work by Mora, OAS presence here has been feeble and ineffective in the extreme.

6. Text of "public" paper follows:

"Statement of the position of Antonio Guzman toward the formation of a constitutional government in the Dominican Republic, May 19, 1965:

1. Sr. Antonio Guzman has expressed his readiness to assume the office of President of the Dominican Republic, if duly chosen, on the following terms and with the following convictions:

2. Sr. Guzman will assume office only when qualified on the basis of the Constitution of 1963. He will at once call for a duly authorized national referendum, to take place within 60 days. This referendum

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 10:55 p.m. and passed to the White House, DOD for McNamara, and CIA for Raborn at 11:26 p.m.

will permit the Dominican people to reaffirm—or to oppose—this constitution. Full observation by the Organization of American States will be requested.

3. Sr. Guzman will establish a government of national concord. This government will be broadly based. Members of the cabinet will reflect a broad spectrum of political, economic and social views. In particular, appointment will be offered to one member of the group which has been serving under General Imbert. This government will be equally opposed to extremists of left and right.

4. The military control of the new government will be non-political, and its professional leadership will be entrusted to officers who merit the confidence of the Dominican people and of their fellow professionals.

5. Concerning active Communists and Trujillistas, Sr. Guzman holds the firm position that they present a problem for democratic government in the Dominican Republic and that effective measures must be taken by the constitutional government to protect the Dominican people from their subversive activities. Plans will be developed for the development and execution of such measures within constitutional terms.

6. It is in the interest of the government of national concord that the Inter-American force establish its presence in the Dominican Republic as soon as possible. The United States forces will form a part of the Inter-American force. It is not possible at this time to predict how long the presence of the Inter-American force will be required in the Dominican Republic but withdrawal of components will begin as soon as possible.

7. Sr. Guzman has assurances from the Government of United States that just as soon as government of national concord is established and a full cease-fire is assured, the United States will withdraw a substantial part of the US military forces now in the Dominican Republic. The United States Government has informed him that further withdrawals will be made just as rapidly as the restoration of peace permits.

8. Sr. Guzman has also received assurances that the United States Government will offer strong emergency assistance in the task of restoring active economic life in the Dominican Republic, as well as the assistance already publicly proposed by President Johnson for rapid economic development.

9. On taking office, Sr. Guzman will present a public accounting of all his properties and assets. He will then turn over the management of all these private interests to a trustee, and this trustee will conduct no business with any part of the Dominican government, except for necessary routine dealings with the Agricultural Bank.

10. Sr. Guzman will approach his new duties, if chosen, in the determination that there shall be a spirit of reconciliation among all Dominicans. He will insist on this same attitude among all members of his cabinet and in all branches of the Dominican Government, civil and military alike. In particular he will insist that there be no acts of personal vengeance from any quarter." End of text.

Text of "private" paper follows:

"Memorandum

Communism

1. The constitutional government of national concord will be firmly anti-Communist and President Guzman will state this position in his inaugural address. The government of national concord will oppose communism and will so conduct its activities as to make this opposition entirely clear. It will prevent any confusion in the public mind by distinguishing in all its dealings between the truly democratic political parties and those responding to or influenced by Communist doctrine. It will make certain the public understands that its aims do not coincide with those of the Communists.

2. Persons identified as Communists or Communist sympathizers will be placed under close observation by the government of national concord and, when detected breaking the law, will immediately be detailed. Such other measures as may be necessary to contain the threat of Communist subversion will be taken after appropriate consultation with the Government of the United States.

3. The government of national concord will not permit Communists or Communist sympathizers to occupy positions in the Dominican Government, the armed forces or the national police.

4. The Government of the United States will make available professional personnel with full competence in the Spanish language to assist the government of national concord in identifying Communists and Communist sympathizers, and in controlling their activities. The greatest care will be taken to insure that the information in this field provided by the competent Dominican authorities is precise and detailed, and that innocent persons are not victimized.

5. Measure necessary to contain the Communist threat will be the subject of continuing consultations between our two governments. The Government of the United States reserves the right to re-examine the terms of the agreement reflected in this memorandum if the measures taken under it prove to be inadequate.

Pacification

1. President Guzman and his government will firmly oppose the spirit of hatred and vengeance wherever it may be found. President Guzman, by example and word, will demonstrate to the entire nation

his desire that all Dominicans be treated with absolute impartiality and fairness.

2. The task of disarming the civilian population will be the responsibility of the competent Dominican authorities. United States forces will not take an active role in this process but officers of these forces will be available for professional consultation if their Dominican counterparts should find it desirable. Persons who might wish to deliver their arms to the United States forces will be permitted to do so under appropriate safeguards.

#### Organization of American States

1. The process of establishing the constitutional government of national concord will, to the maximum extent possible, take place with the participation and approval of the Organization of American States. President Guzman, with the cooperation of the United States Government, will attempt to insure that his government and its efforts to restore national harmony receive the full endorsement of the OAS through the special commission appointed by the tenth meeting of Foreign Ministers.

2. The government of national concord will request the sending of OAS observers to witness the referendum on the 1963 Constitution that is scheduled to be held within 60 days after the inauguration of President Guzman.

#### Withdrawal of US Forces

President Johnson wishes to begin the withdrawal of US forces at the earliest possible date. It will be recommended to him that the time for the withdrawal of the first units be determined immediately so that President Guzman may make an appropriate announcement in his inaugural address.

#### Departure of Military Officers

Any officer of the Dominican Armed Forces who has been involved on either side in the present conflict and who wishes to leave the country will be permitted to do so. Those leading officers of either side who wish to depart in uniform will be given appropriate official assignments abroad." End of text.

**Bennett**

**83. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 20, 1965, 0630Z.

1830. From Bundy.

1. This has been a day of much movement, but conclusions are hard to find.

2. Most important event is capture of Radio Santo Domingo by Imbert. This evening he agreed again with Bennett that station should be run by OAS. Moreover he agrees with us that OAS umbrella should shelter firm U.S. management. He has promised to announce this decision at ten Thursday<sup>2</sup> morning. Effective use of RSD may be decisive in the coming week. We all believe that now is the time for Don Wilson<sup>3</sup> to come. He should be here Thursday without fail and he should be ready to stay awhile. He is not needed tonight because station is still on the blink.

3. Next most important event is rapid Imbert advance in area north of LOC. This advance has no final strategic value to Imbert, because it does not touch real rebel stronghold. But it lifts morale far beyond its real meaning, and there is no Guzman solution in sight tonight that would not be rejected out of hand by Imbert and Loyalist military. This does not mean that Guzman solution is impossible. I continue to believe it makes more sense than any other. But I do not think it can be concluded at an acceptable cost until Imbert and company find out that their small victories north of LOC have no lasting value. They must learn again that rebels will probably remain in control of heart of city which is heart of country. Imbert forces cannot dislodge them and our forces will not—if it can be avoided.

4. Further block to early settlement—but not to a later solution—is reported death of Rafael Fernandez Dominguez<sup>4</sup> in attack on Imbert-held palace. This will shock Bosch deeply, though Guzman has taken it calmly. Utterly cynical rebel assertion that U.S. shot him in the back is seen for what it is by Guzman, but Caamano is on the air making as

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65–5/31/65. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 3:20 a.m. and passed to the White House, DOD for McNamara, and CIA for Raborn at 3:57 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> May 21.

<sup>3</sup> Deputy Director, United States Information Agency.

<sup>4</sup> Lieutenant Colonel in the Dominican Army with strong allegiances to Juan Bosch; a leader of the younger officers.

much emotional noise as possible. Unless Commies killed him in Spanish war style, Fernandez died soldier's death he partly sought, and three U.S. Marines were wounded resisting rebel action about the same time. For a hot fire fight front and back are silly words. But rebels will be stirred, and Guzman will be rightly reenforced in his growing conviction that the men downtown are in no mood for reason.

5. Meanwhile Solomon and company are at work, and the country is not coming apart.

6. In this situation I think we probably need a carefully staged pause. No solution appears possible now, but we should soon have on the side of peace the following: (a) time (b) the end of the northern battle, and (c) Radio Santo Domingo. Both Imbert and rebels should learn in coming days that neither of them is going to win a war. RSD should be preaching peace; Solomon should be practicing good works; by continued firmness Palmer should be able to prove that the U.S. is the one real power on the scene.

7. This pause can be signaled by our return or by our ostentatious settling in. On either basis we strongly believe we should be authorized to begin judicious briefing of press and equally judicious contacts with other personages here. We can spread message of peace and reconciliation to all, if we are authorized to do so. It is time.

8. Meanwhile this evening we gave Guzman draft documents sent forward in our 1824,<sup>5</sup> and we also discussed present shape of cabinet. He kept documents for study and he apparently wants to send Bosch both of them. We will stall on this pending your advice because private document is pretty hot. On cabinet Guzman showed usual tendency to backslide a little toward familiar PRD friends, and usual tendency to do better when pressed. Details follow in separate telegram.<sup>6</sup> I floated notion of brief delay in reaching final solution, on ground that both sides were in a bad mood for compromise. He did not quarrel but he did ask that any return of Washington team be accompanied by noises which would leave him in business. I reassured him that Guzman solution remained our choice.

9. It remains to report Guzman–Amiama contact. First meeting was correct and there will be another Thursday morning at ten. We think the two men respect each other. We think they also have a long way to go before their minds really meet. We continue to think that

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<sup>5</sup> Document 82.

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 1866 from Santo Domingo, May 21, lists Guzman's proposed cabinet members, Dr. Ramon Ledesma Perez for President, Hector Garcia Godoy for Foreign Affairs, and Tomas Pastoriza for Agriculture, among others. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65–5/31/65)

their conversations can only do good, and we will press them to keep on. But we will not use our biggest guns to seek immediate paper agreement between them unless you tell us to—if only because Amiama will not agree to serve under Guzman at this stage. This agreement is still my strong hope, but all concerned must be softened by a little time before it will be possible. Specifically, Amiama will accept only if his comrades in arms agree, and tonight they see no need for what they call a “surrender to Bosch.” Moreover Amiama will certainly have a view of his own on critical question of Army Chief of Staff and we strongly doubt that he could accept Lora Fernandez. Vance thinks de Leon or Valdes may still be key here.

10. So let us make haste slowly and let us explain why.

11. Vance generally concurs.

**Bennett**

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#### **84. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 22, 1965, 0140Z.

