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Political party opposition in Latin America : the PRD, Joaquín Balaguer and politics in the Dominican Republic, 1966-1973.

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POLITICAL PARTY OPPOSITION IN LATIN AMERICA
THE PRD, JOAQUÍN BALAGUER AND POLITICS
IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1966-1973

A Dissertation Presented

by

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For my wife, Carol

PREFACE

This thesis examines political party opposition in the Dominican Republic. The major focus of this study is on the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) as it operated since the 1966 presidential elections. The examination of the PRD was undertaken because of a definite void in the study of opposition politics in Latin America. Also, the investigation of the PRD in Dominican politics serves as a means of exploring the problems involved with forming and utilizing democratic institutions and procedures in order to cope with or control conflicts between the government and opposition groups.

The bulk of the research for this study of the Dominican Republic and the PRD was conducted in the summer of 1972 when this writer interviewed a number of Party leaders and those with a working knowledge of Dominican politics. While in the Dominican Republic extensive research was also undertaken at the Archivo Nacional where secondary sources such as newspapers, magazines and documents were examined. The actual writing of the thesis was accomplished in 1973 and 1974 with the aid of current news reports and analyses to help keep abreast with the constantly changing political climate in the Dominican Republic.

In order to compile the data and complete this study, it is necessary to extend gratitude to a number of very helpful and concerned people. Special gratitude goes out to those PRD members, especially Casimiro Castro, Emmanual Espinal and Rueben Suro, who answered questions and gave up their time to aid an inquisitive graduate student. Thanks also goes to the United States Embassy Staff, especially Charles Blum who was most cooperative and expanded my understanding of Dominican politics. Senor Julio Julia of the Archivo Nacional and his staff must also be thanked for their gracious hospitality.

A study such as this is not only the result of personal interviews and library research, but also of encouragement, kindness and criticism from a number of very concerned and considerate colleagues. Initial thanks must go to Professors Edward Williams and Harry Kantor who were instrumental in directing me toward an academic career with an interest in Latin American politics. Professors Harvey Kline and Jane Loy must also be singled out as quite helpful in reading and criticizing the final draft of the thesis. The person most deserving of my thanks and admiration is Professor Howard Wiarda. His constant help and attention from the early days of planning to the guided tour of the Dominican Republic to the tedious work of writing and rewriting were invaluable. Without exaggeration this thesis

would not be possible if not for Professor Wiarda's guidance. Also I want to thank my typist, Barbara Doten, for her invaluable assistance. Finally, very special thanks go out to my parents for their loving encouragement and my wife, Carol, for her patient understanding during the writing of this dissertation.

Political Party Opposition in Latin America
The PRD, Joaquín Balaguer and Politics in the Dominican Republic 1966-1972 (February 1975)

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This study seeks to describe and analyze the interaction of the opposition Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) with the government of Joaquín Balaguer in the most recent period of Dominican history, 1966-1973. The major concern in the examination of opposition-government interaction is to determine the general character of the PRD response to the policies and actions of the Balaguer regime. In the Dominican political system, where the once powerful PRD was relegated to a secondary position and the government showed little regard for the guarantees and procedures of democratic opposition, the subject of opposition-government serves as a helpful guide for judging the role and current status of political parties, traditional leadership patterns and Anglo-American style democracy.

The investigation of the PRD opposition to the Balaguer government is presented from four research perspectives. Because the PRD envisioned itself as a revolutionary party of social change and therefore posed a threat

to the Balaguer regime, Party leaders, especially the former PRD president of the country, Juan Bosch, were continuously concerned with formulating and expounding a number of strategic positions that would serve as a means of responding to governmental initiatives. These strategic alternatives caused a wide range of discussion and dissension in the Party ranks, especially with regard to Bosch's controversial thesis of "Dictatorship with Popular Support" which advocated complete rejection of the Balaguerian political system.

As a corollary to the PRD strategic alternatives, the Party engaged in a wide array of opposition tactics that served to visibly remind the Balaguer government that the PRD was still active and able to challenge the regime. The tactics of the legislative walk-out, nationwide education, street marches, and radio broadcasts of Juan Bosch were but some of the overt responses of the PRD to the Balaguer government.

The strategic and tactical responses of the PRD not only lengthened the gap between opposition and government, but caused serious disruptions within the PRD ranks. From 1966-1973 the Party seemed constantly in the throes of an internal rebellion between moderate, pro-democratic activists and radical abstentionists. The in-fighting eventually led to the resignation of Juan Bosch and the splitting of the

PRD into two distinct parties.

While the PRD was concerned with the matter of internal dissension, the Balaguer government was quite active in attempting to decrease the Party's power. President Balaguer in conjunction with his close aides, military advisors and National Police lieutenants began a successful three-pronged attack on the PRD. In an attempt to weaken the influence of the PRD in Dominican society, the Balaguer regime began full scale efforts to (1) depoliticize the pro-PRD support through massive economic programs; (2) subvert PRD leaders, associations and policy alternatives by clever use of bribery, infiltration and public relations techniques; and (3) repress known PRD activists with a long list of terror tactics.

Faced with a governmental regime that was intent on solidifying its hold on the Dominican political system and on internal leadership structure rent with factionalism, the PRD since 1966 has shown definite signs of a gradual but persistent decline in political influence and opposition effectiveness. At the heart of the PRD's problem in the Dominican Republic is the ability of President Balaguer to mix and balance the Anglo-American democratic institutional structures (a constitution, parties, elections, legislatures) with the more traditional elements of Spanish rule such as paternalistic leadership, strong military collaboration in

government, vigorous suppression of human rights and consistently conservative policy-making.

The PRD, which has a long history of respect for Anglo-American democracy, has had to face the reality of a political system that, although visually democratic, deprives the Party of the ability to effectively challenge the ruling regime. President Balaguer has brought a "new look" to the political system with his introduction of a democratic framework and full-scale economic development. Unfortunately for the PRD, President Balaguer has not forgotten the manner in which the dictator Trujillo handled the opposition. As a result the PRD has had to pay a high price for remaining an opposition party in the Dominican Republic.

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CHAPTER I

LATIN AMERICAN OPPOSITION: AN INTRODUCTION

The study of Latin American politics and political behavior has traditionally been approached with general uneasiness and a great deal of apprehension. Those schooled in the institutional and procedural framework of Anglo-American democracy are often baffled by the maze of coup d'états, civil wars, assassinations, guerrilla uprisings, student demonstrations, and general strikes that are so prevalent in this region. This unique atmosphere of conflict and confrontation has caused some uninitiated observers of Latin American politics to characterize the activity within the political arena as "unpredictable," "unexplainable," or even "mysterious."[1]

Faced with this constantly reoccurring situation of rampant instability in Latin America, those interested in the politics of this area have long sought to explain the history

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[1]For perhaps the best introduction to the Latin American political tradition which may help to clear up many of the misconceptions about the character of politics in this region see Howard Wiarda's article, "Toward a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Ibero-Latin Tradition - The Corporative Model" in World Politics, January, 1973. See also Lawrence Graham's unpublished article, "Latin America - Illusion or Reality: A Case for a New Analytic Framework for the Region (Unpublished paper, Department of Government, University of Texas, 1969).

of governmental unrest and thereby put an end to many of the more common stereotypes about political power and leadership change. In this study of the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD), President Balaguer, and Dominican politics since 1966 an attempt will be made to examine and make some judgements on one of the commonly held reasons for Latin American instability--the constant struggle between the opposition groups outside of political power and the governing regime that controls political power.[2]

The conflict between opposition and government is perhaps as old as Latin America itself, indeed as old as "the political system." Since this region was discovered conflict has emerged as a normal adjunct of political behavior. Witness the antagonism between Indian and explorer, King and creole, Liberal and Conservative, landowner and campesino, left-wing guerrillas and right-wing military officers as examples of the dynamic tension that has constantly surfaced in Latin America. A study of the PRD in Dominican politics would thus seek to add a new chapter to this ongoing historical process of interaction and conflict between those

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[2]The struggle between opposition and government is discussed in a more theoretical manner in an interesting chapter entitled "Some Theoretical Dimensions of the Idea of the Enemy" by David Finlay in Enemies in Politics, David Finlay, Ole Holsti, Richard Fagen (New York: Rand McNally, 1969).

on the fringes of national power and those who are the dominant political force.[3]

The task of analyzing PRD opposition in the present Dominican administration of Joaquín Balaguer has been eased somewhat by the work of a number of scholars interested in the peculiarities of Latin American politics and the "rules of the game" that contribute to this unique political behavior. The writings of two American political scientists, Charles Anderson and Kalman Silvert, are the most illuminating with regard to the problem of opposition-government conflict and the instability that it stimulates. Both scholars have earned high praise for their ability to make sense out of the so-called "mysterious" nature of Latin American politics.

Anderson posits the theory that a lack of political legitimacy is at the heart of Latin America's chaotic internal situation.[4] The fact that elections do not serve as the final determination of political victory and that a number

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[3]A fuller discussion of the problem of oppositions in Latin America is provided by Robert Dix in a paper entitled "Oppositions and Development in Latin America," a paper prepared for delivery at the 1967 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, September, 1967.

[4]"Toward a Theory of Latin American Politics," Occasional Paper No. 2, Graduate Center for Latin American Studies, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee (February, 1964) and also published in his book Politics and Economic Change in Latin America (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1967), Chapter 4.

of "power contenders" are ever anxious to ascend to political power by means other than elections has now been accepted as a key interpretation of the structure and process of Latin American politics. As Anderson relates, power is not exchanged in a formal, procedural, and electoral manner in Latin America as is the case in many Western nations; power is rather won through some show of force which alerts society to the importance and dominance of the "power contender." Latin American society thus has no tradition of a "loyal" opposition, as in the Anglo-American tradition, nor does it have the support for the passive acceptance of periodic transfers of national power. The Latin American tradition appears to be that of a zero-sum-adversary system in which political power is attained and maintained by the dominant "power contender" through vigorous, and at times merciless, attacks on the opposition. The unwritten law of the Latin American political system seems to be respect the power of the winner and keep the opposition in check.

