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COMMUNISM IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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The account of events in the section of this paper entitled "the rebellion" is a reconstruction of developments based on reports which in some cases were received some time after the fact due to delays necessitated by security of communications and the chaotic situation prevailing.

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19 July 1965

Communism in the Dominican Republic

I. The Pre-Rebellion Period

History -- The Communist Party of the Dominican Republic originated in the late 1930's and early 1940's with a group of Spanish Communist exiles who came to the country after the end of the Spanish Civil War. In the Dominican Republic, these Spanish Communists established a network of front organizations and publications and began to proselytize. They appealed mainly to anti-Trujillo intellectuals, particularly among the university students. Although Trujillo courted the Soviet Union during World War II, Dominican Comunists were jailed or kept under surveillance, and operated underground from 1942 until 1945. In 1945 the Dominican Communist Party was formed under the leadership of such men as Péricles Franco Ornés, Francisco Henriquez, and the Ducoudray brothers -- Juan Bautista and Félix Servio Ducoudray Mansfield. In mid-1945 the police prohibited Communist propaganda activities and leading Dominican Communists sought diplomatic asylum and exile. Most sought refuge in Cuba.

Late in 1946, exiled Communist leaders returned to the Dominican Republic at the invitation of General Trujillo, who was preparing an "election" which would permit him once again to become chief executive. The Communists supposedly were to be allowed freedom of operation while the Trujillo government could take credit for furthering democracy by allowing opposition groups to take part in the life of the nation. The Dominican Popular Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Popular Dominicano - PSPD)--currently active in the rebellion--was legally established as the official Communist Party in the country and began holding public campaign meetings. This recognition scheme, which was to become a favorite Trujillo maneuver, was short-lived. The PSPD was suppressed shortly before the 1947 elections and its principal leaders were put in jail and then exiled.

The Dominican Communist exiles established their headquarters in Guatemala and began publishing Orientación, which was smuggled back into the Dominican Republic. After the fall of the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954 the Dominicans moved their headquarters first to Mexico and then to Cuba, where it remained until after the death of Trujillo.

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Prior to the assassination of Trujillo in May 1961, the Cuban-based PSPD members were negotiating with him in an effort to re-establish a Communist organization in the Dominican Republic. During the months of negotiations, there were no Cuban propaganda attacks on the Dominican dictator. Immediately after his assassination the Cubans reacted with accusations of US government complicity in the deed.

With the relaxation of controls that followed the death of Trujillo, exiled Communists began joining the returning Dominican exiles. By early 1962, extremist propaganda leaflets signed by the Central Committee of the PSPD began appearing in the Republic. The PSPD also beamed a daily radio program to the Dominican Republic from Cuba. Communists became increasingly active in the labor field and suspected Communists headed both the United Workers' Front for Autonomous Trade Unions (FOUPSA) and the now defunct National Federation of Public Employees and Autonomous Institutions (FENEPIA).

Although the Central Committee of the PSPD in October 1962 declared itself opposed to the Council of State government and the forthcoming December 1962 elections, it cautioned leftist forces in the Dominican Republic against being drawn into armed insurrection in which they would probably be defeated. This stand against violence reflected the PSPD's quarrel over tactics with the more extremist elements of the far left, a disagreement which impeded the unification of leftist forces into a "popular front" movement.

The election of Juan Bosch raised expectations within the party that the new government would be initially left-of-center, followed by a definite swing to the left that would create a political situation favorable to Communist activities. By the time Bosch had been inaugurated as President in February 1963, most Communist party leaders had returned to the Dominican Republic loudly praising Communist Cuba and expressing conditional support for Bosch. Although still illegal, the PSPD operated without much restraint during the short Bosch administration. Bosch refused to take repressive action against the extreme leftist groups so long as they pursued their ends by peaceful means. He apparently wanted to avoid forcing the extreme left completely underground and into a position where they would probably resort to violence--as had happened in Venezuela under President Betancourt. The PSPD, for its part, followed a double-faced policy toward the Bosch government. On one side they concentrated most of their propaganda resources on advancing the line that the government was in imminent danger from an ultra-reactionary plot, involving elements of the military and the "imperialists." Although the

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Communists emphasized the desirability of protecting the "democratic forces," they made almost no mention of the Bosch administration. The Communists, along with other extreme leftist groups, hoped to lead the anti-coup forces without committing themselves too much to the regime. The other side of their position involved exerting pressure on the government for more "revolutionary" measures, with the intent to exploit for their own benefit Bosch's failure to deliver on his promises.

