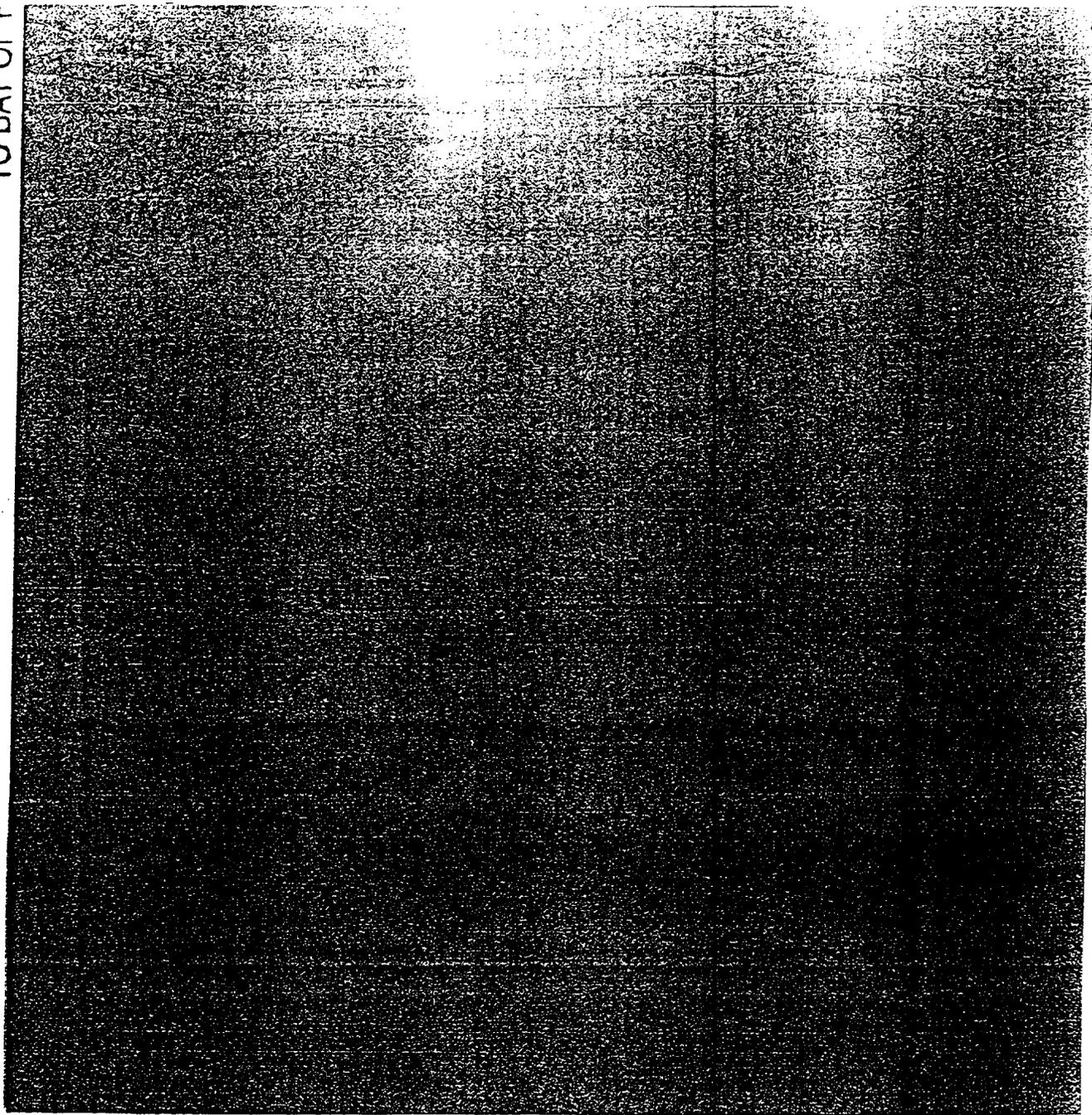


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LATIN AMERICA

3. Venezuelan Policy Toward Cuba and the Dominican Republic:
Venezuelan President Betancourt has told Ambassador Sparks

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that he is completely disenchanted with Fidel Castro and that he would play a leading role in bringing hemisphere attention to bear on the Cuban problem if Dominican dictator Trujillo were ousted beforehand. Betancourt insists, however, that any effort to present the Cuban problem to the Organization of American States (OAS) before Trujillo's ouster would not have the support of more than three other Latin American countries--Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras. He evidently is aware of the charges of Cuban intervention presented to the OAS on 25 April by Guatemala, which now has broken diplomatic relations with Havana. Honduras may also take this action soon for similar reasons.

The question of policy toward Cuba is a potential threat to the viability of the three-party coalition of Betancourt, who has admitted that Castro supporters in Venezuela are causing difficulties for the Caracas government. Among the strong political groups seeking closer Venezuelan-Cuban ties are the dissident leftist wing which recently broke away from Betancourt's own Democratic Action party, the principal Venezuelan labor organization, the Communists, and the Democratic Republican Union, which is a dissatisfied member of the government coalition.