The theories of Anderson go a long way toward explaining what seems like errant, irrational behavior in Latin American politics. As Anderson describes, politics in this region follows a very understandable course provided one recognizes the unique interaction between opposition and government and the overall weakness of democratic institutions and practice.

Another noted Latin American scholar, Kalman Silvert, expands upon Anderson's "power contender" thesis by suggesting that instability in Latin American politics is often vital to the development of these modernizing societies.[5] Silvert shows that the so-called "unpredictability" commonly associated with politics in this region is wrongly understood. To Silvert there is a great deal of rational behavior in the constant fluctuations prevalent in Latin American politics. As Silvert relates,

> "Unpredictable" and "unstable" are the two adjectives most often applied to Latin American politics. The implication of both pejoratives are partially erroneous. As a matter of fact, one of the easiest things to predict is instability itself. And second, some types of revolutionary disturbance do not indicate instability. If the normal way of rotating the executive in a given country is by revolution, . . . then it is not facetious to remark that revolutions are a sign of stability.[6]

Silvert like Anderson is attempting to show his readers the importance of viewing Latin American politics from a Latin American perspective. Without some appreciation for the fundamental differences in Latin American culture and society, a truly realistic appraisal of politics and political behavior in this region will never be attained.

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[5]Kalman Silvert, The Conflict Society: Reaction and Revolution in Latin America (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1966), Chapters 1, 2, and 17.

[6]Ibid., p. 19.

The traditions of elite control, authoritarian dictatorship, paternalistic leadership, opposition conflict, and frequent instability necessitate that those studying Latin American societies do not approach their task with the biases of Anglo-American representative democracy, change by regular elections, and general acceptance of the governmental framework.[7]

Although Anderson and Silvert are at the forefront of this movement to explain the conflict prevalent in Latin American politics, their studies do not complete the examination of the unique quality of politics found in this region. The major interest of these writers is in forming theoretical interpretations of Latin American instability without really explaining the intricate complex of social, economic, and political factors that are involved in specific, country-by-country opposition to the governing regime.

In order to investigate more precisely the interactions between the opposition groups and the government Merle Kling and Kenneth Johnson have devoted considerable

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[7]For excellent discussion of the historical roots of the traditional practices of Latin American politics see Glen Dealy, "Prolegomence on the Spanish American Political Tradition," Hispanic American Historical Review 48 (February 1968); Lyle N. McAlister, "Social Structure and Social Change in New Spain," Hispanic American Historical Review 43 (August 1963) and Ronald C. Newton, "On Functional Groups, Fragmentation and Pluralism in Spanish American Political Society," Hispanic American Historical Review 50 (February 1970).

attention to the causes of political instability in Latin America. Kling posits the view that instability is the result of a rigid socioeconomic structure in Latin America which forces individuals and groups who seek status and financial security to grab hold of the reins of government.[8] Kling feels that to many Latin American "out" groups the quickest way to position and power is by attaining political dominance.

Johnson expands upon Kling's thesis by examining what he believes to be three crucial sources of political instability. Johnson sees entrepreneurial deficiencies (passive and so-called "flight" capital), a high degree of substitutability (a lack of administrative specialization) and accelerated urbanization and overpopulation as the primary determinants of political instability. All these factors coalesce to form a large group of dissatisfied, change oriented, and power hungry groups who constantly challenge highly fragile political systems.[9]

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[8]Merle Kling, "Toward a Theory of Power and Political Instability in Latin America," Western Political Quarterly 9 (March 1956): 21-35. See also Martin Needler's Political Development in Latin America: Instability, Violence and Evolutionary Change (New York: Random House, 1968).

[9]Kenneth F. Johnson, "Causal Factors in Latin American Political Instability," Western Political Quarterly 17 (September 1964): 432-466.

Despite the efforts of Kling and Johnson to narrow the examination of opposition conflict with the governing regime, a full and complete understanding of the interaction between those out of power and those in power in Latin American politics is still lacking. What has not been attempted in any great detail up to the present is an investigation of the operational aspects of opposition conflict with the governing regime. In simple language it is time that scholars of Latin American politics seek to answer the question of how the opposition "power contenders" operate in a specific political system and how the governmental leaders of that political system respond to the maneuvers of the "out" groups.

It must be emphasized initially that in some areas of Latin American studies a sophisticated examination of opposition forces is already underway. Spurred on by the seminal work of Robert Dahl and others, scholars have begun the investigation of the role and activities of Latin American oppositions.[10] There has been considerable work undertaken with regard to the premier "opposition group" in Latin

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[10]Robert Dahl, Political Oppositions in Western Democracies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966) and his most recent volume edited with Samuel Huntington entitled Regimes and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973). See also Ghita Ionescu's and Isabel de Madariaga's Opposition: Past and Present of a Political Institution (London: Watts, 1968). For a view of Opposition in the Third World see Edward Shils, "Opposition in the New States of Asia and Africa," and Hans Daadler, "Government and Opposition in the New States," both in Government and Opposition, February, 1966.

America--the armed forces. The literature available on the armed forces seeks to examine key topics of opposition behavior like strategies and tactics of opposition to the existing regime, internal conflict within the armed forces over the shape of the opposition role, and the reaction in government and society to military opposition policies.[11] Unfortunately, even though this area of Latin American military operations is coming under greater scrutiny, much of the research emphasis still remains on topics of social mobilization within the ranks, increasing professionalization, modernizing roles and the like.

When one moves from these studies of the armed forces as an opposition group to the other societal groups in Latin America like student associations, labor unions, middle class organizations, and particularly political parties, it becomes extremely difficult to find adequate research which seeks to uncover the structure and activities of these "power contenders."[12] Many times the literature dealing with these established urban groups and their politics has been

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[11]See for example Alfred Stepan, The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971). See also Robert Potash, The Army and Politics in Argentina 1928-1945 (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1969).

[12]See for example Orlando Albonez, "Student Opposition in Latin America," Government and Opposition, November, 1966 and James Payne's excellent discussion of labor opposition in Peru, Labor and Politics in Peru (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

overshadowed by the more spectacular activities of rural peasant unions and guerrilla groups who have been quite vocal in the recent era.[13] The interest rural opposition receives coupled with the pervasive nature of military intervention often leaves the urban groups to be viewed as extraneous or secondary to the normal flow of politics in Latin America.

The sparsity of data with regard to political party opposition in Latin America is particularly surprising. Although the military is often the most visible and successful "out" group, and the revolutionary guerrillas the most controversial opposition force, parties remain one of the few (if not the only) of the established urban-based groups in Latin America that view opposition to the governing regime as a political exercise and seek to criticize and restructure existing policy by working within a framework of Anglo-American style democracy.

The political and Anglo-American nature of party opposition in Latin America is not meant to suggest that the activity and importance of groups like students, the labor unions, and the middle class is minimal. But what is

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[13]Rodolfo Stavenhagen's edited work Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movements in Latin America (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970) provides a good discussion of peasant opposition while Richard Gott in Guerrilla Movements in Latin America (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971) offers the most comprehensive examination of guerrilla opposition.

suggested is that parties in Latin America, especially opposition parties, seek to perform an unusual and extremely difficult task as agents of political change. Parties, unlike any group in this region, (at least theoretically) seek to unify a diversity of groups and group demands and then work within the existing democratic structure to achieve a rearrangement of national power and policy alternatives.[14] In Latin America, however, where Anglo-American democracy and democratic procedure are poorly understood and rarely respected, the activity of political parties seems woefully out of place and perhaps even hopeless. The long-standing traditions of competing "power contenders" and violent shifts of political leadership make parties and elections the exception rather than the rule in the attainment of national power.

The unique function of interest aggregation in a weakly constructed democratic atmosphere that political parties are called upon to perform in Latin America thus adds a new dimension to the study of opposition politics. A group like a political party that has consistently attempted to oppose the governing regime in a manner that is unfamiliar and often not recognized in Latin America seems worthy of

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[14]A good discussion of Latin American political parties in the modern era and the problems they face can be gained by reading Robert E. Scott, "Political Parties and Policy-making in Latin America" in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, Political Parties and Political Development (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966).

much closer examination. Latin American parties by engaging in thoroughly Anglo-American activity have introduced an alternative opposition system to this region, a system that appears to challenge the accepted manner of attaining power and shifting leadership.

Before drifting more deeply into this matter of party opposition and democracy, it is essential to comment in a more detailed manner on the nature and character of democratic institutions in Latin American nations (particularly the Dominican Republic) and the difficulty involved in matching the traditional goals of Anglo-American democracy with the realities of society and politics in this area. If this study is to develop a complete analysis of party opposition in the Dominican style democracy of Joaquín Balaguer, it seems appropriate that some initial mention be made of the problems involved with relating the Anglo-American democratic framework to the sociopolitical system in the Dominican Republic.

The difficulty with examining and making judgements on democracy and democratic practice in Latin American countries like the Dominican Republic is that the above terms are understood and interpreted differently than in the United States or Great Britain. Democracy in the Anglo-American tradition means a binding respect for the law, an appreciation for constitutional structures and processes like separation of powers and checks and balances, an acceptance of

elections as the final determination of political power, a healthy encouragement of opposition activity, and, perhaps most of all, a recognition that basic human rights must be guaranteed. In the Latin American context, though, and in particular in the Dominican Republic of Joaquín Balaguer, democracy is not understood in the Anglo-American sense. Granted there is an acceptance by Balaguer of the formal signs of democracy like constitutions, parties, elections, a tripartite governing system, a loyal opposition, and a verbal pledge to respect human rights. Beneath this formality, however, one often finds in the Balaguer regime a lingering of the traditional vestiges of political behavior and governmental practice like authoritarian leadership, personalistic decision-making, vigorous suppression of legitimate dissent, and a nagging disrespect for basic human rights.