1881. Bundy, Bennett and Mora met with Imbert at 11:45 a.m., May 21. Purpose was to get him to agree to indefinite extension of truce and to nail down prompt turn-over of Radio Santo Domingo to OAS. He treated us to quite a display of verbal histrionics designed to impress on us his determination stand fast on GNR and not accept Guzman formula.

Mora led off by asking him to extend truce beyond 24-hour period. Imbert reaction was strongly negative. He said rebels have this time agreed to cease-fire because they know they are licked. Arguments by Mora and Bennett that it is to his interest to project image of man of peace made no perceptible change in his adamant stand. Imbert said that only solution to Dominican situation is for rebels to surrender under full personal guarantees. Bundy said it was USG view that continuation of truce would be great contribution and refusal to go along

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<sup>1</sup>Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State on May 21 at 10:28 p.m. and passed to the White House, DOD for McNamara, and CIA for Raborn at 11:30 p.m.

would be a big mistake. Imbert's rejoinder was that he could clean out downtown in 2 days if US did not have his hands tied. He said that he had been tricked into truce. His colleagues had warned him, he added, that if he agreed to a 24-hour truce, he would find himself trapped into a longer one. Request now being made of him was "proof" they were right.

Bundy switched subjects by asking Imbert when we might expect him to turn RSD over to OAS as he had promised Bennett. Imbert replied he and people repairing station and that he wanted to make speech over RSD to Dominican people before allowing OAS to assume "control." Bundy and Bennett said this not our understanding of agreement. Further discussion led Imbert to say he personally in favor of turning station over to OAS and so announcing in his speech but would have to get clearance from his "associates," including military.

Turning conversation to US efforts to bring about a political solution, Imbert declared flatly "I will not accept an agreement with them. I will not enter into agreements with Communists . . . A return to the 1963 Constitution would be a fatal precedent." He brought up how he had been urged by USG to leave private life to form GNR. He described struggle in DR as one between democracy and communism. He said he failed to see why USG, having urged him assume GNR role, was now trying to force him to deal with Communists. He claimed country was with him and rebels represented only 20 city blocks. Given this and Communist nature of rebels, he saw no reason why he should be asked to accept political formulas which ran counter to his personal convictions and to what Dominican people expect of him. He became so exercised at one point that he said if USG wants to pressure and betray him, he will denounce US before world opinion. "I will not accept political deals (compendas politicas) imposed by foreign government," he concluded.

Bundy pointed out that Imbert knew full well that our policy is not to support communism, and we take lessons from no one on danger which communism represents. Bundy said our appreciation of military and political situation is frankly quite different from his. We do not think that either side can win by further killing. Our reading of what Dominican people want is continuation of truce and peaceful formula for political solution and not more bloodshed as implied in Imbert request that we allow his troops cross LOC to mop up rebel stronghold.

Recognizing that in Imbert's present state of mind it was not profitable to continue discussion, Bundy proposed that those present take time to reflect on views expressed. He told Imbert that he wanted him to know that: (1) we think it is very important that truce continue; (2) we desire to have RSD turned over promptly to OAS; and (3) we

plan to continue working toward peaceful solution. Of these, Bundy noted, RSD problem was one needing immediate attention. On this it was agreed that: (1) Imbert would seek consent other GNR members and inform Bennett or Mora of response during course of afternoon; (2) we would promptly send technicians to repair facilities; (3) once in operation, Imbert would make a broadcast announcing he was turning radio over to OAS; (4) Mora would thereupon assume control over programming. Imbert said that he wants his troops to guard RSD even after OAS takes over.

**Bennett**

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## **85. Editorial Note**

On May 22, 1965, the Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics adopted a resolution calling for provisions to guide the conduct of the Inter-American Force in the Dominican Republic. One provision empowered OAS Secretary General Jose A. Mora to assume the powers necessary to form an Inter-American force with broad representation; another requested that Brazil designate a Commander for the Inter-American force, and the United States designate a Deputy Commander. The last provision established a committee to study the functioning and maintenance of the Inter-American Force. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 14-4 (Chile, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru), with 2 abstentions (Argentina, Venezuela).

Subsequent to this meeting, General of the Army Hugo Panasco Alvim of Brazil was designated Commander of the Force and Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer, Jr., of the United States, Deputy Commander.

**86. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 22, 1965.

1894. For the President from Bundy.

1. In two hours with Benitez and one-and-a-half with me, Guzman today flatly refused to propose departure of three leading rebels or even to allow Benitez to propose it. He is honestly convinced that any such move would cost him the confidence of the people and, after battering him at length, Benitez and I are convinced he would quit before he would accept it.

2. I told Guzman this attitude raised in my mind serious questions since it showed his unwillingness to take any action now to control rebel general staff. I added that this was doubly difficult for us because we do not know who really runs that group. Guzman's bright young factotum, Salvador Jorge Blanco, denied this by asserting Caa-mano's clear control. I expressed doubts which Guzman did not contest. I asked him for full list of rebel military leaders and remarked that in our judgment there were Communists among them—real Communists and not simply leftist idealists. When they asked for details I agreed to provide them. (We are reviewing composition of this group and will report available facts and impressions in a separate telegram tomorrow.)<sup>2</sup>

He agreed completely when I described his position as that of a man who did not think he would have the public and political strength to attempt any split of rebel military leadership at the outset.

3. I told Guzman this decision would be very disappointing and that we would have to report it to Washington. He understood but held his ground.

4. On all the evidence I do not believe Communists now control the general staff or that general staff will control the government. But if we substitute "influence" for "control" I think both propositions will be true. I think degree of influence can be acceptably low in both cases, especially if we can strengthen cabinet. But it will be present, and it will be observed. On the other hand Benitez visited rebel headquarters

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Nodis. No time of transmission appears on the telegram; it was received in the Department of State at 6:53 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 1902 from Santo Domingo, transmitted a list of the proposed Guzman cabinet. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65–5/31/65)

this afternoon and said afterward that Communist issue was laughable. He reports they are really adolescents with guns. I think he may be right.

5. This series of talks reinforces a growing conviction that Guzman is both good and weak. He really understands Communist problem and he has stood firm against a cabinet job for the doubtful Hector Aristy. But he is not going to go against those who are seen as heroes of the revolution.

6. If we are to go ahead nonetheless—and this is my own firm recommendation—we must plan to give maximum attention to building continuing intensive U.S. relations with Guzman and with his non-Communist military.

7. This of course is only an important special example of general proposition that Guzman government will at best be caretaker affair, terribly dependent on U.S. handholding.

8. We intend to make up on cabinet swings what we have lost on the departure roundabouts. It will be hard work to broaden Guzman's base, but we plan to seek Mora's help. We are aiming for number of outstanding independents, and we also aim to plan with Guzman for best joint approach to possible members. We have already softened up de Leon and Postigo by private feelers and believe both will serve.

9. We discussed possible cabinet grouping with Guzman tonight made up as follows:

Presidency—Ramon Ledesma Perez (PRD)  
 Armed Forces—Colonel Jose Antonio de Leon Grullon  
 Interior and Police—Eduardo Read Barreras (IND)  
 Foreign Relations—Hector Garcia Godoy (PR)  
 Education—Julio Franco y Franco (PR)  
 Without Portfolio—Julio Postigo (IND)  
 Attorney General—Miguel Angel Brito Meta (IND)  
 Labor—Virgilio Mainardi (PRD)  
 Public Properties—Jose A. Brea Pena (PRD)  
 Agriculture—Tomas Pastoriza (IND)  
 Health—Dr. Tabare Alvarez (PLE)  
 Public Works—Emilio Almonte Jimenez (PRD)  
 Finance—Milton Messina (IND)  
 Industry and Commerce—Eduardo Leon (IND)

Guzman was generally receptive, although obviously had some difficulties with Read for Interior and Police and Franco y Franco for Education. Leon, whose presence on cabinet would be welcome in number of sectors including military, was Guzman's own proposal in place of our suggestion of Andres Freites. This cabinet would provide strong representation by political independents, would offer

undoubted competence in some key fields (particularly Messina in Finance) and would lay reasonably solid base for credible claim that Guzman formula does represent call to national unity. Remains to be seen if Guzman will be as agreeable after consulting with Caamano group and if most attractive candidates (Garcia, Pastoriza, Messina and Leon) could be persuaded to join.

10. All this leads me to conclusion we are reaching moment of truth on Guzman solution. I believe it is still best available. I think I can get Mora to back it strongly. It will have to be pushed down the throats of Imbert and military, but Mora, Vance and I can do that too if we are told to do so. We can even get UN help if we swallow a little hemispheric pride.

11. Apart from all the ups and downs of fun and fatigue and fantastic reporting, the dominant political facts of life here are four:

(1) Guzman solution is nearest to desire of people that we can find.

(2) The responsibility of decisive choice is ours.

(3) Delay now favors Imbert who represents most primitive form of cunning feudal strongman.

(4) Because of our massive presence, we have any number of continuing weapons to use against danger of communism.

12. The other possibilities that remain are two. One is Imbert. We could probably help him to general temporary victory today and with less cost in life than I thought before northern victory. We can probably also get from Imbert much wider and stronger cabinet than he now has. Imbert will be hard and genuine anti-Communist and also pro-American. He will also become hated—though he is not now—because he is a superior man of force and fraud, and knows it, and shows it. I am against him.

13. Second remaining possibility is person unknown, somewhere between Guzman and Imbert. This middle man is not in sight. I think we cannot afford to wait for such an unknown. There is sense in which both Guzman and Imbert are temporary and relatively moderate choices. Imbert is the choice of fear, and Guzman is the choice of hope.

14. As you know, I am a hopeful type. Vance generally concurs. Bennett submitting comments.

**Bennett**

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**87. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 22, 1965, 1705Z.

1896. For the President and the Secretary.

Following are some pros and cons relevant to your decision:

1. Pro: Solution meets real desires of people.

Con: In Guzman we may be buying a sizeable pig in a poke. While it is the kind of liberal-looking solution we would all like to see, some would not give it much survival value.

2. Con: We all accept that Guzman is a good man, but weak. And he has very little political experience. He himself admits he cannot now control the military group at headquarters and even PRD civilians with firebrand credentials such as Pena Gomez and his group confess they have lost power to influence situation. This headquarters group is very shadowy; we do not really know focus of its control. There is rather general agreement that it is not Caamano.

To put a good but weak man up against a group of strong and determined men of dubious motivations and objectives is to provide a set-up for take-over. An honorable man might well choose to get out, but the damage would have been done.