Shortly after the military coup which ousted the Bosch regime on 25 September 1963, the Triumvirate government declared all Communist organizations and activities illegal, and forced the PSPD underground once again. PSPD members probably joined other political parties and the country's leading labor organizations, but had little success in subverting any major group. The Communists have influence in only one trade union, the Dominican Workers' Union (Unión Dominicana de Trabajadores Sindicalizados), known as "La Unión," and even here the extent of their influence is difficult to determine.

Communist indoctrinators and recruiters have concentrated their efforts in the schools with marked success. Communist and Cuban propaganda is distributed more or less freely in the schools. The average worker or peasant in the Dominican Republic is semi-illiterate and incapable of absorbing Communist doctrines quickly, while the students are usually avid readers and, as in other Latin American countries, become involved in politics at an early age. Fragua (Forge), the pro-Communist student organization, has, since its founding in February 1962, largely dominated campus politics at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo. General student apathy toward campus elections and the militancy of the pro-Communists help Fragua control the Dominican Students' Federation (Federación de Estudiantes Dominicanos - FED), the official organization of the student body.

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The MPD

The MPD (Movimiento Popular Dominicano) was organized in 1956 by Dominican exiles in Cuba, where MPD members actively supported Fidel Castro. In June 1960 Trujillo, in hopes of favorably influencing opinion in the Western Hemisphere, allowed MPD leaders to return to the Dominican Republic to form a token opposition. Within two months the Dominican government arrested MPD leaders Máximo López Molina and Andrés Marcelino Ramos Peguero and had the party headquarters looted by mobs. López Molina had been expelled from the PSPD in 1956. He was accused of following the "Chinese heresy." Although the MPD operated for only a short time and at Trujillo's pleasure, it gained considerable popularity and established itself as a bona fide anti-Trujillo organization.

López and Ramos were released in March 1961 and the MPD was given new guarantees by Trujillo who was again making overtures to the OAS. Following Trujillo's assassination at the end of May 1961, López and other party leaders reactivated the MPD amid extremist speeches filled with anti-US and pro-Castro propaganda. Party leaders denied favoring violence or Communism, but the MPD created disorders in Santo Domingo and their public declarations contained an unmistakable note of class warfare. The MPD political banner--a red and black flag with an upraised fist--supported the extremist impression. Although mobs organized by the government repeatedly sacked MPD headquarters during the summer of 1961, by September the party had an estimated 7,000 members and was penetrating other opposition groups in the Dominican Republic. During the period the MPD, in cooperation with the PSPD, unsuccessfully attempted to unite all leftist parties into a common political front. In October 1961, as a result of mob violence instigated by the MPD, the government of Joaquín Balaguer declared the MPD illegal. The internal security agency obtained official membership lists and deported the party leaders.

Until the inauguration of Juan Bosch in February 1963, the MPD was subjected to sporadic harassment by the government and went underground. It lost most of its popular following and increasingly resorted to provoking riots and mob violence led by disgruntled youth drawn largely from the lowest urban classes. When MPD leaders returned from exile in the spring of 1963 the party tried once again to set up a united front of leftist parties. Although the party was still outlawed, López was allowed to travel throughout the country publicizing the ideas of "national liberation" and the popular front, which were echoed in the clandestine party news organ, Libertad. At this time MPD leaders

were receiving guerrilla warfare training in Cuba and the MPD began cooperating with the APCJ in instruction and indoctrination in military operations.

Shortly after the September 1963 military coup the MPD, along with the PSPD, was declared illegal by the governing Triumvirate. Arrests of MPD leaders more or less eliminated the MPD from the guerrilla campaign of late 1963. Máximo López Molina and nine of his followers with a supply of weapons were arrested near Cotui in October 1963. In early December government forces captured several high-ranking MPD members during an attempted landing from a ship called the Scarlet Woman and discovered an arms cache nearby.

MPD strength is found among members of the poor urban classes, and many of the leaders come from this group. The rest of the leaders are lower-middle class university students or professionals, most of whom have laboring-class family backgrounds. Without close family ties, often without employment, they and their largely unlettered followers form a highly combative group of the dispossessed.

The Cuban government has presumably supported exiled MPD members while they were in Cuba and facilitated their travel to and from Cuba. Many MPD members have received guerrilla warfare training in Cuba, and in July 1963 it was reported that a member of the MPD central committee returned to the Dominican Republic with money from Cuba for MPD activities. It is probable that some of these Cuban-trained Dominicans are illegal agents of the Cuban Government, unknown to their MPD colleagues. The only evidence of Cuban attempts to supply weapons was found in December 1963, when Dominican officials captured Cayetano Rodríguez del Prado and Islander Selig Delmonte, two high-ranking MPD members attempting to land, and discovered an arms cache nearby.