What this duality often means in Latin American countries like the Dominican Republic is that claims of democracy and democratic practice by leaders similar to Balaguer must be viewed with a great deal of suspicion. Balaguer, as will be shown, constantly characterizes his regime as democratic and actively seeks to develop the outward signs of Anglo-American democracy. Yet despite these claims and promises, all visible actions of the government point to the fact that democracy as we know it in the United States or Great Britain

is being ignored. There is ample evidence available to show that the "Balaguerian" democracy has a proclivity for breaking laws, ignoring the constitutional processes, rigging elections, suppressing the opposition, and denying human rights.

Because of the dual nature of democracy in Latin America, a number of interesting circumstances arise which must be pointed out if the PRD opposition to President Balaguer is to be understood. Firstly, the use by Balaguer of a formal governmental structure, which serves to "soften" the realities of Dominican politics, makes the task of explaining the internal mechanics of the political system quite difficult. Often times the mixture of democratic formality with authoritarian rule creates a picture of contradictions that must be sifted through in order to present the correct view of Dominican politics and policy-making. Secondly, the dual nature of Latin American democratic regimes like Balaguer's makes any group that has a respect for Anglo-American institutions and seeks to work within those institutions susceptible to intimidation and great disappointment. A group like the PRD that has a long history of respect for Anglo-American democracy (and what is more is populated by many activists who have an abiding admiration for American or British government) can become quickly disillusioned when faced with Balaguer's refusal to play by the rules of Anglo-American

democracy. Thirdly, the fact that Balaguer follows two differing roads of democracy (and furthermore firmly believes that this mixture can be termed democracy) makes him less open to criticism, especially from the outside world. Despite the constant and often reprehensible diversions from Anglo-American democracy that occur in Dominican politics, Balaguer can always point proudly to the fact that his country has a constitution, three branches of government, active political parties, open elections, a free press and a tranquil and supportive citizenry.

In a real sense the democracy--Dominican style--which will be examined in this thesis is not only a complicated mixture of form and substance, but an ingeneous formula for maintaining and expanding power. Dominican democracy is a classic example of government for appearance sake with President Balaguer serving as the master of sleight of hand.

Research on Party Opposition

Although the inherent contradictions found in political party activity, and especially opposition activity, in Latin America would seem to be an interesting research topic, there is very little in the way of scholarly involvement in this area. Paul Lewis' study of the Paraguayan Febrista party,[15] Robert Alexander's examination of the Communist

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[15]Paul Lewis, The Politics of Exile, Paraguay's Febrista Party (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966).

party in Venezuela,[16] and Donald Mabry's recent investigation of Mexico's PAN Party[17] are the most notable research efforts on political party opposition in Latin America. Added to these three specific studies of political party opposition are a dearth of other investigations of parties which incorporate in a tangential manner some discussion of opposition activity.[18]

The major problem with these studies is that for the most part they are too confined. Lewis' Febrista study is of an exile party which has not participated in Paraguayan politics for some forty years. Alexander's view of the Venezuelan Communist party is also limited in that it examines a minor revolutionary party in a political system that is the most stable in contemporary Latin America. Mabry's study of PAN concerns itself with a party that is increasing in strength, but still is not a formidable challenger of the PRI. Unfortunately there is little in the way of research

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[16]Robert Alexander, The Communist Party of Venezuela (Stanford, Cal.: Hoover Institution Press, 1969).

[17]Donald Mabry, Mexico's Accion Nacional-A Catholic Alternative to Revolution (Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1973).

[18]Good examples of such research are Harry Kantor's study of the Aprista Party in Peru entitled The Ideology and Program of the Peruvian Aprista Movement (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953) and John Martz' study of the Accion Democrática Party in Venezuela entitled Accion Democrática: Evolution of a Modern Political Party In Venezuela (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966).

that specifically examines the opposition activity of a party that is a major contender for power and has previously controlled the reins of national government.

One of the primary reasons for this omission it seems is that most Latin American scholars choose to investigate political parties at the point of highest involvement and visibility--national elections. Latin American parties are constantly examined as they organize potential voters, campaign for party candidates, formulate platforms, fill patronage positions, and deliberate in the legislative chamber. The emphasis is clearly on examining parties in power or as they seek power.

There is no question that these studies of parties at election time are most important, primarily because they reveal the intricacies of party organization at peak efficiency. Yet something is missing in a presentation of this sort. What seems to be lacking is a total analysis of the parties. Such an analysis would view the parties functioning, or trying to function, along a time span which includes more than just the preparation for national elections. What is necessary to complete the picture of Latin American parties is a view of opposition activity and behavior in the intervals between elections. Political parties must be examined when they are not in the thick of an election campaign, but are struggling to stay alive in a hostile

environment of power hungry leaders and apathetic citizens. Parties in a secondary political position, as will be shown, try much harder to perform their designated functions whether they be educating the populace, restructuring ideology, recruiting new members or financing the organizations' debts. What parties in the opposition must face, however, is a constant barrage of internal and external problems ranging from factionalism, loss of patronage, government repression and just simply a declining audience.

A useful examination of political parties is thus one in which the focus is not on the electroal winner, but on the loser whose task it is to remain a viable political force in an atmosphere frequently of intimidation, repression, organizational collapse, and public apathy. By placing emphasis on opposition party activity and behavior not only will parties be examined in a more realistic light, but closer scrutiny will be given to the unique structures and practices of Latin American leadership, policy formation, and social change. Parties will not be seen as the normal participants of politics in Latin America; but rather as "artificial" organizations that have never been recognized as the final determinators of leadership and power as in the Anglo-American tradition. In the end a complete view of an opposition party like the PRD will offer a clear guide to the strengths and weaknesses of these Western oriented agents of political change functioning in a thoroughly Latin atmosphere.

Introduction of the Two Opponents

The importance of examining in a less theoretical manner the opposition conflict with the governing regime in Latin America and the need to expand upon the existing information concerning the "operational" aspects of political party opposition brings us to the Dominican Republic and the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD). It would have been quite possible to examine the central theme of opposition versus government in another Latin American nation and within another political party that is out of power. But as will be shown below, the Dominican regime of President Joaquín Balaguer and the activities of the PRD since the elections of June, 1966 provide one of the most beneficial interactions between winner and loser that is available in contemporary Latin American politics.

The choice of the Dominican Republic, the Balaguer government, and the PRD opposition in most recent history (since 1966) is based on a number of reasons. In the first place Dominican politics from June, 1966 onward takes a new route. Prior to this date the Dominican Republic had for a full year period been in a state of constant unrest. The Dominican Republic beginning in May, 1961 experienced the assassination of its long reigning dictator, Rafael Trujillo, the initial introduction of democratic institutions, the

nation's popularly elected president in forty years (the PRD's Juan Bosch), a tragic coup against Bosch's government, a period of extreme economic stagnation, and a ravaging civil war that was only ended by a controversial United States intervention.[19]

Thus in June, 1966 the Dominican Republic could look back only on confusion, hatred, and misguided hopes. With the unfortunate events of the previous five years behind them and the desire to begin an era of peace and prosperity, the Dominican people went to the polls in June, 1966 to choose a leader. Despite the failure of democratic politics since 1961 and the almost total lack of understanding and respect for democratic institutions on the part of Dominican elites and the general public, the Dominican Republic once again followed the road of democratic practice. World opinion, political and economic pressure from the United States government, and an unquenchable desire for participation and social reorganization on the part of many new groups in society convinced Dominican elites that they must attempt a second effort at Anglo-American democracy.

Dominican leaders, it must be emphasized, were not terribly interested in forming the political system into an open, law-abiding democracy on par with the United States or

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[19]Howard Wiarda's book The Dominican Republic - Nation in Transition (New York: Praeger, 1969) offers the most comprehensive view of this historical progression.

Great Britain. They were primarily concerned with creating a political system that fulfilled the expectations of the outside world, (especially the United States government) and quieted those groups in the Domincan Republic who clamored for a government that respected parties, elections, legislatures and personal rights. The decision then to follow Anglo-American style democracy was a mere tactic, a practical means of consolidating power without alienating or arousing those elements so important for the economic redevelopment of the country. Dominican leaders, and in particular President Balaguer, were well aware that democracy in their country would have its own character and would in many ways come into conflict with the recognized norms for establishing a governmental system modeled on that of the United States or Great Britain.

In the election of 1966 Joaquín Balaguer (a former Trujillo puppet president in the last days of the dictator's power) was victorious over the reluctant PRD candidate Juan Bosch (the deposed president of the country whose revolutionary promises incurred the rath of the conservative elements in the country). With his victory assured Balaguer outwardly promised to form the Dominican Republic into a thriving democratic system and above all to strive to form a government of cooperation and conciliation in which the opposition would play a significant role. Bosch, for his part,

reluctantly promised to abide by the results of the election and to provide the Dominican governmental system with a vigorous opposition voice.

And so with Balaguer's victory and Bosch's promise the Dominican Republic set out on this strange course of building a democratic structure on top of an age old system of authoritarian rule, personalistic leadership, status quo decision-making, and suppression of all challenges to the dominant economic, social, and political forces. Although there was this pledge of democratic practice, many in the Dominican Republic wondered whether democratic institutions could curtail the ingrained hostilities stored up after years of conflict between competing classes and ideologies.