Pro: Headquarters group will not be real center of power after Guzman is in, and while we do not know as much about them as we would like, there is no reason to credit them with superhuman skills for day-to-day action after battle ends. Takeover by real Communists is impossible while we are here and we need not leave until we are satisfied it is safe.

3. Con: What happens to the Dominican military, a group for whom we have no great admiration but which does represent an organized authority which has had its uses in holding country together this past month against strong undertow and active efforts from Ciudad Nueva. Our forcing them to take Guzman and co. is going to be very messy, public affair, and it may well leave armed forces shattered and fragmented. Destruction of up-country military detachments in reflection of divisions in capital could have most serious consequences nationally and could precipitate breakdowns in towns around country which have thus far been avoided. There is nothing extreme left would like better than to see armed forces rent asunder (and filled with

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 1:58 p.m.

resentment against us) while arms are loose in the streets in such great quantities as at present. We have seen painful results of this elsewhere.

Pro: We have means to prevent this result. Morally we have great authority with Guzman and we can have it also with new military chiefs. No one says any of these proposed new authorities is pro-Communist, and we are the ones with logistics, transport and communications.

4. Con: Some of us cannot accept Benitez' assumption that the men at rebel headquarters are "adolescents with guns." There are indeed too many kids with weapons wandering about terrorizing the public and shooting things up for the hell of it—the classic revolutionary tactic of passing out weapons indiscriminately to the "people" was one of the most serious things done here last month. But we have seen too much here these past four weeks to consider the problem merely as a simple one of exuberant youth.

5. Con: It is regrettable we cannot now look forward to departure of any rebel military. If we are to take at face value the notion that the heroes of the revolution are butchers of the Caamano, Montes de Arache and Pena Tavares variety (the first two have been killers since Trujillo's day and have been so employed—Montes for instance was sent to Venezuela to do in Betancourt, while Pena is perhaps a Communist if reports are to be believed), not to mention worthies such as Aristy and Cury, then the moral base of the revolution and of Guzman's government is sadly compromised. On this view, with all their faults, reasonable competent and professional officers such as Rivera Caminero, Jimenez and De Los Santos are preferable. Incidentally, we all agree Wessin must go—and soon.

Pro: The key to this is not in who leaves for a few months. The key is in gradual reassertion of legitimate authority, including that of Guzman above all and then of De Leon and service chiefs. Some of us are now convinced that we can do this job better by not forcing departures even if we could—which is very doubtful indeed.

6. Con: The alternatives of leadership are bleak, and in the situation which has developed in past week here they lead back to Imbert. We all distrust Imbert. He is tricky (although within limits) and he is no move forward. However, to some of us he seems less a step backward than Balaguer, whom so many regard as the electoral answer next time. Imbert has a certain national consciousness, a quality rare among Dominicans; and he has guts, even more rare here. He is not without some appeal in the north and east of country and he has been picking up support as he has been winning. While the people of the country have very burning frustrations and we must move massively to meet their legitimate social and economic aspirations (whatever the governing group), political support for the PRD can be exaggerated. (And not all of it necessarily transferable to Guzman, who is not a widely

known public figure.) After all, both Trujillistas and the military voted in bloc for Bosch in 1962 out of fear of reprisals in event of UCN victory. They would not do so again. Recent polls showed Balaguer running well ahead of Bosch, and an admittedly inconclusive polling of "constitutionalist" prisoners taken here by our forces has shown a preference for Balaguer by just over 50 percent of those interrogated.

Pro: There can be no real doubt—as Postigo told us yesterday—that strong majority of people will prefer Guzman to Imbert.

7. Con: It should not be too difficult to broaden and strengthen Imbert's cabinet to give it more appeal and competence. (He already has one Bosch man.) Judicious handholding, help and pressure by us could influence him in right directions. He is pro-US but can go off reservation and get ugly if he feels himself pushed into corner.

Pro: There is truth in this, but the passion for power in Imbert is strong, and such men usually manage to take us into camp because they cheat and we do not. Imbert will be as hard to manage as Aristy would be.

8. Con: Washington may consider Imbert too difficult a proposition to sell to US press and to some good neighbors. We recognize his very real handicaps in this regard. In an ideal world no one would choose Imbert; however, our situation here and our prospects are about as un-ideal as possible. Imbert is at least a going concern and, despite admitted marks against him, is picking up strength. Guzman has appeal but he has not left the post. And getting him onto the track is going to be difficult.

Pro: The apparent strength of Imbert and the apparent weakness of Guzman can be turned around dramatically when decision is made and some authority delegated. And selling Imbert as final result of US intervention is job some of us think US could never succeed in doing.

9. Whatever your decision it will have unanimous and unreserved support of Bennett, Bundy, Vance and Palmer.

**Bennett**

**88. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 22, 1965, 2:04–3:20 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting at White House, Cabinet Room on the Dominican Republic, 22 May 1965, 2:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE

The President, SecState, Ambassador Martin, SecDef and DCI<sup>2</sup>

SecState stated he feels that OAS or another Latin American person with our backing may be the best way to handle.

Ambassador Martin feels that U.S. speaking through an OAS (person)<sup>3</sup> would be “face-saving.” SecState agreed.

President asked about number of troops under Imbert and Caa-mano. DCI replied that they were about equal, but DCI agreed with SecDef and SecState that Imbert would not be able to dislodge Caa-mano from his positions inside the “new city.”

This would result in great loss of life and completely unacceptable to U.S. and the world to let such go on with all of our troops there and in position to prevent. DCI concurred.

A cable will be sent to Vance and McGeorge Bundy to continue discussions with Imbert, Guzman and the three Chiefs (Army, Navy, and Air Force) to accept a coalition government.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Fortas stated that before any progress can be made with Imbert we must have a rather firm arrangement with Guzman and then say to Imbert that this has U.S. approval!

Cable from Ambassador Bennett, #221705Z (Flash 1896) Amb. to SecState.<sup>5</sup>

SecDef feels we should continue talks with military leaders—it should be clear that we are as interested as they to constitute a constitutional (non-commie) government. It is too early for “ultimatum”

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic. Secret. Drafted by Raborn on May 24. The time of the meeting is from the President’s Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> According to Valenti’s notes of this meeting, the following also attended: Ball, Crockett, Fortas, Mann, Moyers, Bromley Smith, and Dick Goodwin. (Ibid., Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes)

<sup>3</sup> On May 20 the OAS elected Jose A. Mora as the new mediator in the Dominican Republic crisis.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 91.

<sup>5</sup> Document 87.

stage. We have to know “who is in the back room” behind Guzman before we form a government. Otherwise we may find an “Aristy” telling Guzman to order U.S. out of the country.

The President said:

1. We thought at San Juan we had an agreement<sup>6</sup>—to protect Bosch, Dominican people and U.S.
2. The three tough ones (Rebels) must be put on “an island” to prevent them from influencing Guzman’s government.
3. Tell Imbert he must go along for good of the Dominican Republic.
4. Vance to move on Imbert and Chiefs to get this accepted.
5. We won’t get all we want from Guzman, Imbert and three Loyalist Chiefs.
6. If this won’t work, then we will have to work solely through OAS.

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<sup>6</sup> See the attachments to Document 67.

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## 89. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 22, 1965.

1199. Cite CAP65192. References: Embtels 1893<sup>2</sup> and 1896.<sup>3</sup> For: Bundy, Vance and Bennett. From: The President. Bundy should make strong efforts with Guzman along the following lines:

1. You should not accept Guzman’s refusal to consider departure of three leading rebels without making further effort. There are serious dangers in creating a government under admittedly weak leadership while ring leaders of present rebel headquarters group remain in country with possible capability of exercising substantial influence.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of Gordon Chase, Bundy’s Mission on the Dominican Republic (2/2). Secret; Flash; Exdis. No time of transmission appears on the telegram; it was received in Santo Domingo at 4:55 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> This reference should be to telegram 1894, Document 86.

<sup>3</sup> Document 87.

2. You should insist on agreement that specially trained discreet U.S. security team will assist in constant control of Communists. Measures to be taken on findings of team to include, among others, surveillance, detainment and deportation if necessary. In other words, you should return to firm stance of May 14 San Juan agreement with Arnold, insisting that security team must remain in Dominican Republic until, in U.S. judgment, situation no longer requires their presence.

Vance should simultaneously pursue following line with Imbert and separately with military chiefs:

A. Imbert and chiefs should be told categorically that neither Caamano nor Imbert can be President or occupy any ministerial post in the government.

B. The U.S. will insist upon an anti-Communist government in Dominican Republic and will take all necessary measures to secure this objective. In elaborating this, you should explain that we are insisting on anti-Communist safeguards agreed at San Juan and that we are insisting on elimination of worst rebel elements.

C. You should emphasize that the Guzman formula is the best achievable and therefore Imbert and the chiefs should accept it. But for the present, at least, you should not repeat not issue any threats of force or ultimata.

D. We hope that by continuing talks with military leadership—not just with Imbert—Vance can obtain their agreement or acquiescence on the basis that the proposed coalition government could be clearly anti-Communist and provisional pending elections. It should be made clear to senior military officers that we are just as concerned as they that Communist influence be removed from public institutions of Dominican Republic and that the professional military establishment be maintained which supports a constitutional government.

E. Imbert will, as a minimum, insist on arrangements to guarantee his personal safety. If he knows that he cannot be president or a cabinet minister, what ideas can he then suggest to assure his own protection?

**Rusk**

**90. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Santo Domingo, May 23, 1965, 0730Z.

1925. Ref: Deptel 1199.<sup>2</sup>

1. We can and will make additional effort insure Guzman's ability provide us with evidence that his position vis-à-vis rebel camp strong enough give reasonable assurance that he can control his own government. We do not believe, however, that formula of three major rebel leaders for three San Isidro types reaches heart of problem. "Control" in our terms really means ability to deliver on the Communist question. To meet our need for more convincing indication that threat of Communists can be met, we propose insisting on one of two following alternatives.

2. Spanish Communist and PSP member Manuel Gonzalez y Gonzalez is, according to reliable testimony, much in evidence around rebel headquarters. It is widely believed here that he has been functioning as leading rebel military tactician. As pointed out Embtel 1904,<sup>3</sup> available evidence points to Pena Tavares and Garcia German as possibly representing additional significant Communist penetration of rebel high command. We can insist on immediate expulsion of these three as demonstration of Guzman's good faith on Communist issue. Substitution on this list of Gonzalez and Garcia for Montes and Aristy would have double advantage of avoiding very difficult demand for departure of two major popular "heroes" of the revolution while focusing on real threat of suspected Communist subversives. Our present view of Aristy is that he is a tricky nuisance but probably not a Communist.