The Fourteenth of June Political Group

The extreme leftist 14th of June Political Group (Agrupación Política Catorce de Junio --APCJ) is a pro-Castro political organization which came into existence in the late 1950's as a clandestine movement aimed at unseating Trujillo. As an anti-Trujillo organization, the APCJ originally attracted members from a broad political spectrum, many from wealthy and socially prominent families. The name, 14th of June, commemorates an abortive invasion attempt mounted from Cuba on 14 June 1959. In January 1960 the APCJ was implicated in a plot to kill Trujillo, with the result that many of its members were imprisoned and tortured.

The APCJ was not involved in Trujillo's assassination on 30 May 1961. Shortly after Trujillo's death and apparently at the insistence of the extreme leftist faction of the movement, the APCJ assumed the role of a functioning political party. In late 1961 the APCJ refused to enter the Council of State government proposed by President Joaquín Balaguer. The increasingly pro-Communist orientation of the APCJ caused moderate leaders to resign from the party in January 1962, leaving the APCJ in the hands of extremists. By April 1962 the APCJ was organizing armed groups, and stocking arms caches for future guerrilla activities. The party's public pronouncements became increasingly anti-US and pro-Castro, reflecting the dominant position of pro-Communist forces.

The APCJ did not participate as a party in the December 1962 elections, basing their abstention on the accusation that the Council of State was maintaining the repressive machinery--the police and the army--of the Trujillo dictatorship. After the inauguration of the popularly-elected Juan Bosch, ~~in April 1963~~, the APCJ applied for recognition as a legal political party, which was granted in May 1963 by the superior electoral tribunal. The party continued, however, to organize clandestine cells, and party leaders appeared to be in full agreement with Marxist-Leninist solutions to the economic and social problems of the country.

During 1963 extreme leftist groups, especially the MPD, attempted to unite all Dominican leftists into a popular front. Personal rivalries, however, doomed the proposed front.

After the 25 September 1963 coup the APCJ attempted to rally non-Communist opponents--the PRD and the PRSD--into a national front to "struggle for the restoration of constitutionality..." By late October 1963, however, when it became apparent that anti-coup forces would not join forces with the pro-Castro APCJ, party leaders decided to commence the much discussed but poorly planned armed insurrection.

The APCJ temporarily joined forces with the extreme leftist MPD under the banner of the Revolutionary Movement 14th of June (Movimiento Revolucionario 14 de Junio -- MR-1J4), and in November 1963 a force estimated at about 130 men took to the mountains. Leaders of the MR-1J4 apparently hoped that the uprising would point out the instability of the triumvirate government and make the MR-1J4 the leader for the presumed growing discontent with the government in the Dominican Republic. They failed in both hopes. The MPD

guerrilla contingent was quickly captured, and the uprising attracted little sympathy. PSPD leaders, who continued to counsel against violence, withheld their support. On 2 December 1963 the government, using an October 1963 anti-subversion decree, declared the APCJ illegal. Campesinos in the zones of operation refused to aid the guerrillas in spite of efforts to win them over. Dominican army leaders crushed the uprising within a month.

The death of several leaders and the imprisonment or deportation of others such as Jaime Duran, Fidelio Despradel, Juan Roman Diaz and Pablo Johnson Ortiz, left the APCJ disorganized and divided. During 1964 some wanted to rehabilitate the APCJ as a legal political party, others wanted to continue as a subversive group aiming at the violent overthrow of the de facto government. By October 1964, however, Cuban-trained APCJ leaders began returning clandestinely to the Dominican Republic and the prospects for a more active APCJ became manifest.

Although little information is available on the sources of APCJ funds, the party probably supports itself by contributions from members, sympathizers, and businessmen hoping to buy protection, and by the sale of the party newspaper, El 1J4.

The most important group in the APCJ is the political bureau, and the organization includes a central executive commission or committee, provincial committees, and cells. Leaders of the APCJ before the recent rebellion appeared to be:

Rafael Báez Pérez
Norge Botello Fernández
Fidelio Arturo Despradel Roque
Jaime Durán Hernando
Roberto Duverge
Luis Genao
Juan B. Mejía
Daniel Ozuna Hernández
Juan Miguel Román
Rafael Francisco Taveras Rosario

Since 1961 the aim of the APCJ has been a revolution for national liberation from what they term the domination of the landowners, the oligarchy, the upper bourgeoisie, and US imperialism. The Castro revolution in Cuba is its model.