The Dominican effort in 1966 to rebuild the country after the civil war along psuedo-democratic lines thus seems to offer an excellent research area for examining the conflict between opposition and government, PRD and Balaguer. With the victory of Balaguer, Juan Bosch and the PRD assume the role of democratic opposition and begin to work within the institutional framework of Dominican politics. From 1966 onward it is possible to trace and analyze the interactions between the PRD and the Balaguer government and point out the major changes in their relationship. As will be shown, the interaction between the PRD and the Balaguer regime provides a fascinating glimpse not only of Dominican politics, but

also of the extreme hardships that an opposition party must face in a political system in which democratic institutions and practice are often mere window dressing.

But more than just analyzing the interactions of the PRD and the Balaguer regime, the investigation of Dominican politics in the contemporary period will serve as an aid to understanding a virtually unknown, yet crucial, era in this nation's history. It is the consensus of most experts that with the conclusion of the 1965 civil war the Dominican Republic entered into a new era. As the country lay in ruins after the war it was the job of Dominican leaders to pick up the pieces and redevelop the nation. Yet because of the intricacies of the civil war situation and the added involvement of the United States, journalists and scholars have taken considerable interest in the pre-1966 period, while generally ignoring the important political activities occurring since the June, 1966 elections.[20]

The investigation of the PRD in opposition since June, 1966 will thus seek to close a quite noticeable void in political research. The study of the PRD and the Balaguer regime does not purport to be a comprehensive examination of the

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[20]There have been a few scholarly and journalistic articles on the Dominican Republic since 1966 which will be alluded to in the course of the thesis. Only one book of any consequence has been written about politics in the Dominican Republic since 1966--Carlos Maria Gutierrez' The Dominican Republic: Rebellion and Repression (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

total Dominican political system in this period, but it must be emphasized that the interactions of the PRD and the Balaguer regime go a long way toward explaining modern day Dominican politics. Because of the smallness of the nation, the bifurcation of the Dominican populace into two readily observable political camps, and the strength of the nation's two caudillos, Balaguer and Bosch, the study of the PRD and its opposition status covers most of what can be termed politics in the Dominican Republic. In fact it has been suggested somewhat facetiously that all one has to do in the Dominican Republic is listen to what Balaguer and Bosch are saying in order to determine what the tenor of politics is going to be like in the future.

Some Implications of PRD Opposition for Latin American Politics: Themes for Discussion

Although the discussion of the PRD and its interaction with the Balaguer regime is at the heart of this study, it is important to stress that the conflict between opposition and government in the Dominican Republic calls into question a number of problems in politics, social organization, and national development that are of great importance to Latin America in general. As this thesis will point out, the efforts of the PRD to develop and maintain a viable opposition in Balaguer's Dominican Republic stirs up interest as to the current influence of political parties in the Latin American

context, the continuation and sophistication of the paternalistic governing system, and the prospect for the development of Anglo-American style democratic institutions and procedures in this region. Through the interaction of the PRD and the Balaguer regime it will be possible to expand our understanding and make more concise judgements about areas of larger importance to Latin America. Furthermore, with the political situation changing rapidly in Latin America in the present era of widespread military involvement in national politics and increasing emphasis on economic modernization and technological development, it seems that the struggle of the PRD against Balaguer must be examined in a larger perspective. So as to alert the reader to the implications of the PRD-Balaguer conflict a brief introduction of the problems surrounding political party activity, paternalistic leadership, and Anglo-American democracy in Latin America is provided below.

The fate of Latin American political parties. The opposition dilemma of the PRD, although in some respects unique to the Dominican political system, cannot be divorced from a lessening of the influence and effectiveness of party organization in modern day Latin America. The rise in modernizing demands, the expanded role of the military, and the general failure of liberal democratic leadership has left parties and party systems in dire straits. There is ample

supporting evidence to show that political parties which once were at the forefront of national power are no longer central to the development process in Latin America.[21] New elites (or perhaps the old elites in "new clothing") have sprung up to challenge the onetime dominance of political party elites and to offer alternative roads to national integration, leadership recruitment, interest articulation, and policy implementation. The failure of political parties in Latin America has even caused some scholars to comment on what can only be termed the "death" of party politics in this region.[22]

Despite these gloomy statements and predictions about the declining influence of political parties, there are those who still feel that parties can continue to play a role in the changing tenor of politics and economic development that is engulfing Latin America. Political parties, according to these analysts, must strive to develop their capacity for integrating Latin American populations and for channeling the interests of the people to the centers of power. What parties must come to realize, however, is that the chance of

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[21]See Douglas Chalmers, "Parties and Society in Latin America," paper presented at the American Political Science Association meeting in Washington, D.C., September, 1968.

[22]An example of such writing can be found in Susan Bodenheimer, "La crisis del movimiento socialdemocrata en America Latina," Estudios Internacionales (Chile) No. 12, enero-marzo, 1970, pp. 544-567.

institutionalizing democratic systems with set procedures for changing political power and guarantees that party organizations will remain at the core of the decision-making appartus is remote, if not impossible.[23]

The discussion then of the PRD opposition must be placed in the context of this current controversy over the status and role of Latin American political parties. It will be the task of this study to view not just the history of the PRD opposition to Balaguer, but to use the example of the PRD as a means of making some judgements about parties and party activity in the modernizing environment of Latin America. Party oppositions like the PRD can in a real sense serve as a kind of political barometer. If the PRD, despite its problems with the Balaguer regime, shows itself to be a generally strong, active, and influential force in Dominican politics, it might be necessary to reevaluate some of the warnings currently in vogue about the decline of party dominance in Latin America. If on the other hand the PRD, because of governmental pressure, shows itself to be a weak organization and unable to challenge Balaguer, then it becomes necessary to pay more attention to those who question the viability of political parties in modern day Latin America.

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[23]Scott, "Political Parties and Policy-making in Latin America."

The emerging authoritarian-paternalistic leader. Besides viewing the larger implications of the PRD opposition for Latin American parties, it is important also to examine the activities of President Balaguer as an example of an emerging type of authoritarian-paternalistic leader in a tradition bound modernizing state. The system of paternalism and the paternalistic leader is of course crucial to an understanding of Latin American politics. The centralization of power in the hands of one "patron" figure who deals out favors to his supporters and admonishes (or terrorizes) his detractors has been in evidence throughout the history of Latin American society.[24] The Dominican heritage is likewise replete with evidence of the paternalistic leader and the undying influence that he has had on future generations.

The traditional element of paternalism in Latin America, though, does not mean that this form of leadership and control cannot change and modernize in order to meet the new demands of a new era. It will thus be the task of this thesis to examine not only the PRD opposition, but President Balaguer as an example of a modern paternalistic leader who has improved and expanded the techniques of power politics

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[24]An analysis of paternalistic leadership and administration can be found in Magali Sarfatti, Spanish Bureaucratic-Patrimonialism in America (Berkeley: Institute for International Studies, University of California, 1966), and Claudio Veliz, "Centralism and Nationalism in Latin America," Foreign Affairs 47 (October 1968): 68-83.

and social control so necessary in a complex and demanding developing nation.

In many respects Balaguer can be seen as an emerging model of Latin American leadership. As the thesis will show, Balaguer has the keen ability to balance off conflicting forces in Dominican society, while at all times enhancing his own position. He is at once the savvy politician, the suave statesman, the humble public servant, and the brutal repressor. In this contradictory union is perhaps the key to understanding the new paternalistic leader in Latin America that Balaguer mirrors. Balaguer is a caudillo who has gotten off the horse and placed himself in the limosine. He has successfully bridged the gap between the militaristic patron and the modernizing administrator.

Balaguer's ability to accomplish this transition to modern leadership, while maintaining an element of traditional practice can best be seen in his interaction with the PRD opposition. The daily initiatives taken by the government against the PRD reveal the ability of Balaguer to mix repression with more modern techniques of public relations and co-optation. By thus viewing Balaguer and his response to the PRD we not only see the total picture of opposition activity in the Dominican Republic, but we also begin to recognize this new manner of conducting politics in Latin America which blends aggressive economic development with strong-willed political control.

Latin American democracy. In discussing the conflict between the PRD and Balaguer it is well near impossible to ignore the status of democracy and democratic practice in the Dominican Republic. In fact what is being examined in this study of the PRD opposition is the course of the so-called Dominican "experiment" in democracy that was initiated after the 1965 civil war. The interaction of the PRD with the Balaguer government is but one aspect of the total story of Dominican democracy in the modern period.

As alluded to earlier, the Dominican Republic in the recent era has been functioning politically under a Balaguer-designed democracy. The trappings of democracy--a constitution, a legislature, elections, parties, legalized opposition groups, and a free press--are all present in the Dominican Republic and are proudly paraded in full view for the world, and especially the United States, to see. As we will see, however, much of the Dominican "experiment" in democracy is cosmetic, as the institutional framework constructed after the 1965 civil war does not function autonomously or effectively, but responds to the encouragement and direction of President Balaguer and his supporters.

The rather weak dedication of the Balaguer regime toward democracy and democratic practice as conceived in the Anglo-American sense and by the PRD sets the stage for a fuller, more comprehensive discussion of the current status

and future possibilities of Anglo-American style democracy in Latin American societies. With the success of administrations like Balaguer's and the recent decline of democratic regimes throughout the region, Latin American politics seems to have returned to an earlier era when government was purely an exercise in authoritarianism, and democracy was hardly ever mentioned. There is in short a quite evident movement afoot in Latin America to discredit the institutions and procedures of democracy as incompatible with the traditional manner of conducting politics in this region, and moreover, detrimental to the speedy modernization of these developing nations.[25]

The dilemma of democratic failure in the Dominican Republic and in many Latin American countries calls out for an answer not only because these nations have been unwilling or unable to model their governmental structure after the United States or Great Britain, but more importantly because there are still sizeable portions of Latin American society that believe democracy and democratic practice hold the answer to the long range goals of national development and revolutionary change. Therefore, the problems of the

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[25]For some background information about the failures of democracy in Latin America, especially with regard to Western expectations about the institutionalization of democratic practice see the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), Economic Survey of Latin America 1968: Some Aspects of the Latin American Economy towards the End of the 1960's (New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1969).

democratic "experiment" in the Dominican Republic can serve as an excellent backdrop for the study of democracy and its future in Latin America. The fact that the Dominican Republic started anew in 1966 to develop a viable democratic system makes this country and its political actors probably the best and most recent guide to the pitfalls and potential of Anglo-American style democracy in a Latin atmosphere.