3. As perhaps even stronger, and in some way more palatable alternative from Guzman's point of view we could ask for firm agreement now on deportation of specific Castro-Communists whose credentials are not in doubt. List could include 20 agreed names of members of three red parties who have spent time in Soviet Bloc, Cuba and/or Communist China and who we know are presently in D.R. involvement or lack of it in rebel movement would not be main issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 4:59 a.m. and passed to the White House, DOD, and CIA at 5:25 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Document 89.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 1904 from Bundy in Santo Domingo, May 22, described Pena Tavares as a "leading Communist in the rebel military command," and Garcia German as an even "more sinister figure" than Pena. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. V, 5/19/65-5/31/65)

We would simply make up list of leftist subversives and seek Guzman's firm commitment to the immediate expulsion of agreed 20 as soon as located. Names of our leading candidates follow in separate cable.<sup>4</sup>

4. In our judgment we should at this time seek Guzman's consent to one or other of two foregoing proposals. This would not mean, however, that other could not be carried out at later date under terms of private agreement on Communist issue.

5. In order obtain final concession on one of these alternatives we request definite authority to approach Guzman on basis that his acceptance will be sufficient for final agreement. We cannot get him to do either of these things on any other basis. There will be other things to ask for but they are all covered by our public and private memoranda and by our continuing power position.

6. For this reason, unless otherwise instructed, we will handle language of understanding on Communists on one or other of two following bases:

- (A) First and preferably, by existing public and private memoranda
- (B) Second, by following language which meets your suggestions in your 1199 while accepting as we have before the notion that not all Communists need be thrown out at once.

“Memorandum of Understanding—shorter form.

With respect to Communists and Trujillistas:

It is understood that effective measures must be taken by the constitutional government to protect the Dominican people from the subversive activities of Communists and Trujillistas. The initial understanding on this point continues as follows:

‘These measures will involve their separation from the Dominican community. This may take the form of their internment in some isolated area under Dominican jurisdiction or their departure from the island. Identification of such persons to be effected promptly by mutual consultation and prompt action will follow as aforesaid.’

It was later agreed that ‘the detailed procedures would have to be worked out with the new President with the object of accomplishing an effective job utilizing the resources available to all concerned.’

Still later it was agreed that while internment and departure of Communists and Trujillistas is permissible, it may have practical disadvantages. It was agreed that the best practicable course will be for persons of U.S. choosing to work closely with the new Minister of Police and come to agreement as to how best to achieve the basic objective. The cooperation of U.S. personnel will be sought and retained

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<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

for such time as may be necessary. Such U.S. personnel should be of Spanish-speaking background."

7. Vance and I believe he can handle military much better by waiting until we have solid platform with Guzman. If you give us clear green light on above basis tomorrow, we will proceed fastest.

8. Tonight Mora told us firmly that Imbert solution is no good. He is prepared to say so to Imbert too when time comes. He will also back a clearly anti-Communist and broadly based Guzman government. So give us the tools and we will finish the job.

**Bennett**

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## 91. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 23, 1965, 5:01 p.m.

1208. Embtel 1925.<sup>2</sup> For Bundy and Vance.

1. If Guzman does not have either the power or will to arrange for departure of three rebel leaders in headquarters group and is unwilling even to try to achieve this it is obvious that he would not deal adequately with those leaders and other dangerous elements once his government was formed.<sup>3</sup> This would cast in doubt the efficacy of any safeguards we might write into an understanding with him.

2. Under these circumstances we believe you should continue to insist on the original plan for paid overseas vacations for the three rebel

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Drafted and approved by Ball. Repeated to the White House.

<sup>2</sup> Document 90.

<sup>3</sup> On May 23 at 2:02 p.m. Ball read a draft of this telegram over the telephone to President Johnson for his approval. At this point in the text, the President commented: "I'd make it [the first sentence] stronger than that; I'd say that if he doesn't have the will or the power, or the desire to even agree to do it, it is obvious that he'd have a pig in a poke and that he wouldn't do it later. Therefore, we couldn't survive at home. I'd let Bundy know that he's coming back to a bunch of—that he's coming in to the lion's den. He's down there enjoying himself but he better realize that he's going to be facing Dick Russell and Bill Fulbright and all of them will want to know why we put the Communists in charge. If Guzman doesn't have the will or the desire, or won't even agree to get rid of them after he takes power then obviously he wouldn't get rid of others that need to go. And in this situation we could not survive. . . . I want to shake him [Bundy] up a little bit." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and George Ball, Tape F65.39, Side A, PNO 1)

leaders. Anything less would be impossible to explain and justify to Congress and American people. We would not regard expulsion of Gonzales, Pena Tavares, and Garcia German as a substitute. If agreed safeguards work they would be thrown out or interned anyway.

3. In addition we believe we must insist on the following safeguards:

a. Identified communists<sup>4</sup> will be promptly taken into custody and deported or interned.

b. Measures will be taken for the identification of other communists, whether in civilian or military life. When identified those communists will be immediately placed under surveillance and if at any time evidence develops of a plot or threat to security of government they will be immediately deported or interned.

4. We would prefer that you or Mora or other appropriate emissary maintain contact with Imbert and proceed with exploratory talks with him without awaiting conclusion of final agreement with Guzman. However, if you feel strongly that approach to Imbert is not advisable before a final conference with Guzman you may delay such approach until tomorrow.

5. Although it is obviously desirable that Imbert accept agreed cabinet list we are prepared to consider one or more alternative suggestions (excluding Imbert himself) if he finds any names on list totally objectionable. This means we are prepared to consider addition of up to two or three pro-Imbert people who are not Trujillistas.

6. We recognize that these instructions may increase difficulty of reaching a final understanding but we are not prepared to accept a deal that does not fully satisfy our requirements. If your efforts to reach an understanding should in fact meet a dead end we would propose that Mora bring to the meeting of the Foreign Ministers the details of what each side is prepared to accept. Brazilian, Argentinian, Ecuadorian and hopefully other ministers plan to arrive in Washington on May 27.<sup>5</sup> We would expect Mora to make clear to Ministers that United States has carried the ball as far as possible pending the development of OAS arrangements to assume responsibility for establishing government. With the creation of the Inter-American Force and the meeting of the Foreign Ministers the OAS should now carry on from there.

**Rusk**

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<sup>4</sup> During the same telephone conversation Ball read to the President a phrase that included a specific reference to the identification of "Communists totaling in the order of 20" who would be promptly deported. President Johnson objected to this. He said, "I'd just cut out the 20. Why do you want to deport 20 and leave 40" I don't care about 3 or 20. I'm interested in Communists per se." Ball said "okay," he would change the text.

<sup>5</sup> Brazilian Foreign Minister Juracy M. Magalhaes proposed that Foreign Ministers attend the already ongoing Tenth Meeting on May 27 to take stock of the situation in the Dominican Republic and to decide what further steps were necessary.

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**92. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 23, 1965, 5:39 p.m.

1209. For Vance. Highest authority<sup>2</sup> suggests that in dealing with Imbert you should make clear that in any new government we are prepared to give representation to his adherents and to assure that his anti-communist philosophy will be upheld.

Specifically you should give assurances along following line:

1. We will insist that there be no communists in any new government and that we will not support any government that includes communists. Our objective is a government of national union composed of individuals liberal in their politics but anti-communist.

2. We shall insist that such a government adopt a policy of reconciliation and renounce revenge either toward the United States or toward Imbert and his following.

3. FYI. If Imbert insists we would be prepared to include two or three of his own people in cabinet posts in a new government provided they are reasonably liberal and not extremists. We would also be prepared to include two or three of Balaguer people leaving possibly five places for Bosch's people. End FYI.

4. We will undertake to assure Imbert's personal security. This might be best achieved if he were to come to Washington either as Ambassador or head of a Reconstruction Mission. Under those circumstances security arrangements could be readily provided. We can also arrange financial security.<sup>3</sup>

5. All of this represents a generous arrangement to meet the requirements of Imbert and his followers.

**Rusk**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted and approved by Ball.

<sup>2</sup> In a telephone conversation with George Ball on May 23 at 2:02 p.m. (see footnote 3, Document 91) the President indicated that another telegram, subsequently telegram 1209, was necessary and outlined its contents.

<sup>3</sup> During the conversation cited in footnote 2 above President Johnson also told Ball: "We'll give [Imbert] plenty to live on, and we'll guarantee to [him] that the power of the 50 states—the fleet, the airplanes, the bombs—will aid and not let any Communists get in the government and not let any Communists rise to power, and reconstruct for [his] people. Now if [Imbert] demands anything else then he's a selfish bastard looking out after himself 'cause we're looking after [his] philosophy and we're looking after [his] people; and that's the way Cy Vance ought to put it to Imbert."

**93. Telephone Conversation Between the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 24, 1965, 11:50 a.m.–noon.

[Omitted here is approximately 4 minutes of conversation on Mann's illness; magazine articles critical of U.S. action in the Dominican Republic and specifically of Mann, Bennett, and Vaughn; a proposal for U.S. troop withdrawals from the Dominican Republic; and the possibility of a high-level OAS team, headed by the Brazilian Foreign Minister, to take over negotiations in the Dominican Republic.]

President: You don't think anything will come out of the negotiations with either side do you?

Mann: No, I don't. I think you summed up our feelings early in the game when you said you didn't think these negotiations had a 30 percent chance. I feel now just about how I felt then. I don't think they're ready; it's going to take time. [Mann references a "piece of information" he sent to the President earlier that morning. President Johnson said he read it.]

President: I have grave doubts about Guzman and I don't know what we're finally going to do if he should accept all of our terms. I keep making them a little harder on him without getting rid of all the Communists.

Mann: I have a strong feeling that this is right Mr. President. Your instinct is right on that, and we ought to be thinking about—this is kind of a maneuver which is all right if we think of it that way and maybe trying to build something around somebody else when the time comes and under the OAS tent.

President: Okay, find anybody you might submit as a name?

Mann: There are people around there probably who are not either Balaguer or Bosch that you could build around. I think you'll have to look pretty hard; I can't suggest anybody now. But somebody on the ground could find them. I don't think we ought to become married to this guy Guzman because I just don't trust Bosch to fight the Commies. And, what I'm afraid of is that Bosch is trying to get us to put him in power and to destroy the armies so that there will be nobody to bother him and then once he takes control I think we might be in deep trou-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, Tape F65.41, Side B, PNO 2. No classification marking. President Johnson placed the telephone call to Mann. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

ble. That's my own feeling about it and that came out strongly when I was down there on the ground and everything I've read since I got back tends to confirm this in my mind.