The APCJ is openly pro-Castro and maintains a representative in Havana. The Cuban Government is known to have trained APCJ members in guerrilla warfare, sheltered APCJ exiles and assisted them to infiltrate back into the Dominican Republic. Radio Habana has furnished propaganda support to the APCJ as well as to other extreme leftist groups in the Dominican Republic.

Beginning last autumn, the Communists and allied extremists who had been deported following the abortive guerrilla effort began filtering back into the Dominican Republic. They came back by a variety of circuitous routes and used various clandestine means of entering. Some were caught by the Dominican authorities. Most were not. Even some of those arrested were not sentenced because Communist lawyers were able to intimidate and influence the judges. A few were released on bail and never appeared for trial. By early April of this year, on the eve of the insurrection, there were nearly 50 Communists or allied extremists back in the country after varying periods in exile.

The returnees who came back during the six months that preceded the outbreak of the insurrection included many who were to take very prominent parts in the fighting. Among the more prominent were Juan Miguel Roman Diaz, top APCJ militant who was killed on 19 May leading an attack on the loyalist-held national palace; Jaime Duran Hernando, another prominent APCJ leader who is now reliably reported to be hiding out in the interior; Daniel Ozuna Hernandez, an APCJ militant active during the insurrection; Cayetano Rodriguez del Prado, top MPD leader also active during the fighting; Baldemiro Castro Garcia, an MPD leader who took part in the rebel raid on San Francisco de Macoris on 25 June; Tomas Erickson Alvarez, an MPD activist who was captured by loyalist forces during the early stages of the fighting; Felix Servio Ducoudray Mansfield, top PSPD leader who is playing an active political role in the rebel camp; Franklin Franco Pichardo, another ranking PSPD "politician" who has been particularly close to rebel foreign minister Cury; and the PSPD militant fighter Antonio Isa Conde. Many of the returnees had been active in the abortive guerrilla effort of late 1963. 25X1

25X1

Despite all this effort, however, the Dominican security organization did not develop into a competent service. Capable and educated men could not be induced to serve in it and Reid insisted on

diverting its few trained men away from their primary task of controlling Communist subversion and instead continually assigned them to investigate smuggling and to collect information on his non-Communist political opponents. Reid never seemed to take the subversive threat as seriously as the facts would seem to have justified. [redacted] 25X1 25X1

One factor that made the situation particularly vulnerable in the case of the Reid government was the fact that the Communist parties had found an exploitable issue--one which placed them on the same side as the non-Communist political parties which had the greatest popular support. That issue was the one of "constitutionalism" and anti-militarism, reflecting the public's opposition to the military coup of September 1963 and the unpopular governments that had followed.

The Rebellion

In its earliest moments, the rebellion appeared to be a coup by anti-Reid officers, some of whom had old scores to settle with their superiors, and some of whom were intent on returning Bosch from exile in Puerto Rico. Many PRD members who had not been involved in the plotting quickly threw in with the rebels; a provisional government headed by PRD member Rafael Molina Urena was proclaimed and Bosch was asked to return.

It now appears, however, that extremist and Communist groups had advance word of the revolt, not surprising in Santo Domingo where plotting had been endemic and the subject of frequent gossip. Some lower-level PRD members are reported, moreover, to have been in contact with some extremist leaders and seeking support for a coup effort.

In any event, once news of the revolt became public on the afternoon of 24 April, these extremist groups moved quickly to participate. Leaders of the three Communist parties began collecting arms, organizing their forces, and establishing strongpoints in Santo Domingo. The PSPD established its principal strongpoint, or garrison, at the house of party leader Buenaventura Johnson Pimentel at #56 Calle Espaillat. Crudely fortified machine-gun emplacements were set up on the roof of the house. PSPD activists, including Johnson, Nicolas Pichardo Vicioso, Manuel Ortiz, Ignacio Perez, and others were observed on 25 April making Molotov

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cocktails and crude grenades at the house, which continued to serve as an arsenal and as headquarters for the main PSPD paramilitary forces until 27 April. The PSPD moved its headquarters to the house of Rafael Esteves Weber on the night of 27 April, probably for security reasons, but the Johnson house has remained an important stronghold and arsenal.