The Structure of the Thesis

The choice of the Dominican Republic, the Balaguer regime, and the PRD in the most recent era as the setting and the participants for this study of opposition-government interaction necessitates that a formal structure for pursuing this analysis be introduced at this point. Since the major emphasis of this study will be on attempting to determine the "operational" aspects of the PRD opposition, this thesis will be divided into five main chapters. An historical and sociological chapter will follow this introduction and seek to lay the groundwork for a fuller understanding of Dominican society and politics. The major emphasis in this chapter will be on pointing out the heritage, customs, traditions, and leadership components that have helped to form the unique quality of Dominican life. This historical and sociological chapter will also incorporate a brief discussion of the PRD in the pre-1966 period to aid in an understanding of this major actor in the

conflict between opposition and government. Following this chapter the thesis will move into the heart of the discussion of opposition party activity in the Balaguer years and examine four areas that will illustrate the interactions between opposition and government.

The first area to be examined will be the opposition strategies employed by the PRD in order to combat the policies and actions of the Balaguer regime. In this chapter on strategies a number of opposition "grand plans" that the PRD developed in order to maintain its position within Dominican politics will be examined in detail. What will be stressed in this discussion, though, is not so much the number or the content of the strategies but the PRD's constant readjustment of its strategy positions so as to compensate for new situations that arose as a result of policies or actions taken by Balaguer.

Besides viewing the strategies that the PRD formulated, a complementary chapter on opposition tactics employed by the Party to implement its policies toward the Balaguer regime will also be introduced. As with the opposition strategies of the PRD it is possible to point out an extensive array of tactics used by the Party ranging from the legislative "walk'out" to radio broadcasts to huge street demonstrations to the threat of a general strike.

Following upon the discussion of the PRD's outward attempts at engaging in opposition political activity, emphasis will shift to an indepth investigation of the internal machinery of the Party and the extensive difficulties that it encountered as an opposition. Problems in maintaining ideological purity, avoiding harmful intra-party squabbles, increasing the quantity and quality of its leadership ranks, strengthening its organization structure, and expanding its financial base will be investigated. All of the above demands can be considered central to the smooth functioning of any political organization. But within opposition parties the effective performance of these functions is hampered by the powerlessness of the organization nationally, the natural dissension that crops up within a losing political party, and the enormous advantages that the party in power attains in the way of garnering patronage and other financial and economic benefits.

The fourth major section concerning the PRD will view the Party and its problems as the recognized Dominican political opposition from a different perspective. The PRD will be examined in terms of its relationship to the Balaguer government and the efforts of that regime to weaken the once powerful hold of the PRD on the Dominican populace. It is a well known fact in Latin American politics that many political parties in a secondary position vis-à-vis the national

government are often times subject to systematic intimidation and repression. As will be shown with regard to the PRD in this contemporary period, the Balaguer regime followed a similar path of anti-opposition behavior, only to a much greater extent, and, in all fairness, in a more ingeneous manner.

The chapter on the Balaguer regime's efforts to stymie the PRD will be concerned with three major ploys used by the Dominican president and his supporters. Since June, 1966 the PRD has been subject to a continuous wave of depoliticization, subversion and repression. The PRD has constantly been faced by the government's attempts at shifting the attention of the Dominican people from political concerns such as the character of the power structure in the country and the possibilities of revolutionary change to purely economic concerns as housing, road building, education, wages and industrialization. The goal of this activity is to wipe clean from the Dominican people's consciousness the memory of a nation which only a few years ago was in the clutches of a fierce political battle, a battle that was headed by the PRD and aimed at achieving modernization from within a completely new social framework.

When the government was not depoliticizing the Dominican populace it was working overtime to subvert the Party leadership of the PRD by offering lucrative governmental positions to those within the organization whose allegiance was

at best marginal or by attempting to reduce the associational ties of the PRD in the labor, peasant, and middle class sectors. Where the depoliticization efforts were in the main subtle maneuvers to gain public support, the subversive activities of the Balaguer regime were overt, intimidating and often ingeneous. The subversive tactics reveal a regime intent on halting PRD effectiveness.

The final and most serious tactic of the Balaguer regime was its concerted effort to emasculate the PRD leadership ranks by vicious campaigns of murder, harassment, incarceration and kidnapping. The government, through its repressive agents in the military and the National Police, seemed intent on punishing the PRD for its determination to remain a vigorous political force in Dominican society. Unfortunately, the picture of repression against the PRD will offer some of the saddest views of contemporary Dominican politics.

After this discussion of strategies, tactics, internal party politicis, and the responses of the Balaguer regime to the PRD opposition, there will be a concluding chapter in which an attempt will be made to summarize the plight of the PRD opposition since 1966 and to comment on the possibilities of democratic opposition in the future. Also in this concluding chapter there will be a general discussion of the Dominican political system and the place that opposition

activity has in that system. This discussion will seek to bring together the data on PRD-government conflict into a more understandable whole by describing the nature and character of Dominican politics.

The discussion of the PRD opposition to the Balaguer regime thus is not a simple matter. Besides the intricacies of opposition-government interaction this study will seek to begin the reevaluation of the wider issues of Latin American societies like the future potential of political parties, the sophistication of paternalistic leadership, and the dilemma of Anglo-American style democracy in Latin America. But where this thesis will serve as a means of examining some recent changes in Latin American politics, the primary aim of this research to expand the current knowledge about the structure and process of Dominican development. Far too little is understood about the mechanics of Dominican politics and government. Research emphasis must now be placed on determining the complexities of policy formation and implementation in the Dominican Republic. In a sense we have just scratched the surface of politics and government in this country and have become too concerned with assassinations, coups and civil wars. Now in a period of stability and relative tranquility we must attempt to build from the existing knowledge of Dominican politics and construct a fuller picture of the Dominican political process.

CHAPTER II

DOMINICAN HISTORY AND THE PRD: A LEGACY OF CONFLICT, DEPENDENCY AND UNFULFILLED PROMISES

Every country in Latin America is in some way touched by its history. The vestiges of strict class structure, unequal distribution of goods and services, paternalistic caudilloism and rampant instability can still be found in many countries of this region. Some analysts find the importance of history so strong in many Latin American countries that they have developed theories which suggest that these societies never "lose" their past. What happens is that new ideas, institutions and procedures are grafted onto the already existing traditions and culture forming a unique union or "museum" of the past and the present.[1]

Perhaps this view of Latin American history and change is nowhere more applicable than in the Dominican

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[1]Charles Anderson's article, "Toward a Theory of Latin American Politics," on the "power contenders" in Latin American politics concludes by making an important observation about the fact that society and politics in this region are a melting pot or as Anderson terms it a "museum" of structures, traditions, customs and ideologies that refuse to die, but rather retain their legitimacy and compete with all that is new. As Anderson suggests, many times the past has been victorious over the present as Latin American society and politics refuse to change.

Republic. This country, like the other countries of Latin America, is steeped in the distinctive social and cultural heritage that was brought to this region by the Spanish colonists and has come to be entrenched through some one hundred and fifty years of national development. The sad legacy of oppressive leaders, numerous foreign interventions, brutal class and regional struggles and unvelievable economic backwardness, however, has had a profound influence on modern day Dominican society. Many, if not all, of the problems that have plagued the Dominican Republic throughout its history still dominate the national scene and seem as far away as ever from satisfactory solution. The Dominican Republic, in a real sense, is a country whose past has never been able to be laid to rest.

Although the legacy of Dominican history is certainly a tragic comment on the misuse of power and the crying need for social equality and economic modernization, the development of Dominican society from its independence in 1821 cannot be ignored or forgotten as a "bad dream." The important connection between past Dominican history and contemporary sociopolitical behavior necessitates that the study of the PRD in opposition be preceded by a thorough examination of the past. Without a proper grounding in the essentials of Dominican history, the often times unexplainable and sad events that this country and its people have had to

endure cannot be placed in their proper perspective.

No history of the Dominican Republic and the PRD can be initiated without first mentioning some of the basic geographical, social and cultural characteristics of the country, its people and its heritage.[2] The Dominican Republic, a country of nearly five million people, shares the former Spanish island of Hispaniola with French-speaking Haiti. Situated in the Caribbean between Puerto Rico and Cuba, the Dominican Republic is a study in contrasts. Stretching through the heart of the country is the Central Cordillera, a mountainous range which reaches heights of over 10,000 feet in some areas. The Central Cordillera creates numerous lush green valleys of excellent farm land of which the Cibao region is the most famous and populous. In the Eastern third of the country and in some parts of the Southwest, however, the Dominican climate has created a semi-arid desert region. Economic productivity in these areas is quite low and the population is in many respects the most deprived in the nation.