President: I'm also afraid that he'll change the cabinet, if it weren't pro-Commie it would be after he's in there a month.

Mann: That's why I was arguing hard the other day for maintaining the armed forces under their present leadership. I don't mind if you move one or two men but not too many so we have something to fall back on once we get out. The only people we can rely on there now, Mr. President, on the Communist side are the officer corps of the Armed Forces. There just isn't anybody else that I was able to find down there that will give us any base at all to work against the commies in the future. Now we've got to do that on the one hand and on the other hand try to get them, I think we can, to quit throwing out governments that are not Communist. We've got to get them to move toward democracy instead of destroying them.

President: Was there any justification for throwing out Reid [Cabral]?

Mann: No, not at all. Reid took over at an impossible time from a political point of view because Bosch had raised the cost—that's a sugar economy—of producing sugar to somewhere around 9 cents. Some people say as high as 11. When the world price went down to 2.5 cents, he was in trouble just because he had to fire a lot of people, he had to impose austerity programs, he made the Generals mad by stopping their grafting, he made the rich mad by collecting taxes, and the poor people who don't understand much about this stuff only knew that times were hard. Now that's what really got Reid. He's a pretty decent guy. Most people that I talked to thought he had the cleanest, honest, best government they've had in a long time. But, he's gone, and you couldn't bring him back. You've got to start with a new face. I don't rule out the possibility of Balaguer although I think that would cause great trouble with Imbert. Imbert is afraid of Balaguer.

President: Why?

Mann: Everybody hates everybody down there; that's the main trouble.

President: Why is Imbert afraid of Balaguer?

Mann: Because Imbert killed Trujillo and Balaguer was the Vice President under Trujillo and he thinks he [Balaguer] would let the Trujillistas get to him and kill him and his family.

President: How are we ever going to get Imbert out of power?

Mann: Once we get the OAS down to the [Dominican Republic] and we get the right political climate, I don't think it's going to be so hard Mr. President. If we don't rush it too fast, if we don't insult him

so he thinks his honor is involved, if we play it slowly and firmly, we'll find a way.

President: So you think the best thing to do is to just ride it out and just say that we're waiting on the OAS.

Mann: That's my judgment.

President: And say that we have achieved all of our objectives up to this point; we've stopped the shooting.

Mann: We've done as much as we can to pave the way for the OAS. They are coming down; we're delighted; we're sort of turning over to them. This is going to work out better than most people think, I believe.

[Omitted here are closing remarks.]

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#### 94. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 24, 1965, 1830Z.

1963. For the President from Bundy.

1. In 2 hrs this morn presented basic position in ur 1208.<sup>2</sup> Guzman believes he will be quite unable to accept our position or even to negotiate at length about it. But he has undertaken to speak with Mora and Mayobre before giving a more considered answer this afternoon.

2. I opened by reminding him that there had always been 3 basic issues in front of us—and that there had been no really final agreement on any of the 3. They were the need for high leaders on each side to step out and leave the country, the problem of effective dealing with Commies, and a constitutional govt with a sufficiently wide base to command general Dom confidence. I knew he had always recognized the importance of 2nd and 3rd, and equally I knew that he had never given his own approval to 1st.

I said that we had had growing concern in recent days on the role of rebel leaders and especially on the role of Commies. There had been repeated incidents suggesting the influence of forces which do not wish

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 23–9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 3 p.m. and passed to the White House, DOD, and CIA.

<sup>2</sup> Document 91.

a settlement. There had been reports from Doms of good will the influence of the Commies continued to be strong. We had growing evidence of our own that Commies were strong in the constitutionalist forces.

3. I reminded Guzman of our original formula that leaders should leave and that known Commies should be separated from the Dom community by detention or departure. I said that we had reported his own objections to these proposals. I said that our fundamental view now was that we did not think a constitutional govt with necessary Dom and U.S. support was possible without a public and decisive position on Commies. The only action which we could see that would show this decision plainly was the separation of those known to be tough, trained, and committed Commies, with a public announcement of this decision.

4. I said all liberal non-Commie movements must eventually confront and defeat Commie threat. I knew that we both agreed on this point. In our judgment the time for this clear breach in the Dom Rep was now, and the slower and more gradual way would not meet the necessities. I said this was the only safe way to a democratic future, in the clear view of my govt, and I reported my impression that there was sympathy for this position on the part of both Mora and Mayobre. (This is what they have told us privately, but it remains to be seen whether they will be so firm with Guzman.)

5. I said that I knew this position would present a grave question for Guzman in the light of his arguments of last week and that I hoped he would take time to reflect before giving a definite reply. I said that our objective was still to lay a firm basis for real agreement, and we should take all the necessary time.

I emphasized strongly our continuing conviction that constitutionalist solution was best and Guzman best man to execute it. Said we were making clear again to Imbert that we saw no lasting solution in him or in his group—and that this opinion too was shared by Mora and Mayobre. We should therefore take our time and find a way to match the basic necessities of constitutional govt with basic requirements I had stated. I was sure this could be done.

6. Guzman said he was deeply disillusioned but not greatly surprised. He knew that I was responsible to final authority of the President. He assumed, however, that the President would know of our discussions and conversations of last week. He recognized that there were many worries in Wash; that many people there and here believed things that were unreal. He himself recognized that there had been Commie infiltration in the constitutionalist forces. He remained persuaded that the Caamano govt had very good control over its various elements. He said it was understandable that in a mood of siege there would be

occasional outbursts that could not be controlled, but that the basic situation was one of effective authority under Caamano. He reminded me that he himself had never supported the departure of revolutionary leaders. He recognized that Bosch had agreed to detention or departure of Commies, but he had always opposed it.

He expressed at some length his conviction that this method was inefficient and indeed not really workable.

He then underlined his rejection of the sacrifice of leaders. He would not do it if Benitez, or Bosch, or the leaders themselves should ask it of him. The departure of these leaders would mean a govt without popular support. If this was required, he would expect to have to withdraw. He would still be glad to assist as a mediator and as an advisor both to us and to his fellow countrymen, but he would not expect to serve in any resulting government.

At this point, I gave him a dose of honest praise, pointing out that his integrity and independence of mind were rare qualities which he had no right to withhold from the service of his people at a time like this if a reasonable solution could be found. I thought he should be sure to talk with Mora and Mayobre before reaching a decision and that I thought it would be very wrong for him to give a final answer now.

7. He said he was willing to defer a final answer but that we should understand these were his firm principles. He believed that repression by force would simply make more Commies. He thought this was the product of earlier crude policies of the Council of State and of the triumvirate govts. He was just as concerned about Commies as we, and he was determined to have them carefully watched and controlled. But he was strongly opposed to creation of conditions that would manufacture Commies. Killing and deportation would have this effect.

8. I replied that I understood and respected his own belief that one set of measures was better than another. But present circumstances had necessarily created special concerns. We both believed that what counts is results. We took no satisfaction in acts of force for their own safety. But today there was a grave question of confidence both in his country and certainly in my own. It was therefore a necessity for visible action against real Commie danger. We could find no other way that to separate hard core Commies. I drew clear distinction between student dabblers and solidly committed, trained, and disciplines revolutionaries. We thought action against the latter absolutely essential.

9. We then discussed a number of other matters such as maintenance of cease-fire, fate of Radio Santo Domingo, and possibilities for econ rehabilitation while seeking pol solution. I also complained

about Cabinet leak to Szulc<sup>3</sup> which we believe came from Caamano himself.

10. Guzman wound up by emphasizing great difficulty of his personal position and his view that both general situation and this personal problem made a quick decision essential. Believing this decision would be negative, I reassured him that no matter when or how discussions ended he could count on us to bear witness to his patriotism, honor and integrity. I re-emphasized that we had common objectives and urged him to make every possible effort to reconcile his purposes with the basic requirements on which we found it essential to insist.

11. He then undertook to talk to Mora and Mayobre and to give us a reply this afternoon. I said that I would take this reply not as a final answer but as a message to the President, so that both sides could be sure of full understanding of each other's position. This may give us another 24 hours—but not much more.

**Bennett**

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to a story filed by Tad Szulc, a Washington correspondent of *The New York Times* who was in Santo Domingo. On May 17 at 4:45 p.m. President Johnson telephoned Bromley Smith seeking information on this story. Smith summarized Szulc's article as stating Guzman was the U.S. Government's candidate to lead the Dominican Republic and the Bundy mission's purpose was to convince Imbert to leave to make way for a U.S. Government "slate" under Guzman. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Bromley Smith, Tape F65.30, Side A, PNO 3)

95. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 25, 1965, 10:06–11:32 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting at the White House, 25 May, 10:00 a.m., on The Dominican Republic; Mr. [name not declassified] accompanied the Director<sup>2</sup>

1. McGeorge Bundy will return tomorrow (26 May).
2. They will get an agreed upon position between SecState, McNamara and Bill Moyers as to what should be said and SecState will hold press statements.
3. Mora and IAF will handle business with strong U.S. representative.
4. Withdraw U.S. troops man-for-man replacement from Latin America.<sup>3</sup>
5. Studies will be made by U.S. military for Mora to see what further reductions in U.S. troops can be made.
6. State will have to have contingency plans with people who will be satisfactory to U.S., for the Dominican Republic Cabinet.
7. Ambassador Bunker will keep OAS informed.
8. President feels that our Latin American ambassadors have not told our Dominican Republic story promptly or good!
9. Have [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] supported our Ambassadors in providing them with story or is this State?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302. Secret; Eyes Only. Prepared by Raborn on May 26. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library)

<sup>2</sup> According to a May 26 CIA memorandum of this meeting, Raborn and his associate [name not declassified] were in attendance as were President Johnson, Bunker, Rusk, McNamara, Mann, Fortas, Ball, Vaughn, Moyers, Valenti, and Bromley Smith. (Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302) Valenti's handwritten notes of this meeting state that George Reedy was also present. (Johnson Library, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes)

<sup>3</sup> The memorandum cited in footnote 2 above, includes the following: "The President said that he wanted some of our troops to start moving out since there were already some 500 Latin American troops in place. Secretary McNamara said this would be started and that the first group of about 400 would be evacuated by the evening of 27 May. He added that the remainder—to reach about 1700—would be evacuated soon after the Brazilian contingent arrives. Our goal is to be down to about 10,000 troops under the Inter-American Force." (Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302)

10. President would like State and Defense to initiate an OAS elite force (2000 men with planes, tanks, etc.) to take care of future Dominican Republic situations. We should participate in this planning (CIA). Get in touch with State and Defense and stay close to this effort—we should have a place in such effort.