A building on the corner of Arzobispo Portes Avenue and Sanchez Street also served as a PSPD stronghold during this period. Diomedes Mercedes Garcia, Jose Rodriguez Acosta, and other PSPD leaders were observed there and were seen leading a paramilitary force armed with submachine guns and rifles, Molotov cocktails and hand grenades.

The APCJ is known to have established a strongpoint during this same period on Jose Gabriel street near the Malecon in the Ciudad Nueva section of the city. A heavily armed paramilitary force was seen using this building as a base. A headquarters and strongpoint of MPD guerrillas was established on Benigue Street in the Ciudad Nueva area.

On the first day of the rebellion the military rebels, fearful that the high command would move rapidly against them, opened the arsenals of Santo Domingo and began passing out weapons to civilians. One such arsenal was at the "27 February" camp on the outskirts of the city. This and similar actions elsewhere on subsequent days provided the leaders of the various Communist and extremist groups with the materiel they needed to supplement their own collection of arms and become a significant factor in the rebellion.

Buenaventura Johnson Pimentel, Juan Ducoudray Mansfield, Jaime Durán Hernando and Fidelio Despradel Roques were particularly active in acquiring weapons and equipping their followers in both the PSPD and APCJ. The last of these, Despradel, had been trained in Cuba, and according
25X1 to [redacted] had been given $20,000 by the Chinese Communist Embassy in Paris for use by the Dominican Communists. All these men appeared to be responsive to direction from Manuel Gonzalez Gonzalez, a Spanish Communist veteran of the Spanish civil war.

By the afternoon of Sunday, April 25, the situation in Santo Domingo had become chaotic and confused. Violence had begun but there was more feinting and jabbing than significant action. Some of the rebels, particularly among the

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military, were tempted by offers from the loyalists for the establishment of a new junta which would seek a solution, presumably along traditional compromise lines. The Wessin forces, apparently taken by surprise, were reacting slowly and not effectively. In this situation the Communists were intent on strengthening popular participation in the revolt. Public address cars manned by identifiable PSPD members prowled the city directing the crowds to tactical positions.

At this point the PRD leaders appeared to share the initiative with rebel officers; the Communists were busying themselves with organizing the distribution of weapons to "reliable" groups and rounding up manpower for civilian militia units. It was in this period that the various Communist parties established their weapons depots and set up disbursing controls.

As they established their organizations to assure the military effectiveness of the civilian rebels, the Communists apparently also began to turn their attention to the political ends of the revolt. On the night of April 25th and the early morning hours of April 26 rebel leaders consulted in the captured Presidential Palace on strategy and on the composition of a provisional government. To these meetings came PSPD leaders Milvio Perez and Silvano Lora, as well as a Cuban-trained guerrilla fighter of the APCJ, Facundo Gomez.

These conversations in the palace showed for the first time not only that the Communists were intent on winning influence in the rebellion, but that they already had a degree of bargaining power. The government formed by Molina after these consultations included as Attorney General, Alfredo Conde Pausas, who had two sons in the PSPD. The Director of the National Department of Investigations--the security service--was to be Luis Homera Lajara Burges, reported to be an underground member or associate of the PSPD; the sub-director was to be Lajara's son, an APCJ militant with a long record of arson.

PSPD leaders, and particularly Diomedes Mercedes Garcia, commented on several occasions during the early days of the insurrection that they were very pleased with the attitude of Captain Mario Pena Taveras, one of the army rebel leaders, whom they described as a "friend of the party." Another rebel leader, the lawyer and retired army officer Rafael E. Saldana Jimenez, was acting as legal adviser to the rebel military officers occupying the National Palace

between 24 and 27 April. Saldana is closely connected to the APCJ and is reported to have used his military connections during 1963 to obtain weapons for the APCJ. APCJ and MPD leaders are known to have been in communication with Saldana on 27 April and at other times.

Thus by the night of April ~~26~~ 25 the rebellion was undergoing a rapid evolution. The Communist militants among the rebel forces had established their credentials as effective and ruthless leaders. They were recruiting supporters with sound trucks and manufacturing Molotov cocktails for use against Wessin's tanks. This latter task was a specialty of PSPD members. APCJ activists organized in patrols were arresting "political prisoners" and often meting out rough justice on the spot.

Monday, April ~~27~~ 26, was the last full day of the short-lived Molina rebel government. The day began with sporadic bombardments of the downtown area of Santo Domingo by loyalist planes and naval guns. While casualties were being sustained in the rebel sectors, ten members of the PSPD were meeting at the home of Nicolas Pichardo Viciosio to plan the destruction of the city by fire if Wessin's troops entered. This was apparently characteristic of the Communists' doggedness during this bleakest hour for the rebels. Before the night was over it had become the dominant mood of the workers' quarters embittered by the bombing raids. Some of the military rebels apparently had had enough, but they were relieved of their weapons by rebels before being allowed to defect to the loyalists.