The structure of the land and the Caribbean climate has greatly influenced the character of the natural resources and economic development in the Dominican Republic. The

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[2]A more indepth discussion of the Dominican geography and other social and cultural characteristics can be found in the Dominican Republic Election Factbook June 1, 1966 (Washinton, D.C.: Institute for the Comparative Study of Political Systems, 1966).

nation's greatest natural resource is sugar cane. Due to a long history of interest and involvement by foreign families and corporations the Dominican Republic has become one of the world's leading exporters of sugar cane and sugar cane by-products. One cannot journey very far in the Dominican Republic without noticing the endless fields of sugar and the thousands of peasants wielding the machete as they cut the cane. Recent findings of nickel deposits and other minerals have expanded the country's resource potential, but the Dominican people maintain a strong reliance on the export revenue gained from sugar. This strong reliance has done nothing to quash the view of many that the Dominican Republic is destined to remain a one-crop economy.[3]

Although the backbone of Dominican society is in the sugar cane fields, the economic, social and political life of the country is centered in the capital city of Santo Domingo (pop. 900,000). Santo Domingo is a vibrant, expanding city which attracts not only the middle class seeking the excitement and financial benefits of the urban area, but also the rural peasantry who venture to the capital in search of a

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[3]For perhaps the most recent view of the economic situation in the Dominican Republic the Balaguer government has put out a twenty-four page advertisement in the New York Times of June 9, 1974 which touches on nearly all areas of national development. Of course one must recognize that the advertisement is definitely pro-government and does not have to be believed. Nevertheless, the discussion of the Dominican economy is extremely helpful and one of the few comprehensive examinations of the length and breadth of the changes achieved or undertaken in the Balaguer years.

better life away from the land. Much of the economic modernization that has been achieved in the Balaguer years can be seen in and around the capital city. New housing is particularly in evidence as the government has had to make room for the great influx into the city.

Where the city of Santo Domingo is the center of the new Dominican society, the second largest city of Santiago (pop. 132,000) is the best example of the old, traditional Dominican society. Situated in the Cibao valley region, Santiago is a slower paced city with deep roots in the country's past and a community of landed aristocrats who exert a strong influence on political leaders and policy-making in the capital city.

The Dominican Republic, it must be emphasized, is not merely land, resources and cities. The Dominican Republic is also people. To better understand the Dominican people one can point out some general characteristics, like the fact that 80% are of mixed blood (primarily Caucasian and Negro), that the majority live in rural areas (upwards of 60%), and that the birth rate increase of 2.9% yearly is one of the highest in Latin America. But to develop a more precise and meaningful view of the Dominican people it is important to stress their "Spanishness." With traditions and customs of Spain that go all the way back to Columbus (Santo Domingo is the first city built in the New World), it

is not difficult to understand the Catholicism of many Dominicans (98%), the importance of the family unit, the general formalism found in social and business relations, and the rather stringent social class system that separates Dominicans of different economic backgrounds.

The overarching influence of this Spanish heritage has not only effected the beliefs, behavior and relations of the Dominican people, it has also been instrumental in forming the Dominican Republic into a "closed" society. "Closed" not in the sense of personal aloofness, since the Dominicans always show themselves to be a kind and gracious people. Dominican society is "closed" in the sense of the serious and seemingly permanent gaps between the upper class landed and business elites and the lower class peasant and laboring groups. National elites in the Dominican Republic are extremely reluctant about moving too quickly into the twentieth century for fear of destroying the atmosphere of security that the traditional social system has engendered. The history of the Dominican Republic and the struggles of the PRD that will be discussed below reveal the influence of the history and Spanish heritage on Dominican society and the conflict that permeates the past of this tiny country as opposition groups have continually fought to "open up" a "closed" system.

The Dominican Republic since 1821

The decision to begin this study with the Dominican independence movement in 1821 was not arrived at without some hesitation.[4] It is possible to trace Dominican history back to the initial sighting of the island by Columbus' men aboard the Niña. Such a starting point would aid in the presentation of the early relationship between the Spanish explorers and the native Indian population which was crucial to the development of Latin American culture and mores in the New World.

It is also beneficial to view the evolution of the island called Hispaniola by the Spanish from its lofty position as the first center for all colonial operations in the New World to the neglected, underpopulated outpost it became

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[4]The major historical works which concern the Dominican Republic are Samuel Hazard, Santo Domingo: Past and Present (New York: 1873); H. Hoetink, El Pueblo Dominicano, 1850-1900 (Santiago, Dominican Republic: Universidad Catolica Madre y Magistra, 1971); Rayford Logan, Haiti and the Dominican Republic (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968); John Bartlow Martin, Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Republic from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War (New York: Doubleday, 1966); Selden Rodman, Quisqueya: A History of the Dominican Republic (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1964); Otto Schoenrich, Santo Domingo: A Country with a Future (New York: Macmillan, 1918); Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844-1924 (New York: Payson and Clarke, 1928); Howard Wiarda, The Dominican Republic - Nation in Transition (New York: Praeger, 1969).

from 1550 to its independence.[5] By centering attention on this period of development and decay one can more easily view the formation of the Dominican heritage with its characteristic elements of dedicated Catholicism, vigorous economic exploitation, elitist social stratification, and corporative political organization.

Yet the most advantageous beginning for the description of Dominican history seems to be with the formal break with Spain and the onset of independence in 1821. Most scholars acknowledge 1821 as the inception of modern Dominican history and the key date for examining the events and personalities that have molded the current shape of Dominican society and government. It is important to remember, however, that even though Dominican history will be examined from 1821 forward, the social, economic, and political systems of this country have to a large extent been effected by the Spanish conquerors and administrators.

In the case of most Latin American countries at this crucial time of independence, the break with Spain created a new era of "home rule" and national development. In the Dominican Republic of 1821 the successful uprising against the Spanish left the former colony at its weakest state and

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[5]Carl Ortwin Sauer, in The Early Spanish Main (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), gives one of the more detailed accounts of the problems that Spanish colonization brought to the Island of Hispaniola. See pp. 196-217.

therefore open to invasion and control by those with greater resources. Occupying the remaining one-third of the island, neighboring Haiti showed great interest in extending its dominance and proceeded to take complete control of the Dominican Republic under General Jean Pierre Boyer.[6]

The takeover of the entire island by the predominantly black Haitians produced immediate difficulties which were never rectified, and helped to revitalize the lethargic independence forces in the Dominican zone. At the root of the Haitian failure was the legacy of hatred left by the cruel Haitian generals Dessalines and Christophe prior to 1821. This deep-seated enmity of the Dominicans for their black conquerors was increased further by Boyer's decision to revive forced labor among the populace along with the continuation of senseless violence and pillage by Haitian administrators and military personnel.[7]

Amidst such oppressive conditions it was not long before the cries of revolution and freedom could be heard. In the Dominican section of the island the call for a truly independent nation came from Juan Pablo Duarte and his secret

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[6]Logan, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, gives the most objective view of the Haitian invasion. Logan examines the relations between the Dominican Republic and Haiti from a Haitian vantage point, a view that is not commonly posited.

[7]Logan, pp. 31-34.

society of liberators, La Trinitaria.[8] The Haitians, under a new leader, General Herard, attempted to contain the rising revolutionary fervor of the Dominican people, but were unable to control the movement that Duarte initiated. In February of 1844 Durate's forces ousted the Haitian invaders.

The heroism and foresight that Duarte and his followers showed in fomenting the revolution and seeking to carry it forward was in vain as the great Dominican leader was unable to ward off the power hungry advances of two caudillo-like figures, Pedro Santana and Buenventura Báez. Both Santana and Báez combined a personal magnetism with a ruthless determination for national dominance to control Dominican politics from 1845 to 1878, and thereby effectively stifle the democratic dream of Duarte.

Although one can easily overgeneralize about such a long period of a nation's history, it would not be an exaggeration to characterize the "era of the twin-caudillos" as a time when the Dominican Republic fell increasingly into internal and international bankruptcy. The results of this inept management could be found not only in the impoverished state of the government's coffers, but also in the expanded foreign interest and intrigue that surrounded Dominican

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[8]Rodman, pp. 46-59. Rodman's work contains the only detailed examination in English of the Dominican Republic's greatest hero.

politics.[9] President Santana, besides numerous negotiations with the British, French and Americans over monetary agreements, land leases and promises of protection from Haiti, was most well known for his decision to permit the Spanish to reannex the Dominican Republic in 1861 in an attempt to stabilize the faltering economy and to secure a protector against Haiti's continuous assaults.

As with the Haitian invasion, the reimposition of Spanish rule on the Dominican people created serious problems. As the occupation forces branched out across the countryside causing ill-feelings and heightening tensions, revolutionary efforts were again undertaken to rid the nation of these new foreign interlopers. In 1865 the Dominicans, led by the brilliant general Gregorio Luperón, were victorious for a second time in forcing the evacuation of the Spanish.

The Dominican people had now rid themselves of the Spanish twice over, but their future was still not secure or bright as the other caudillo leader, Buenventura Báez, continued to take the nation down the road to financial ruin and international dependence. Báez, already president twice prior to 1865, captured the executive office an additional three more times until his final ouster in 1878. During Báez's last three presidencies he committed his country to

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[9]Ibid., pp. 59-70.

a number of damaging and unpayable foreign loans, and furthermore almost succeeded in having the United States annex the Dominican Republic (the U.S. Senate rejected the treaty signed with the Grant administration).[10] By the time that Báez left Dominican politics the country was sorely in need of enlightened leadership that would bring some order to the shambles left by the politics of occupation, caudilloism and interventionism.

The resourceful leadership that the Dominican people so desperately needed never surfaced. Instead the Dominicans had to endure the seventeen year reign (1882-1899) of Ulises Heureaux. The paradoxical dictatorship of Heureaux was a unique period in Dominican history in that the black leader combined a fierce, repressive rule with the introduction of many social and economic changes that had heretofore been ignored.[11] Although the brunt of the evaluation given Heureaux's regime emphasizes the violent excesses, the huge spy nets, the phenomenal economic losses and the continued reliance on foreign financial assistance, the fact remains that

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[10]Charles Tansill's The United States and Santo Domingo 1798-1873 (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1967) gives a detailed account of how Senator Charles Sumner worked to stop President Grant's move to annex the Dominican Republic. Sumner is now one of the few Americans to be honored by a statue which is prominently placed in a Santo Domingo suburb. See pp. 338-464.