11. What is status of our analysis of Bosch?

12. Vance will stay for a while yet to fill “gap” until OAS commission arrives.

13. President concerned about instable conditions in Latin America. He feels that our plans are weak to handle contingencies.

14. We have invited suggestions through our ambassadors on how to handle Dominican Republic conditions—but so far no helpful suggestions have been received from them!

15. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] must have placed in their hands a *full* story on the Dominican Republic to acquaint their contacts in Latin America. Get from State.

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## 96. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 26, 1965, 1050Z.

2003. From Bundy.

1. Vance, Mora and I met May 24 with Caamano, Aristy and Jottin Cury for four hours during late afternoon and early evening. Guzman and Jorge Blanco also present, as was Benitez who lent his valuable assistance in assuring that we all understood one another. Meeting held in deserted Conservatory of Music just across line in rebel territory on George Washington Blvd.

2. Our lengthy discussion was quite useful in my judgment. Caamano and company should now have clear idea of what we want and of what problems must be solved before final solution can be achieved. They can now have no illusions about the firmness of our purpose nor false optimism about a quick and easy solution. At same time, way was left open for further talks which could ultimately produce good results.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Received in the Department of State at 7:47 a.m. and passed to the White House, DOD, and CIA.

As a starter Vance and Mora will meet with Caamano tomorrow to discuss problem of removing dangerous source of incidents by bringing National Palace within our security lines.

3. I opened conversation by reviewing status of our negotiations with Guzman. Emphasized my respect and admiration for Guzman both as person and as negotiator for Constitutionalists. Said we had been close to agreement on several occasions during past week but serious issues arose each time and we were not in position of having to step back and give careful consideration to problem as a whole. Told them I was going to Washington tomorrow<sup>2</sup> but Dr. Mora and Vance would be here to carry on. Emphasized our deep interest in having everyone concerned make maximum use of OAS presence and Dr. Mora's good offices in working toward final settlement of Dominican problem.

4. Listed following specific issues to be resolved: (A) constitution—we can understand deep desire on part of Caamano forces for return of 1963 constitution. However, must point out that by no means all Dominicans share this desire. (B) Caamano of Armed Forces—insistence that member of Caamano group hold command of army remains one of principle obstacles. (C) Communism—we are satisfied that present leadership of Constitutionalist movement is against communism but there are serious differences between us on how problem should be handled. (D) Civil Base of Government—we have come a long way toward understanding on necessity for broadest possible representation in government so as to attract wide support. However, we might have to go farther. (E) Imbert and the Other Side—power of GNR and its forces has grown considerably during last ten days. Result has been hardening attitude on questions such as who will command army. No one now can seriously believe that a complete victory is possible for either side.

5. Guzman expressed himself as shocked and disappointed at my presentation. (This appeared to be largely for benefit of Caamano and company. Guzman had not filled them in on Monday's conversation—Embtel 1963.)<sup>3</sup> Said he thought we had reached final agreement on constitutional formula, names of officers who would hold top military commands, including Minister Armed Forces and Army and Air Force

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<sup>2</sup> Bundy departed the Dominican Republic to return to Washington the morning of May 26. According to a telephone conversation that morning with Bill Moyers at 9:25 a.m. Bundy, who was still in Santo Domingo, reported that publicly he was returning to Washington for consultations with the President, but the private underlying reason was to try to diminish growing criticism in the press that Americans were attempting to install their own government in the Dominican Republic. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between McGeorge Bundy and Bill Moyers, Tape F65.42, Side A, PNO 1)

<sup>3</sup> Document 94.

commanders, (Navy unsettled but not a particular problem) and on composition of Cabinet. This would leave as only basic problem matter of how to deal with communism. (Guzman did not mention problem of departure of rebel leaders.)

6. I made it entirely clear that in this, as in all diplomatic negotiations, agreement must be reached on all points in order regard any one as having been finally settled. Conceded that we had reached understanding in principle on various points at various times but obviously failure settle all issues left each side free re-examine its position as a whole.

7. Caamano gave Aristy the floor first. He said Constitutionalist "government" had put negotiations in hands of Guzman and was fully prepared accept peaceful solution as long as it included restoration of 1963 Constitution. On that issue they would not give an inch. As for growing strength of Imbert side this was clearly result of US intervention. Imbert could only exist with US support. If US forces would leave the country the Constitutionlists could finish the job they began April 24. Re army command, Aristy said Caamano group had conceded on other three military posts but would continue insist that Army C/S come from their ranks.

8. Caamano picked up the argument in even more forceful terms: There are only two real "bands" in DR, Constitutionlists and the US. Imbert able clear northern part of city only because LOC had divided Constitutionalist forces and because US military had provided active assistance. Caamano had thought that, as matter of course, there would be cease-fire while conversations went forward. Instead on day after talks began US permitted Imbert to attack. His forces used US arms and were assisted by US helicopters, as well as by US troops firing from LOC. Constitutionlists had nevertheless continued make concessions in in effort find peaceful solution. Now they were virtually being asked to surrender with demand that they give up claim to Army C/S post. He (Caamano) would offer his head if necessary for a real solution but would keep it tightly screwed on under present circumstances. Army C/S post must be filled by Constitutionalist officer.

9. In reply I made following points: (A) Caamano's assessment of our role here and of our relationship to Imbert was quite simply wrong. I knew what orders had been given and I had confidence in the discipline of our troops. No such military cooperation with Imbert had taken place. (B) Re armed forces posts, we were not talking about either side ceding or surrendering anything. Had been agreed from first with Bosch that Minister of Armed Forces and Army C/S would be officers acceptable both sides. (C) Assertion that only two sides exist also incorrect. Imbert's side is a fact, like it or not, and it controls good part of the country.

10. Mora intervened at this juncture to suggest that continuing discussion of specific issues was unprofitable and inappropriate. We should be talking about basic positions and general attitudes. Mora also did valuable work in strengthening Guzman with Caamano by paying tribute to his integrity, sincerity and honest representation of Constitutionalist side. I used Mora's intervention to emphasize that my review of status of negotiations was not meant to indicate we were closing the door. Far from it. We merely saying time had come to take stock and see where we might go from here.

11. Aristy and Cury were not yet prepared let reason flow. They said only two alternatives existed: peaceful solution or total and glorious sacrifice of Constitutionalist forces in fight to the finish. Delays in negotiations suggested—at least to unformed—that deliberate stalling tactics were being employed in hope of weakening Constitutionalist movement. Time now at hand when people should know the truth. Might even be necessary, Aristy said, to tell all—who had been negotiating and what had been said.

12. I replied that this was up to them. We had nothing to fear. Our purpose was to seek solution in interests of all. Could only point out that type of publicity Aristy suggesting would scarcely brighten prospects for further talks. As for threat to seek solution with arms, my government was committed to sustain cease-fire in accordance OAS resolution. Our forces would, of course, have to reply in kind if attacked. However, no one wanted more violence, least of all Dominican people. Courage and sense of honor of Constitutionlists might be admirable but notion of seeking glory and world sympathy by provoking fight to the end was futile because such a course would solve nothing.

13. From this point on discussion became increasingly more reasonable. I said it my understanding that basic Constitutionalist position was one of opposition to dictatorship of right or left, of determination that country should have honest government responsive to people's will. I pointed out real Communist danger as we see it and emphasized that US national interests would not permit another Cuba. Also observed that reality of Dominican situation required close and understanding relations between our two countries which, in turn, required appreciation on their part of US responsibilities and attitudes with regard to communism. If my understanding of Constitutionalist position correct our fundamental difference was on issue of how to handle Communist problem.

14. Aristy and Caamano each made rather lengthy statements to effect that: Constitutionlists firmly opposed to communism and knew Communist dictatorship would be even worse than rule by the right. Constitutionlists fully recognized absolute necessity of good relations

with US and of economic assistance from US. Constitutionalist would never permit imposition of communism here and were prepared to meet the danger. As soon as constitutional government established, Communists or anyone else who might break law or conspire would suffer full consequences. Caamano said we knew his history from our intelligence sources, knew him to be anti-Communist. He and his movement were out to give people free, honest government and to clean up corrupt armed forces, nothing more.

15. Caamano and friends conceded there were probably a few Communists around. Every popular movement could expect some infiltration. However, there were no Communists anywhere near Caamano, his government or military command—of that we could be sure. He, Caamano, had met only three Communists in his life—gentlemen who happened to be brought under arrest to the National Police while he was on duty there. He had heard other names mentioned but had no direct knowledge of these people. Finally, as Cury said and others agreed, best way fight communism was to give people social justice and work.

16. I said our assessment of situation was quite different. Constitutionalist claimed they could handle problem and we prepared accept that this what they genuinely believe. However, we informed Communists not few and insignificant but rather numerous and active in Constitutionalist movement. These are people who have been identified to our satisfaction. They are brothers-in-arms of Caamano's officers. Their presence and what is to become of them are matters of real concern to us. We must be satisfied that this problem will be dealt with effectively and must have clear understanding on that point in order go ahead toward solution.

17. Cury and Aristy asked if we could provide names and numbers of Communists. Caamano said he prepared accept US technical assistance on the problem. I replied present large meeting no place go into specifics on such delicate subject but perhaps Caamano would wish designate officer (one clearly identified as anti-Communist) who could hold discussions with one of our people. Caamano accepted suggestion. Said he would pick officer and let us know.

18. Talk then turned to basic attitude of Constitutionalist toward concept of national concord and kind of government that might achieve it. Caamano said his side already committed to policy of no revenge and he reluctantly prepared allow "guilty" San Isidro officers leave country without answering for their crimes. Entire Caamano group next took turns presenting case for their contention that fight to restore 1963 Constitution has full support of Dominican people. In essence argument was that installation of government in accordance that document's provisions would end all problems and be greeted with

universal joy. I again noted differences in our assessment of Dominican reality, pointing out that majority of Dominican people have not really been heard from; that opposition to Constitutionalist solution does exist in important sectors; and that Caamano's group must think in terms of broader solution than merely going back to Constitution 1963—of practical steps to create a genuine government of national concord.

