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SNIE 86.2-1-66

23 June 1966

SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

SECURITY CONDITIONS
IN THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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Submitted by

W. Raborn

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Concurred in by the

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

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23 June 1966

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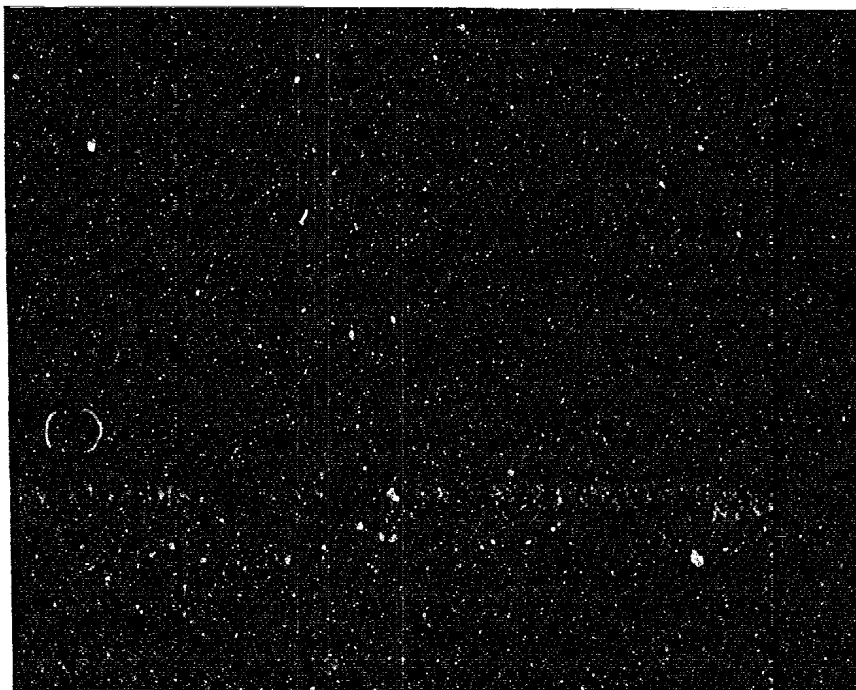
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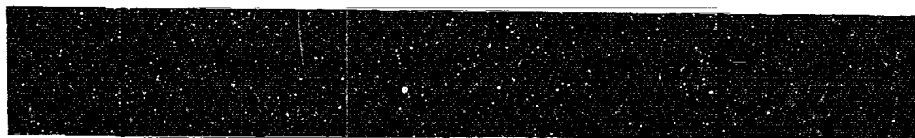


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

23 June 1966

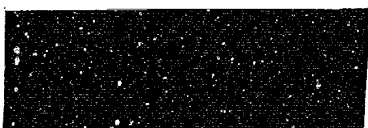
SUBJECT: SNIE 86.2-1-66: SECURITY CONDITIONS IN THE DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the likelihood of incidents which would endanger or
embarrass Vice President Humphrey during his visit to the Dominican
Republic.

CONCLUSION

We believe it more likely than not that leftist extremists will
attempt some action or demonstration to interfere with the orderly
inauguration of President-Elect Balaguer. The scope of this might range
from a minor disturbance to an assassination attempt. In view of the
rabid anti-US attitude of a number of Dominicans, there is some risk that
it might take the form of a deliberate attack on Vice President Humphrey
or of a terrorist act, such as a bomb throwing, which might endanger him.

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We believe that the Dominican security forces would resist strongly any attempt to disrupt the inauguration or to embarrass the Vice President, but they are not capable of fully effective performance against such contingencies. Indeed they might overreact to any incident.

DISCUSSION

1. [REDACTED]

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The rebellion which began in April 1965 intensified longstanding enmities among Dominicans and widened the gulf between the various conservative groupings on the one hand, and the various parties of the left on the other. Violence was gradually halted, however, and a fragile equilibrium restored under Provisional President Garcia Godoy, whose painstaking efforts received necessary support at key moments from the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF).

