

31

**Secret**

25X1



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Memorandum

THE DOMINICAN POLITICAL SITUATION  
ON THE EVE OF THE SUMMIT

State Dept. review completed

**Secret**

23

7 April 1967  
No. 0801/67

## WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

GROUP 1  
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC  
DOWNGRADING AND  
DECLASSIFICATION

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
7 April 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Dominican Political Situation  
on the Eve of the Summit

SUMMARY

Political tensions are on the rise in Santo Domingo and the situation is sufficiently fragile in the Dominican Republic that the regime's stability could be threatened with little warning. There are no signs at present, however, that anti-Balaguer elements plan to move during the President's attendance at the hemisphere summit conference in Uruguay next week. There are, however, deep tensions in the country that are certain to cause Balaguer serious trouble in the near future.

NOTE: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of Research and Reports, the Office of National Estimates, and the clandestine services.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

1. Balaguer's scheduled journey to the summit conference next week in Punta del Este comes at a time when Dominican political tensions are on the rise. The attempted assassination of Antonio Imbert on 21 March and its aftermath have added new dimensions to the divisive issue of "trujilloism" that could disrupt the regime's fragile political stability.

The Aftermath of the Imbert Affair

2. The attack on Imbert, one of Trujillo's assassins, followed a series of charges--some of them well founded--that Balaguer was employing "trujillista" personnel and tactics in his government. The Communist and non-Communist left have made such accusations the focal point of their criticism since last fall. Recently, elements of the anti-Trujillo right--the political aggregation that governed the country during the 1962 Council of State and during the Reid administration that preceded the 1965 revolt--have picked up the theme. Thus, the attack on Imbert produced expressions of distress, consternation, and outrage from these elements; moreover suspicions immediately developed that the assailants were in or sheltered by the government.

3. Balaguer moved quickly to forestall immediate serious antigovernment repercussions from the incident. He announced that a special, high-level commission would investigate the assault, established a \$25,000 reward for information on the would-be assassins, and voiced his personal repudiation of the attack. His most dramatic step, however, was the appointment of the other surviving assassin of Trujillo, Luis Amiama Tio, to the sensitive post of minister of interior and police. Amiama, who saw in the attack a danger to his own personal security, agreed to take the post on condition that he be given a free hand to conduct the investigation.

4. Although the appointment at least temporarily silenced criticism of Balaguer from most quarters, it planted the seeds of discord within

25X1

SECRET

the government. Amiama, who is not identified with the more extreme and intractable right, had become increasingly disenchanted with Balaguer over the last few months. He has privately voiced concern over the President's methods and tactics, which he finds reminiscent of those of the late dictator, and has demonstrated a deep sensitivity over the presence in the government of some unsavory leftovers from the Trujillo era. In particular, he has singled out Balaguer's coterie of palace aides for criticism. At the top of Amiama's "bad guy" list is controversial presidential aide Colonel Nivar, but close behind are "special intelligence adviser" Perez-Sosa and legal adviser Polibio Diaz. The background of Balaguer's personal bodyguard and adviser, Melido Marte, suggests why Amiama and others are upset. In 1961 Marte was described as "a poorly educated strong-arm thug who is trusted by the Trujillo family." Although Balaguer occasionally has voiced dissatisfaction over the often independent conduct of such aides as these, he apparently regards such long-time supporters as completely loyal to him and is reluctant to sever ties with them.

5. In accepting the cabinet post, Amiama said he would work for the elimination or downgrading of "trujillista" officials. He quickly came into conflict with one enemy, police chief Tejeda, whom he accused of "unjustifiable errors" in the investigation of the Imbert shooting and in effect pressed Balaguer to dismiss him. The replacement, General Soto, however, was once police chief under Trujillo, is considered incompetent and dishonest, and has had close ties with those officials Amiama finds so objectionable. It may well be that Balaguer named Soto to balance Amiama's influence. In any event, Amiama's handling of the investigation and the direct control he would like to exercise over the police seems likely to bring him into conflict with Soto, who has already said he is unaware of any police deficiencies in the Imbert case.

6. The new minister of interior and police has already come into conflict with Balaguer over the disposition of outgoing police chief Tejeda. Amiama has threatened to resign unless Balaguer, who had named Tejeda to his palace staff, removes the ex-police chief from active duty. If Amiama resigns, this might be followed by the resignation of his brother--Foreign Affairs Minister Fernando Amiama Tio (who is slated to be a member of the Dominican summit delegation)--and be accompanied by a great glare of publicity and bitter recriminations. Some weeks before the attack on Imbert, Amiama threatened that if Balaguer forced an open break with him he would have no alternative but to make common cause with other anti-"trujillista" elements of both the left and right--including the left-of-center Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) and the Communists. In fact, Amiama already has held a series of meetings with the PRD secretary general over the past two months.