The principal defections at this stage of the rebellion besides that of Molina were those of Jose Pena Gomez, Colonel Hernando Ramirez, and Antonio Martinez Francisco, the secretary general of the PRD. After he had withdrawn from the rebel camp and taken refuge, Jose Pena Gomez, a prominent PRD leader, informed a US Embassy officer that he considered his movement to have been defeated. He admitted that the Communists who joined the rebel force had infiltrated into positions of importance and that it was very difficult to stop them. Molina, who took asylum in the Colombian Embassy, is reported to have said on 5 May that he wanted to get the truth of Communist infiltration across to the world, but that he could not face further jeopardizing his and his family's safety. He reportedly said that he was already under intense attack by the Communists for opposing them. Also, he was reluctant to make any statement that would force him to give up asylum.

Martinez made his way out of the rebel lines and on April 28th addressed the nation over San Isidro radio, controlled by the forces of General Wessin y Wessin. In that broadcast, Martinez said: "I beg all to lay down their arms; turn them in to the nearest military post, because this is no longer a fight between political parties."

Communists did, in fact, clearly dominate the rebel movement between 28 April and 2 or 3 May. They were in obvious control after having filled the vacuum created when moderate non-Communist political leaders who had been in control lost heart for the fight and abandoned it. The moderate-led rebel government of Rafael Molina Urena collapsed on 27 April and most members of Juan Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) went into hiding or took asylum in Latin American embassies. Most of the rebel military officers who had initially sparked the revolt also went into hiding. Even Colonel Caamano was briefly in asylum. The collapse was brought on largely by the movement of loyalist army troops toward the rebel strongholds and recognition on the part of the non-Communist rebel leaders that their forces could not have prevailed over the superior military power then moving toward them under General Wessin y Wessin and other loyalist commanders.

The Communists and their extremist allies had no place to hide and they prepared on 27 and 28 April to defend the rebel stronghold to the last ditch. The Communists, in short, upheld rebel resistance when it otherwise would have completely collapsed. This is what they are unlikely to permit the non-Communist rebel leaders to forget. This is an important source of their present strength and their influence in the Caamano government.

Actually, the Communists were not brought to the ultimate test. The expected loyalist onslaught on the city did not come during the crucial days of 27 and 28 April. The "gutless generals" on the loyalist side were unable or unwilling to bring their well-equipped forces into action against the rebel stronghold. The much-vaunted Dominican military establishment was, in fact, on the point of utter disintegration by the evening of 28 April when the first US Marines landed. It was not until 13 May that loyalist forces became sufficiently stiffened to take the military offensive. By that time, US troops were interposed between them and the main rebel stronghold.

Between 28 April and the first two days of May the Communists and their extremist allies were the only

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effective rebel holdouts--together with the naive youths manning the barricades under Communist leadership. By 3 May, however, various of the moderate PRD leaders had come out of hiding and asylum, returned to rebel headquarters, and began resuming at least nominal control. The presence of US troops and the continuing impotence of the loyalist military gave them at least some confidence that there would be no all-out loyalist onslaught on the city. On 4 May, the non-Communists of the rebel movement formed a government under Colonel Caamano and composed of non-Communists, including some highly respected moderate leftists. Thus, the rebels were able to re-establish the picture of a moderate leftist regime dedicated to the fulfillment of a popular revolution. Communists were not obvious in the rebel camp by the time the bulk of US and other foreign newsmen arrived on the scene. The Caamano government proceeded to try to establish a respectable front and to try to enhance its bargaining position for the political discussions and the negotiations with the UN and the OAS that were to follow. This is, in general, the situation as it has prevailed since that date.

There is voluminous testimony as to the Communists' continuing important role in the rebel movement. This was acknowledged even by Antonio Guzman, who was under consideration as a new president of a PRD-weighted anti-Communist government. Guzman repeatedly stressed in his conversations with high-level US officials that he could not afford to act against the Communists in the rebel movement in a precipitous manner. He seemed to be honestly convinced that he would be unable to lead the kind of government that would have the support of a significant portion of the non-Communist rebel movement if he were required first to deport or take other strong action against Communists and other extremists who were with the rebels. Such action, he said, would only have the effect of creating more Communists.

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