19. In reply, and after more argument on the case, Aristy and Cury made following points to which Caamano agreed: (a) leaders of Constitutionalist movement do not seek places in new government and are prepared step aside for other men; (b) they wish government to be constituted of men acceptable to broadest possible range of Dominicans; (c) leaders agree to national referendum on 1963 Constitution; (d) they desire that new government establish close and cordial relations with US, based in part on common opposition to communism. Mora and I both expressed view that this was constructive reply which I could take back with me to Washington.

20. Remainder of meeting—which punctuated at one point by sound of heavy firing from Sans Souci area—taken up with discussion of comparative merits 1962 and 1963 Constitutions and of possible specific measures to strengthen cease-fire. At end we agreed Mora and Vance would be available for further talks. Aristy and I also agreed that any public reference emanating from Caamano camp would be along lines that constructive general conversation had been held and that possibility for further talks existed.

**Bennett**

97. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 26, 1965, 5:35–6:45 p.m.

## SUBJECT

White House Meeting on the Dominican Republic, 26 May 1965—5:30 p.m. (DCI was accompanied by Mr. FitzGerald)

Bundy's remarks:

1. Forms of assurance of Commies.  
Forms of assurance on Military commander and police. These are critical and will be essential.
2. Imbert actively promoting his cause.
3. Reason to believe an Imbert solution would be distasteful to OAS and charges that U.S. installed him.
4. We may be forced to accept an "Imbert" solution vis-a-vis Constitutional one.
5. The rebels, however, will probably violently oppose.
6. There is every reason to improve OAS's image. Mora has increased posture.
7. Mora feels that U.S. must be right by his side when negotiating.
8. Cables of past 2–3 days<sup>2</sup> are important—people are most eager to get "normalcy" back earliest. (Banks), etc.
9. If "normalcy" could be brought back—we could have a tripartite state.
10. Mayobre seems to be eager to pull off a "rebel" solution and frustrate U.S.
11. President wanted to know the number of arms passed out plus those now available. Can we get number from Cabral Reid?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01580R, Box 15, Dominican Republic, Folder 302. Secret; Eyes Only. Prepared by Raborn on May 28. The time is from the President's Daily Diary. (Johnson Library) The following were present: President Johnson, Rusk, McNamara, Ball, Vaughn, Bunker, Raborn, Fortas, Bundy, Moyers, Desmond FitzGerald, Dick Goodwin, Horace Busby, George Reedy, and Bromley Smith. (Johnson Library) Valenti's handwritten notes of this meeting are *ibid.*, Office of the President File, Valenti Meeting Notes.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

12. Troop withdrawal proposed by SecDef

21,000 (-) 1600—19,400  
1500 more—Saturday<sup>3</sup>  
4500—Saturday, Tuesday<sup>4</sup> } held in abeyance at this time  
2000—more by June 9

This not yet approved in toto.

13.<sup>5</sup> a. Positioning ships.

b. Visit of ambassador<sup>6</sup>

c. Breakdown of law and order

d. Ambassador under desk calling for his secretary to take cover, being shot at, called for assistance as military running up and down hotel shooting with tommyguns among Americans huddled there in grave danger.

e. 600 troops landed to protect Embassy and American life at hotel—*at the same time notifying OAS and asking for their help.*

f. Further breakdown of law and order due to complete collapse of police.

g. Evening of 28th of April two hard core Commies seen by most reliable source participating with rebels, exhorting crowds and passing out weapons.

h. Morning of 29th of April, 8 more Commies were surfaced.

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<sup>3</sup> May 29.

<sup>4</sup> June 1.

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 13 is a chronological account of the events leading up to and immediately after the landing of American troops in the Dominican Republic.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to Ambassador Bennett's arrival in Washington April 26 for consultations with officials on the problems in the Dominican Republic.

98. Intelligence Memorandum<sup>1</sup>

OCI No. 1809/65

Washington, May 26, 1965.

THE COMMUNIST CONNECTIONS OF JUAN BOSCH:  
A FRESH INTERPRETATION

1. Bosch apparently is not a Communist Party member; he is, however, *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* frequently *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* influenced and manipulated by those of his close associates who are Communists. *[8½ lines of source text not declassified]*

2. *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* Bosch has always deferred to the Communists around him. Specifically mentioned in this connection is Dr. Marcio Mejia Ricart, a prominent Dominican Communist who is an economics professor. Bosch is said to be quite close to Mejia Ricart, who exerts great influence over Bosch's economic line of thought. This individual's influence is probably indirectly increased by the fact that Mejia Ricart also is the ideological mentor of other persons whom Bosch respects. In the latter category are Guatemalans Doctor Raul Osegueda and Mario Monteforte Toledo, who are violently anti-US intellectuals of a far leftist stripe. Both men served as officials of the Arevalo regime (1945-51).

3. Other Dominican Communists who are described as particularly influential over Bosch are Juan and Felix Ducoudray Mansfield. These men, who are brothers, have been identified as top rebel leaders in the current revolt. Both have spent much time in the USSR and Communist Cuba and have had long years of experience as top-level leaders of the Dominican Communist Party (PSPD).

4. Most Central American and Dominican Communists who have known Bosch over the years have regarded him as a *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* political lightweight at home and unworthy of serious attention. Jose Manuel Fortuny, a Guatemalan Communist leader who played a key role in the Arbenz government (1951-54), knew Bosch during this period and considered him *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* not anti-Communist and a person who could be won over. *[1 line of source text not declassified]*, during his many years of exile in Central America and the Caribbean, sought on several occasions to pass himself off as solidly pro-Communist in hopes of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic—Communist Participation in Current Dominican Rebellion—5/65. Secret; No Foreign Dissem/Controlled Dissem; Background Use Only. Prepared in the Office of Current Intelligence of the Central Intelligence Agency.

winning Communist support for an anti-Trujillo move of some kind. Most of the Communists whom he tried to impress with this pose saw through it, however. This was because they knew that Arevalo and other non-Communists had even more influence over Bosch than the Communists did.

5. [2 lines of source text not declassified] He has tried consistently to be all things to all men. He would like to be another Arevalo insofar as his style of governing is concerned, but he fell short of this goal because he is “too sentimental and too ultrademocratic.” He is also the type of person who thinks that if the people ask for Communism, then Communism is what they should get. But from the US point of view, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] that perhaps the most dangerous thing about Bosch is the anti-American, ultranationalist nature of some of his friends.

6. One of Bosch’s Guatemalan friends—Monteforte Toledo—is said to have learned that the Communist element within the Dominican rebel movement plans to take advantage of the “clumsy Yankee intervention” in the Dominican Republic to build strength for a later takeover. According to this plan, the Communists are holding onto their weapons and will bide their time until the crisis has ended. Then they intend to launch an attack against whatever government exists and quickly seize power before there is time for international reaction to mobilize itself against it. These tactics are described [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] as typical of the Communists—namely the development of a campaign of terror and internal conflict throughout the country in order to accomplish what cannot be done directly through an open military revolt.

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**99. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Johnson<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 26, 1965.

## SUBJECT

Build-up of U.S. Forces in the Dominican Republic

*History and Background*

The Rebel insurrection in Santo Domingo against the government of Donald Reid Cabral began on Saturday, April 24, 1965. The Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) seized control and appointed Rafael Molina Urena as President.

During the next days, the situation became increasingly chaotic. On April 26, Loyalist forces bombed the Rebel-held areas in Santo Domingo. The Rebel government head, Molina, took refuge in the Colombian Embassy. Although the bombing lasted only one day, the situation continued to deteriorate rapidly. Other early leaders of the Rebels began to seek refuge in foreign embassies. Extremist groups moved quickly to the ranks of the Rebels. Leaders of the communist and pro-communist parties became involved with the Rebels and assisted in collecting arms, organizing forces, and setting up strong points in Santo Domingo. As the Rebels gained control of more arms and ammunition, thousands of irresponsible civilians were given weapons.

The U.S. build-up paralleled these events. On April 24, the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron, with its 1,830 Marines, was directed to move to and stand off the Dominican coast. On April 26, two Army battalions of the 82d Airborne Division were alerted. On April 27, the amphibious squadron was ordered to begin the evacuation. On that day 1,176 Americans and other foreign nationals were evacuated out of the port of Haina. On April 28, the situation was so chaotic that Ambassador Bennett requested the landing of Marines to protect the evacuation operations and reinforce the Embassy guard.<sup>2</sup> In response, 400 Marines were sent ashore. On April 29, the Ambassador requested that the remainder of the Marine units and the two Army battalions be moved to the Dominican Republic to protect American lives.<sup>3</sup> On April 30, 1,500 Marines landed and established

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330 70 A 1266, Dominican Republic 381. Confidential. A notation on the memorandum indicates Vance saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 32.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 41.

positions around the Ambassador Hotel (the assembly point for evacuees) and secured the road to the port of Haina. On the same day, 1,800 Army troops landed at the San Isidro airfield.

Despite the signing of a cease-fire agreement at 5:30 p.m. on April 30, sporadic but frequent sniping continued from the Rebel side; and in less than 36 hours, 3 soldiers and Marines had been killed and 15 had been wounded. As a Rebel shortwave transmitter broadcast instructions to the civilian mobs to shoot Americans on sight and Radio Havana exhorted the Rebels to “fight on,” the remaining seven battalions of the 82d Airborne Division were placed in an increased readiness status. The danger to American lives continued; and with the Rebels in control of Radio Santo Domingo—the only effective communication with the rest of the island—the danger of chaos and anarchy throughout the island increased, with its accompanying danger to American and other lives and property.

Accordingly, 400 Army troops landed late on May 1 at San Isidro, about 10 miles east of Santo Domingo. 1,600 more Army troops arrived early on May 2. They secured the San Isidro airfield, the Duarte Bridge at the east entrance of Santo Domingo, and part of the east bank of the Ozama River on the eastern side of Santo Domingo. On May 1, an International Safety Zone was established within Santo Domingo with U.S. troops to protect it. By the end of May 2, about 1,700 more Army troops and 1,000 Marines were landed at San Isidro and Haina to secure the Duarte Bridge and the road to the airport, and to reinforce and hold the International Safety Zone. By this time, over 3,000 persons had been evacuated from Santo Domingo. The build-up continued on May 3, 4, and 5, with supporting elements arriving until May 14. By May 14, there were approximately 21,000 U.S. Armed Forces personnel on the island; 5,945 Marines, 14,200 Army, and 958 Air Force.