7. Imbert himself may pose additional political problems as he recovers from his wounds. Even more rightist and opportunistic than Amiama, he had been sounding out various political elements with regard to an anti-Balaguer coalition when the assassination attempt boosted his popular image. Imbert's heroics after the attack--such as the driving of his own car to the hospital while wounded in both shoulders--probably elicited admiration in certain circles, including the military. Amiama's concern over Imbert's ambitions may have been behind his suggestion to the US Embassy that Imbert be invited to the US for medical treatment. Such a move would remove one irritant from the scene, at least for a while.

#### Attitudes Among the Military

8. The attack and resulting investigation has introduced an element of strain into Balaguer's relations with the military. Minister of Defense Perez has said that the intense investigation Amiama has conducted within the armed services has produced some resentment among military officers who remain jealous of their prerogatives and

privileges. This could provide an opening for disgruntled military officers, such as those whose political cliques have been disrupted by Balaguer or who have been removed from choice assignments, to coalesce under the guise of protecting the military establishment. Another factor for instability would develop if military elements came to believe that Balaguer's performance in a period of political turmoil showed irresolution and vacillation.

#### Other Political Factors

9. These various charges and maneuvers on the issue of trujilloism are taking place against a mixed pattern of other developments, some favorable and some adverse for the Balaguer government. On the one hand, the left-of-center political parties--particularly those on the extreme left--are in serious disagreement and disarray. On the other hand, they have been keeping up a drumfire of criticism of Balaguer for the failure of his government to control and prevent violence. Particularly active in this role are the radical leaders of the PRD who succeeded Juan Bosch when he went into voluntary exile in Europe. Government officials continue to provide the left with new ammunition for their charges; most recently the government's director of telecommunications was accused of armed assault for entering a PRD-oriented radio station on 29 March and destroying transmitting equipment.

10. Balaguer has had considerable success in reducing the influence of the PRD and of the extreme leftist parties in the labor movement. There is strong labor resentment, however, over the government's wage freezes. The Dominican President has managed to wean some moderates away from the PRD, and so far the small Revolutionary Social Christian Party has adhered to a policy of "constructive opposition." On the other hand, the Social Christians have recently suggested they would abandon that policy unless Balaguer allows their party a more influential role, and the PRD has said it will not support the government in the event of a coup.

The Economic Scene

11. Economic developments have not helped to offset Balaguer's political problems. In fact, available signs indicate that the pace of economic activity has been disappointing thus far this year. This sluggishness has taken place against a background of high and chronic unemployment, and potentially explosive social conditions, particularly in Santo Domingo. Further, the persistent balance of payments deficit has recently shown signs of getting worse and the inflation potential may be growing because of the current trend toward increased government deficits. These economic problems will require politically difficult policy choices involving further import restrictions, higher taxes, and devaluation. Uncertainties over the economy's short-term future compound the problem of choosing among these alternatives.

The Outlook

12. All things considered, the difficulties facing Balaguer seem serious but not yet critical. There are no indications that antigovernment elements are planning to take advantage of Balaguer's expected absence during the summit meeting, but there are deep currents of tension and emotion within the government that could suddenly surface without warning. In addition, Vice President Lora is neither widely respected nor considered to possess great political acumen, and someone could try to test his control of the situation.

13. Balaguer probably believes that he can reap domestic political dividends from the summit trip in the form of favorable publicity; he may hope to establish an image as a recognized hemisphere statesman. He is likely to seek assurances of continued US economic and political backing-- a factor that carries considerable weight with many potential Dominican dissidents.



**Secret**

**Secret**

**25X1**

**Approved For Release 2007/02/08 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010031-2**

**Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt**

**Approved For Release 2007/02/08 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010031-2**

**SECRET**

25X1

7 April 1967

**Talking Paper for DDI Memorandum, The Dominican Political Situation on the Eve of the Summit**

1. This memorandum discusses the current fragile political situation in the Dominican Republic and the problems which could arise while President Balaguer is attending the Punta del Este summit meeting. Although tensions are on the rise in Santo Domingo, and the situation is sufficiently fragile that the regime's stability could be threatened with little advance warning, we believe that anti-Balaguer elements are not presently planning to take advantage of the President's absence. There are, however, deep currents of tension in the country which are bound to cause Balaguer serious trouble in the near future.

2. This memorandum was coordinated with the clandestine services, ONE, and ORR. We recommend it receive routine dissemination both inside and outside the Agency.

**SECRET**

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2007/02/08 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010031-2

Approved For Release 2007/02/08 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010031-2