2. Joaquin Balaguer's election to the presidency on 1 June demonstrated the desire of most Dominicans for a return to peace and order. But there are significant elements on the extreme left -- and a few on the extreme right as well -- who remain unreconciled to the outcome of the voting. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 1.3(a)(5)

3. Moreover, anti-US sentiment is intense among a considerable number of Dominicans, especially in the city of Santo Domingo. These people regard the US as responsible for sustaining the 30-year Trujillo tyranny, with which Balaguer was associated, and they bitterly resent the US military intervention in 1965, which they believe had the effect of preventing the restoration of Bosch to the presidency to which he had been legitimately elected in 1962. Many such people regard Balaguer as a US puppet who in effect was imposed on them by force of arms; to them the attendance of a US official of such high rank as the Vice President at Balaguer's inauguration would seem a provocation to demonstrate their repudiation, not only of Balaguer, but also of his presumed subservience to the US.

4. The Dominican security forces are now better-led and somewhat more capable than when they failed to cope with the 1965 revolt, but they continue to be less effective and more resented than are most security forces in Latin American countries. The problem they have of maintaining order is a particularly nasty one. One consequence of the rebellion was

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that extremist elements, particularly those of the left, still retain considerable quantities of weapons, ammunition, and explosives. These extreme leftists, who played a leading role on the "constitutionalist" side when the fighting was at its height, acquired seasoning under fire and specialized training in urban terrorist techniques. Certain groups on the extreme right have also showed their capabilities for terrorist operations, principally during the pre-election period when they attacked members of Bosch's PRD and former "constitutionalist" military figures.

5. Thus a number of groups in the Dominican Republic have the motivation and the capability to undertake an action which could endanger or embarrass Vice President Humphrey. The most likely perpetrators would be from the Communist-led 14th of June Revolutionary Movement, but activists from either of the two small Communist parties -- the Dominican Popular Movement and the Dominican Communist Party -- might take the lead instead.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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6. It would appear that coolly calculating extreme leftists might conclude that it would be more to their advantage to lie low during the period of inauguration. The 14th of June Movement was permitted to participate actively in the elections, and Balaguer may have to determine early

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in his administration whether or not he will continue to allow it to operate legally. Similarly, the extreme left realizes that there are those in the military and police who would be happy to have an excuse to crack down on them. On the other hand, their past record indicates that these elements are moved more by zeal and impulse than by calculation. If the Balaguer government is to be discredited, some may feel that his inauguration, when high-ranking government officials from many countries of the hemisphere will be present, is an opportune time. Any move directed against Balaguer which forced the IAPF to intervene would "reveal" him as dependent on foreign bayonets.

7. On balance, we believe that the leaders of the organized leftist groups would prefer at this time not to incur the wrath of the new Dominican government and the Dominican military or to risk involving the IAPF. The greater danger, therefore, seems to be from some action by an individual or undisciplined group of the extreme left. The chances of an action undertaken by an extreme-rightist group would seem to be much less, although there are rightist fanatics almost as sharply opposed to Balaguer as to Bosch.

8. Since the capabilities of the extreme leftists are largely confined to Santo Domingo itself, the Dominican authorities will have latitude to bring in substantial numbers of additional security personnel to augment the more than 12,000 already there. The task facing the Dominican security

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forces with respect to protection of Vice President Humphrey is simplified to some extent in that the various ceremonies connected with the inauguration will all be held on 30 June and 1 July. Yet several of the ceremonies will take place at the National Palace, close to the former "constitutionalist" zone, and one will be held in the cathedral in a congested area of the zone itself.

9. The Dominican leaders will not want the IAPF to play a visible part in security arrangements, on the ground that this would derogate Dominican sovereignty. Nevertheless, IAPF contingents are located just outside the city and could be brought to the scene in a short time in the event of a spreading demonstration or melee.

Prospects

10. We think it more likely than not that extremist elements, probably from one or more of the leftist groups, will attempt an action or demonstration to interfere with orderly inauguration proceedings. The scope of this might range from a minor disturbance to an actual attempt to kill Balaguer. There is some risk that it might take the form of an attack on Vice President Humphrey or of a terrorist act such as a bomb-throwing which could endanger him. The possibility of a deliberate attempt to assassinate him -- by an individual sniper -- cannot be ruled out. There is also some chance that protest demonstrations which began peacefully could get out of hand to a dangerous extent.

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11. We believe that the Dominican security forces would resist strongly any attempt to disrupt the inauguration or to embarrass the Vice President, but they are not capable of fully effective performance against such contingencies. Indeed they might overreact to a minor incident, firing unnecessarily into a crowd, and thus create a much more serious situation.

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