#### *The Need for 21,000 Men*

To appreciate the need for 21,000 men ashore, three major factors must be considered: the missions of the U.S. forces, the geographical location and population density of the areas in which they were required to perform those missions, and the explosive political situation.

The initial mission of the U.S. forces on April 28 was to evacuate U.S. nationals whose lives were in danger. By April 29, the mission was expanded to include the evacuation of other foreign nationals and the reinforcement of the U.S. Embassy guard which was under attack by Rebel snipers. Marines were required to insure the safety of the evacuees from the assembly point at the Ambassador Hotel on the western edge of Santo Domingo to the port of Haina 7 miles away. On April 29, additional troops were needed—and requested by the American Ambassador—to protect American lives in Santo Domingo and the surrounding area. On May 1, an International Safety Zone was established

in densely populated, downtown Santo Domingo to provide a secure area for OAS and other peacekeeping authorities, to protect various foreign embassies (some of which had been violated by Rebel forces), and to protect Dominicans and Americans and other foreign nationals. Establishment and maintenance of this zone (identified on the attached map),<sup>4</sup> together with the need to assure the safe movement of people and supplies over the 7 miles of road from Santo Domingo to the landing, supply, and evacuation point at the port of Haina, required approximately 6,000 Marines, with an additional force of 2,000 Marines off the shore of the International Safety Zone to meet unexpected contingencies.

The missions of the Army airborne troops have been to protect American lives throughout the island, to assist (with the Marines) in the restoration of law and order, to separate opposing Rebel and Loyalist forces, and to protect the lifeline of medicine, food, and other essential supplies from San Isidro to Santo Domingo.

The airborne units landed at San Isidro airfield, which is 10 miles east of Santo Domingo. The initial increments of these forces first secured the airfield for future landings of troops, supplies, food, and medicine, then moved to secure the vital Duarte Bridge and the east bank of the Ozama River on the eastern side of Santo Domingo. Subsequent increments of Army forces were needed to protect and keep open the 10-mile road from the San Isidro airfield to Santo Domingo so that men and essential supplies could move swiftly and safely.

Three airborne battalions, totaling 4,416 men, have been required to secure the eastern bank of the Ozama River, including the Duarte Bridge, and the 10-mile road from San Isidro airfield to Santo Domingo on a 24-hour basis. Three other airborne battalions, another 4,416 men, have been required to secure the airfield at Santo Domingo, to be available to protect American lives and property, and to assist in restoring law and order on behalf of the OAS throughout the remainder of the country in the event the rebellion should spread. An additional 1,809 Army and Air Force personnel have been required to support the intensive air operations at San Isidro airfield and to provide the other services needed to maintain our forces in the Dominican Republic.

Originally, it was hoped that Loyalist Dominican forces would be able to maintain order in a corridor between the U.S. Marines on the eastern boundary of the International Safety Zone and the U.S. Army forces 2 miles away on the east bank of the Ozama River. It became apparent, however, that the Loyalist forces would not be able to do so. Accordingly, additional Army troops were required to establish and

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<sup>4</sup> Not attached.

hold a corridor approximately 4 blocks wide and almost 2 miles long in a densely populated section of the city of Santo Domingo. Initially, this corridor was established by house-to-house fighting through Rebel-held portions of Santo Domingo. Eventually the corridor became (as it now is) the line separating the opposing Rebel and Loyalist forces, and the key to the maintenance of the cease-fire.

U.S. Army troops in the corridor not only perform the mission of separating the opposing Dominican forces, but also search all traffic crossing the corridor to prevent the passage of arms and ammunition from one side to the other. The corridor serves as a route for the transport of food, supplies, and medicine to the International Safety Zone and the rest of Santo Domingo. Three airborne battalions, totaling 4,416 men, have been required to accomplish these missions in the corridor on a 24-hour basis.

During the entire period U.S. forces, in conjunction with interested U.S. agencies, have furnished increasing levels of humanitarian support to the suffering Dominican people and their ravaged economy. Military vehicles, helicopters, and personnel have been used unsparingly in the distribution of more than 8 million pounds of food. Military technicians have directly contributed to the initiation of public works projects which, in the process of revitalizing the Republic's economy, have provided employment for over 4,000 Dominican nationals. Another 15,000 Dominicans have been treated in U.S. military medical facilities.

Throughout the performance of their missions, our forces have been, and still are, subjected to sporadic but frequent sniper fire. From April 30, the date of the cease-fire, to May 25, 18 U.S. military personnel have been killed and 100 have been wounded.

In summary, the missions our troops have been required to perform have been complex and have increased from the first landing of Marines on April 28 to the present. The initial mission of evacuating American citizens was expanded within a day to include the evacuation of other foreign nationals. Subsequently, our forces established an International Safety Zone in the heart of Santo Domingo and provided food and medicine for thousands of Dominicans, and Americans and other foreign nationals, as well as themselves. These missions have been performed over an area stretching from Haina, 7 miles west of Santo Domingo, through the heart of the densely populated city, to the San Isidro airfield, 10 miles east of Santo Domingo. Humanitarian missions such as the supply of food, medical care, and other essentials, have been performed throughout the Republic. Finally, and perhaps most important, these functions have been performed in an unusually explosive political situation involving continuous sniping, bitter Dominican factions, and communists and other extremists—a situation

in which our men may be called on at any time for peace-keeping activities and the protection of life and property throughout the entire country.

Robert S. McNamara<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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#### 100. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Santo Domingo, May 29, 1965, 1850Z.

2083. For the Secretary.

1. Concern and at least beginning of initiative now visible on part civic leaders Santo Domingo, Santiago, and other towns may offer a way out of this squalid mess. People now beginning to mobilize themselves, while largely middle road to conservative in their personal viewpoints, represent broad base of opinion which is essentially apolitical and emphatically rejects extremes of both left and right. Several names suggested by Santiago Group<sup>2</sup> for cabinet were on our compromise solution list, i.e. Postigo, Pastoriza, Garcia Godoy, Messina, etc. They willing to work with PRD supporters to find broad consensus on apolitical regime. Some of Social Christians who are concerned over Communist influence in Ciudad Nueva could possibly be brought along.

2. If I may speak bluntly, and with some oversimplification, I view two contending sides at present as follows:

With Caamano group we are dealing with a bunch of hoodlums infiltrated and fortified by Communists whose presence they unwilling admit. One hears names of legitimate PRD people who have swung

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 23-9 DOM REP. Secret; Flash; Exdis; No Distribution Outside Department. Passed to the White House. The handwritten notation "President has seen" appears on the White House copy of the telegram that was sent to the President at his Texas ranch. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, White House Cables, 4/65-7/65)

<sup>2</sup> A group of business, banking, agriculture and civic leaders from Santiago who sought a new political alternative, a "third force" or "third viewpoint," to those already established.

back to them now, but people who visit headquarters such as Papal Nuncio and others do not see them about. (Pena Gomez spoke at Caamano rally yesterday; all other speakers were from extreme left (*[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* special report 268<sup>3</sup>.) Nuncio, who worked as hard and as generously as anyone with rebels, in earlier days, told me this morning he considered “worst elements” have gained ascendancy in Caamano movement. Guzman generally discounted.

3. As regards Imbert, the gangster side of his nature has surged rapidly to fore as he has felt himself more pressed. He is getting advice from, among others, old Trujillo types whom I find as unacceptable to US interests as extreme left elements downtown. While rising hysteria over communism has brought some worthy people to his group, his popular support seems largely artificially pumped up. Recent events have drawn armed forces behind him, but they are not naturally his allies and residue of distrust remains. Certainly Postigo, and probably Grisolia and Benoit, could be pulled away from him for better alternative (Embtel 2080).<sup>4</sup>

4. It seems to me we have made a good record of trying to work honorably with both contending forces and we have tenaciously sought compromise solution. While some minor concessions have been achieved, neither side has shown itself willing to seek honorable compromise. Situation is declining again with danger of polarization, and perhaps time has come to soft pedal them both and seek middle way.

5. A good bit depends on how much influence we now wish give Juan Bosch. Washington will have to weigh wider considerations, but from purely local point of view he no longer needs be given great weight. Our numerous surveys of opinion in recent days in lower middle class and poor areas, both in town and country, seldom if ever turned up name of Bosch, nor Caamano, nor Imbert. Venezuelan Ambassador, who cannot be described as unfriendly to democratic left, this week called Bosch “political cadaver,” and Papal Nuncio, who came back here at urging of Bosch to seek settlement, agrees. Balaguer would seem have more general strength.

6. Obviously, many, no doubt majority of country, want change—they want better life—and we should be attentive to that deeply held

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<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 2080 from Santo Domingo, May 29, transmitted the views of moderate GNR junta members Julio D. Postigo and Carlos Grisolia who met with Embassy officials on the night of May 28. Both junta members expressed their disillusionment with the GNR, and Postigo expressed hope of leaving the GNR while Grisolia disagreed with the concessions granted to the rebels in the name of neutrality. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Dominican Republic, Vol. VI)

social tenet. Any group which emerges here from current civic initiative must be liberal in tone and dedicated to appropriate constitutional formula and elections to meet legitimate aspirations Dominican people.

7. If a middle way can be found, we would still have problems of Imbert and Caamano hard cores. Imbert may be somewhat difficult dislodge at this stage, but believe it could be worked out. While there is no doubt some serious hard core with Caamano, believe that if cultivation of vine were stopped, movement would wither. Nuncio states he agrees emphatically and offers his estimate peace could be achieved in week's time without violence. We might both be wrong.

8. This is obviously a black and white telegram and cuts across many complexities of situation. However, I hope it will be useful in your discussions there. Civic groups anxiously awaiting indications our interest.

9. A further point: in conversations with Bowdler over past 36 hours, Mora has indicated that he does not think it is possible to bring the two contending sides together on a formula on which both can agree. Mora states that from his talks with business and professional people and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, it is becoming increasingly evident to him that responsible elements desire a solution quite apart from the Imbert and Caamano factions. (Papal Nuncio told me this morning middle way solution could count on strong church support behind scenes; it is responsive to recent letter of bishops). Mora is groping for what the formula might be. His current very tentative thinking is that perhaps he should make a recommendation to the MFM setting forth principles which would serve as a guide in developing a third formula solution. He would like to get MFM approval of the guidelines and with that in hand proceed to put the formula into effect, giving both Imbert and Caamano the opportunity to accept it or face the alternative of OAS action against them.

**Bennett**