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REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE
SITUATION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

1. The following information on recent developments in the Dominican Republic has been received from the Office of my Representative there.
2. On 19 December 1965, new serious incidents erupted in Santiago, the second largest city of the country, and in Santo Domingo.
3. The main disturbances took place early in the morning of 19 December in Santiago, where several hundred former "Constitutionalists", including Colonel Francisco Caamaño, arrived in a convoy of some 100 cars to attend a memorial mass held at 0700 hours.
4. While the "Constitutionalists" were at the cemetery, a crude bomb was discovered nearby and was defused. A second bomb was later also discovered before it could cause harm. The first shots were fired, without casualties, soon after the visit of the "Constitutionalists" to the cemetery. When the group repaired to the Hotel Matón for breakfast at about 0900 hours, a large number of Dominican Air Force troops surrounded the building and began firing heavily at the hotel. The "Constitutionalists" returned the fire. The shooting reached its climax when two truckloads of Dominican troops, with four tanks, arrived from the Santiago Air Base. The number of the attacking troops was believed to be about 350 in the final stage. Both sides suffered casualties and the number of killed was later reported to be twenty-two, including Colonel Juan María Lora Fernández, former "Constitutionalist" Chief of Staff, who was killed by tank fire inside the hotel.
5. On learning of this incident, President García Godoy requested assistance from the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF), which early in the afternoon of 19 December dispatched detachments by road and by air, including a group of helicopters, to Santiago to restore order there and assist in the return of the "Constitutionalists" to the capital. When the IAPF troops arrived at the hotel at approximately 1530 hours, their officer-in-command negotiated a cease-fire in order to evacuate civilians from the battle area and then placed his troops between the opposing forces.

6. The Dominican troops withdrew to the Santiago Air Base at about 1300 hours while the IAFP took over the area of the Hotel Matón. At the time of writing of this report all "Constitutionalists" had left Santiago and the remains of Colonel Lora Fernández had arrived in Santo Domingo.
7. Following the Santiago incident, the population in Santo Domingo, unnerved by rumours, became tense. Angry crowds gathered in various parts of the city on the afternoon of 19 December and violence erupted in many areas. Cars were burned and roads were blocked by obstacles and oil-soaked straw. Angry crowds attacked the newspaper Listín Diario and two radio stations. Rifle and machine-gun fire was heard intermittently throughout the city, especially in the vicinity of district police stations. The disturbances in Santo Domingo resulted in casualties, including three killed, two of whom were policemen. After 1600 hours, most of the capital was being actively patrolled by mixed elements of the IAFP and the Dominican Armed Forces, which appeared to be in complete control of the city and its approaches.
8. In the afternoon of 19 December, the Government broadcast repeated messages asking the population to stay indoors, to disregard rumours and to remain calm. At 2240 hours, the Government issued a communiqué stating that the situation in Santiago had returned to normal. The communiqué also indicated that tension in Santo Domingo had diminished. The Government appointed a Committee to carry out a full investigation into the Santiago incident, composed of the Vice-President and Minister of the Interior, Mr. Manuel Joaquín Castillo, the Attorney-General, Mr. Gustavo Goriez Ceara and the Minister without Portfolio, Mr. Fidel Méndez Núñez. The Committee left for Santiago on 20 December and was instructed to report to the President within seventy-two hours.
9. As of 2330 hours, on 19 December, both Santo Domingo and Santiago were relatively calm, but uncertainty and confusion continued. On 20 December, the situation in the capital remained tense. The sugar workers refrained from going to work and employees of several ministries stayed away from their desks. The sugar workers threatened the Government with a new strike if the heads of the three Armed Services and of the National Police as well as the Secretary of Armed Forces were not immediately rescued.
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