[11] Francis L. Willis, "Heureaux and His Island Republic," National Magazine, 10, September, 1899, pp. 563-571.

under Heureaux educational changes progressed steadily, transportation and communication links were expanded, preferential trade agreements were finalized and the bureaucracy and army were substantially overhauled. Yet despite the modernizing efforts of Heureaux, the Dominican Republic at the turn of the century languished in a state of political and financial collapse. With the assassination of Heureaux in 1899 the Dominican people and their leaders came to recognize the dire straits into which caudillo politics had led them. More importantly, many Dominicans again became reconciled to the fact that the most advantageous method of attaining economic stability and social development was through the guidance and assistance of a foreign power.[12]

The foreign intervention in the name of financial solvency and economic prosperity (which many Dominican leaders viewed as inevitable) came in 1905 with the establishment of a United States customs receivership. The Dominicans, embroiled in internal political upheavals between two rival factions, turned to the United States as the official collector of its custom duties and administrator of the $29.5

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[12]Hoetink's book, El Pueblo Dominicano, covers one of the more forgotten eras of Dominican history and thus is a valuable contribution to an understanding of the economic difficulties and dependence of the Dominican Republic.

million in domestic and foreign payments.[13] The United States, for its part, was anxious to spread its influence in the Caribbean. President Roosevelt wholeheartedly supported the Dominican request for the receivership to the extent that he expanded the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine to include direct intervention of the United States in a sovereign nation.

The receivership of 1905, for all the future implications it held for United States-Dominican relations, was on the whole successful as it substantially reduced the debt burden facing the country. The social and political scene also seemed to benefit from the American presence. The administration of President Ramón Cáceres was perhaps the most visionary and democratic in the nation's history. Unfortunately Cáceres was assassinated leaving the Dominican Republic again without effective leadership.[14]

The death of Cáceres placed the Dominican Republic in a familiar position of having to fill a power void. The rival Jimenista and Horacista factions attempted to fill this void, but only brought the country another dose of internal chaos. Domestic politics became so confused and unstable

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[13]Welles' Naboth's Vineyard is the best source of data on the relation of the United States to the Dominican Republic during this period. See especially pp. 601-639.

[14]It is interesting to note that Cáceres was one of the assassins of the dictator Ulises Heureaux.

that the role of the United States shifted from that of mere customs collector to the controlling of national elections to the ultimate occupation of the country in 1916.[15]

With the landing of the United States troops, the Dominican Republic experienced its third foreign occupation since independence. As was evident from the popular reactions to the past invasions, the Dominican people did not relish the new American presence on their soil. Although the first American governor, Captain Harry S. Knapp, was a compassionate and understanding administrator, resistance movements sprung up throughout the nation. The Marines responded to these rebel groups with force, but succeeded only in intensifying the feelings of an already hostile population.[16]

Although the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic evoked considerable anti-American bitterness, a number of social and economic improvements were made in agriculture, sanitation, road building and education by American technicians. The modernizing and humanitarian assistance offered by the United States, however, did not lessen the tide of nationalism mounting among the Dominican

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[15]See Carl Kelsy, "The American Intervention in Haiti and the Dominican Republic," American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 1921.

[16]Rodman, pp. 106-127; see also Welles, pp. 744-835.

people. By 1921 the United States came to realize that its interests demanded an early departure from the Dominican Republic. In anticipation of the American withdrawal Dominican political life revived as national leaders sought to use the expected exodus of the occupation forces to turn the country away from the despotism and stagnation of the past.[17]

The hopes of these leaders and of the United States were never realized as the exit of the Marines in 1924 soon ushered in another period of factionalized politics that returned the country to the "normalcy" of instability, unpredictability and financial bankruptcy. For six years the Dominican Republic remained in a state of political impotence as the steadiness that the United States presence brought gave way to incompetent national administration.

With the advent of the 1930's the Dominican Republic witnessed the rise to dominance of a man who would curtail the pattern of internal chaos and debility and fill the leadership void that had left Dominican politics fragmented. This man was General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina whose thirty-one year authoritarian regime left the Dominican Republic not only politically quiescent, and to a considerable extent economically prosperous, but also the sad recipient of

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[17]The closing pages of Welles' Naboth's Vineyard has some very insightful and prophetic comments on the future of the Dominican Republic after the departure of the American forces.

Latin America's most complete dictatorship.[18] Under Trujillo the Dominican people would realize the forceful, dynamic leadership that had been absent from national politics for so long, but they would have to pay a heavy price in terms of overarching control, horrible repression, excessive waste and corruption, and, most of all, a snuffing out of the democratic aspirations within the country.

Although the regime of Rafael Trujillo takes in a sizeable portion of Dominican history, the complexity of events that occurred during this era can best be examined by analyzing the expanse of "El Benefactor's" control and the effects of that control on the nation. It is not without exaggeration to state that Trujillo's control over the Dominican Republic was well-near complete. Trujillo and his family either directly or indirectly owned, managed, regulated or manipulated every major economic concern in the nation from the sugar, cement and tobacco industries to the small shops to the rural haciendas.[19] Politics was not a means of determining policy alternatives, but a way for Trujillo to organize

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[18]Some of the more detailed accounts of the Trujillo era are in Robert D. Crassweller, Trujillo: The Life and Times of a Caribbean Dictator (New York: Macmillan, 1966); Arturo Espaillat, Trujillo: The Last Caesar (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1963); Jesus de Galindez, La Era de Trujillo (Santiago, Chile: Editorial del Pacifico, 1956); German Ornes, Trujillo: Little Caesar of the Caribbean (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1958); Howard Wiarda, Dictatorship and Development, The Methods of Control in Trujillo's Dominican Republic (Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press, 1968).

[19]Wiarda, Dictatorship and Development, pp. 81-101.

his own wealth and power. Education became a propaganda outlet for the Trujillo cult and ideology. The roles of the police and the military were twisted from one of administering justice and protecting national frontiers to that of internal surveillance and repression. The Dominican Republic became Trujillo's private estate as the semi-educated dictator amassed control of close to three-fourths of Dominican economic activity.[20]

The dominance of Trujillo did not make his regime immune from errors of judgement, strategy and tactics. By the late 1950's, after a number of years of economic growth and prosperity, the Trujillo government showed obvious signs of weakness. The primary cause of Trujillo's decline was the dictator's incessant desire for public adulation free of any revealing criticism. In the immediate years before his death Trujillo became the object of intense criticism from journalists, church leaders, political exiles, neighboring governments and his previously staunchest ally, the United States.[21] Faced with a declining economy, charges of suppression of political enemies, and governmental ineptitude on all fronts, Trujillo fought back, sometimes with

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[20]Ibid.

[21]Trujillo went so far as to track down one of his most virulent critics, Jesus de Galíndez in New York and bring him back to the Dominican Republic for torture which led to his death. See Ornes, pp. 309-338.

expensive public relations campaigns and other times by having a critic murdered.

Despite the attempts by the Dominican dictator to reassert his dominance in the country, adverse world opinion continued to mount and was joined by internal resistance activities intent on overthrowing the dictatorship. Faced with such strong pressure it came as no surprise to some, and caused great relief to many, when Trujillo was assassinated on May 22, 1961.[22]

The death of Rafael Trujillo, and the eventual departue of his family, once again left the Dominican Republic without substantial leadership. But even more than leadership, the Dominican Republic was a nation lacking the understanding, the training and the organization for self-government. Trujillo's control was so pervasive that the Dominican people were ill-equipped for the role of nation-building and unaccustomed to the functioning of democratic government. After years of dictatorship, repression, backwardness and inequality, the Dominican people were once again given the opportunity to control their own destiny in an open, competitive and fair manner. But unfortunately, as will be shown, the sad legacy of Dominican history proved an

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[22]There are many accounts of Trujillo's assassination, but Norman Gall's "How Trujillo Died," New Republic, April, 1963, is considered the most reliable portrayal of what actually happened on that highway outside of Santo Domingo.

insurmountable obstacle to the development of stable, democratic government.

The PRD and Dominican History after the Fall of Trujillo

Despite the seemingly enormous obstacles to successful democratic development, the Dominican Republic began the task of forming the necessary elements of an open political system. After some initial difficulties in dismantling the Trujillo regime, (Trujillo's son Ramfis still hoped to retain power) the Dominican people came to realize that "El Benefactor" and his highly efficient dictatorial organization no longer exerted influence over the future course of their nation.

The days after the assassination were in many ways chaotic as the Dominicans engaged in a flurry of activity. Huge street demonstrations in praise of Trujillo's demise were prominent, along with numerous incidents of violent reprisals by the people against hated Trujillo agents. This was also the period of nascent political organization as parties, unions, students and middle class groups began assembling the machinery of democratic participation.[23]

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[23]Juan Bosch in his The Unfinished Experiment - Democracy in the Dominican Republic (New York: Praeger, 1965) gives a fine account of the disarray of post-Trujillo Dominican Republic and the PRD exploitation of that disarray. See pp. 3-22.

Trujillo's last puppet president, Joaquín Balaguer, attempted to maintain the existing paternalistic system through a deft program of political favors and economic distribution, but the end was near. In early 1962, after the departure of Balaguer and the failure of a last ditch effort by a small group of Trujillista military officers to seize power, a Council of State was initiated whose task it was to make the necessary preparations for the country's first free elections in over thirty years.

Central to the success of this movement to build a strong democratic framework in the Dominican Republic was the emergence of a political party system. Any effort to organize the populace on a national level, introduce numerous and unfamiliar issues, and educate the Dominican citizenry on the rudiments of democratic behavior requires an experienced body of individuals who are schooled in the rigors of constructing a viable democracy. Although political parties are key components in developing a democratic system of government, the Dominican Republic has shown throughout its history a marked inability to form modern, issue-oriented political parties. As Sumner Welles comments in Naboth's Vineyard:

> The history of the nation has made it evident that political parties . . . have not existed in Santo Domingo. Dominican government has been personal government . . . the future of the Republic cannot be assured until party government in the modern

> sense has been evolved. Until political parties have been formed with principles and policies, personal government is inevitable, and the succession to the Presidency will be dictated by a few politicians, rather than by the great mass of the plain people.[24]

Into this void of personalistic parties and limited access to the presidency in the Dominican Republic stepped the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) of Juan Bosch, a party of the so-called Latin American Democratic Left which revealed modern organizational abilities and the desire to press for certain societal reforms such as redistribution of lands and income, increased participation in national decision-making and nationalization of foreign property.[25] As with most of the structures of a newly forming democracy, the PRD did not have extensive experience in handling the demands of active political operation. The PRD had been an exile political party that because of the repression of the Trujillo regime was never able to move from propaganda promises of radical societal change to policy implementation within the Dominican Republic.[26]

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[24]Welles, p. 911.

[25]The PRD has commonly been termed an Aprista-type party after the Peruvian party of Haya de la Torre which seeks radical reform from within a democratic context. See Kantor, The Ideology and Program of the Peruvian Aprista Movement.

[26]See de Galíndez, p. 441 for the most detailed account of the PRD in exile opposition.

Although the PRD had a strong exile organization with a long history of political activity stretching from New York to Puerto Rico to Caracas, the Party was for the most part unknown in the Dominican Republic. The steady stream of anti-Trujillo propaganda that was sent forth from numerous PRD headquarters since the Party's inception in 1939 touched only a small audience of intellectuals and middle class supporters. The peasants and urban poor, who the PRD claimed to be speaking for, were left virtually ignorant of this political ally by Trujillo's stringent censorship policy. Nevertheless, the PRD remained a viable political opposition in exile and a constant thorn in Trujillo's side.

With the assassination of Trujillo, the PRD, for the first time in its long, expectant history, saw the opportunity to return home and seek revolutionary change within a democratic context. Almost immediately after the news of Trujillo's death, Bosch and the PRD Executive Committee laid plans for an organizational and educational effort in expectation of future elections.[27] The vanguard of the PRD movement arrived in Santo Domingo on July 8, 1961 with three veteran political activists--Angel Miolán, Nicolás Silfa and Ramón Castillo--each prepared to begin the enormous task of

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[27]Bosch, The Unfinished Experiment, pp. 3-5.

making the promises of the Party in exile a political reality in the post-Trujillo Dominican Republic.[28]

The PRD entered the newly structured Dominican political scene with mixed emotions. It is true that after some twenty-two years in exile, the Party finally had the chance to actively engage in political organizing. But with this electoral opportunity the PRD leadership recognized the obstacles that lay in the path of successful power politics in the Dominican Republic. Besides the monumental effort that would have to be undertaken to bring the PRD message to the unknowing Dominican citizenry, the Party would also have to contend with hostile political and social groups who were adamant in their desire to curtail revolutionary programs that Juan Bosch had pledged his government to. But as Bosch himself stated:

> From the moment I learned of it, (Trujillo's death) I had felt that the time had come for us (the PRD) to re-enter the Dominican Republic . . . All of us believed that now, after more than twenty years of exile, we had an opportunity to lead the Dominican people toward a brighter future, and that we could not afford to miss that opportunity.[29]

In the area of educating the Dominican populace in the basic tenents of its ideology, the PRD showed early in

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[28]The date of July 8th is still considered a Party holiday by the PRD and is usually a time when the Party makes a major pronouncement.

[29]Bosch, The Unfinished Experiment, p. 4.

the campaign for the presidency that it was more thoroughly prepared than any of the other parties seeking national political power. Through the brilliant strategies of Miolán and the charismatic appeal of Juan Bosch, the PRD became known in the countryside as the Party of the people, the Party of the poor and the Party of change.[30] The PRD's closest rival, the Unión Cívica National (UCN) led by Dr. Vitriato Fiallo, could only muster support from the business community and landed aristocracy, and never attained the widespread identification that the PRD did as the Party of all the people.[31]

Even though the PRD was successful in presenting itself as the major political force in the Dominican Republic, the Party faced a number of obstacles which could not be easily overcome, and which eventually came back to haunt the PRD. The center of opposition to the electoral efforts of the PRD came from the traditionally conservative forces throughout Latin America--the Church, the military and the landed elite. Each of these groups felt threatened by the

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[30]Howard Wiarda, "Aftermath of the Trujillo Dictatorship - The Emergence of a Pluralist Political System in the Dominican Republic" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Glorida, 1965), pp. 253-256.

[31]Fiallo and his UCN party organization came to be known as "tutumpotes" or "big-shots," a name that Juan Bosch coined and used quite effectively to remind the Dominican people exactly what Fiallo and the UCN stood for.

rhetoric and program of the PRD. Each of these groups saw their favored position in Dominican society in jeopardy because of the so-called "Communist" inclinations of Juan Bosch.[32]

The suspicions of the traditional triumvirate in the Dominican Republic prompted a number of attempts to foil the PRD electoral machine. Charges of "Marxist-Leninism" were made against Juan Bosch; efforts were undertaken to curb voter registration, and numerous instances were recorded where PRD activists were harassed, jailed or physically mistreated while engaging in party business.[33] Yet despite these formidable obstacles to effective political participation, the PRD gained increasing strength in all areas of the country. As election day neared the PRD was confident that it had the unqualified support of the two most populous segments of Dominican society--the rural peasantry and the urban poor.

The predictions of the PRD leadership were proven valid as the election returns came in on December 20, 1962. In what was considered a surprising show of strength by many observers, Juan Bosch carried the PRD to a sweeping victory over Fiallo and the UCN. Bosch garnered 619,491 votes for

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[32]Bosch talks extensively about the campaign to discredit him in The Unfinished Experiment, pp. 111-144.

[33]Ibid.

58.7% of the total vote, while Fiallo could only muster 317,327 votes for a dismal 30% of the vote.[34] Bosch and the PRD carried all but five of the country's provinces and swamped Fiallo in the capital city of Santo Domingo 152,404 votes to 35,376.[35]

The victory of Juan Bosch carried the PRD to the pinnacle of political power in the Dominican Republic. The electoral margin that Bosch received not only established the Party as the most popular political force in the nation, but gave the PRD leader a mandate from which he hoped to radically restructure Dominican society. Yet the overwhelming support that Bosch received from the Dominican masses did not sway the traditional forces from working against the revolutionary goals of Bosch or conspiring amongst themselves in order to destroy the Bosch regime.

As the administration of Juan Bosch entered the National Palace in February, 1963 it became increasingly evident that radical change was not going to be achieved immediately or without considerable opposition from entrenched Dominican elites. Although Bosch made a number of overtures to the opposition in terms of cabinet appointments and assurances of responsible modernizing programs, those who felt

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[34]Wiarda, "Aftermath of the Trujillo Dictatorship," pp. 256-258.

[35]Ibid.

threatened by the PRD leader conducted a vigorous campaign to discredit Bosch and his policies. As Wiarda notes:

> In the days prior to his inauguration Bosch invited the five major opposition parties to cooperate with his government in a national unity front. Cabinet posts and other important government positions were offered as inducements. But his overtures to the several parties were rejected. The idea of the losers cooperating with the winners to establish a functioning political system was unheard of.[36]

The trouble that opposition parties heaped upon the newly formed government of Juan Bosch was aided in many respects by the mercurial PRD president himself, as he hurt his own cause with a marked misunderstanding of the necessities of presidential politics and a glaring inability to bargain with the apprehensive social groups facing him. On a number of occasions Bosch was urged to act positively and deal with the problems of land reform, tax equalization and educational expansion. But more often than not Bosch showed a cautious, almost feeble approach to pressing national needs. Bosch's slow-paced response to the demands of Dominican development raised a number of eyebrows in all quarters of the nation, and subsequently heaped more fuel to the fires of opposition.[37]

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[36]Ibid., p. 259.

[37]John Bartlow Martin in Overtaken By Events makes constant reference to Bosch's inability or unwillingness to take the modernizing initiative and bring change to the Dominican Republic.

Added to this inability to start the Dominican Republic moving toward implementing its modernizing program was Bosch's lack of political savvy when it came to dealing with his adversaries. Bosch frequently alienated large sections of the Dominican elite by either snubbing the influential Catholic Church or by refusing to crack down on a group of Communist sympathizers who were causing great consternation within the armed forces and the United States Embassy. As one Dominican stated:

> Bosch is alienating everybody one by one - the press, the Church, business, and even people who were his most enthusiastic supporters, political liberals.[38]

By the summer of 1963 it had become common knowledge that Juan Bosch's position in national political power was precarious. Rumors filled the capital city almost daily that some form of coup was in the making. At this critical stage in the Bosch administration, when the traditional elite was overtly seeking the president's demise, the PRD organization increased the precarious nature of the Bosch regime by openly showing signs of displeasure with its leader. PRD leaders claimed that Bosch was not producing on his promises of reform, and, worse yet, he was not supplying jobs for PRD supporters who expected the tide of patronage to swing over to their camp. Mutterings of "Juan Bo no sirve nada" (Juan

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[38]Rodman, p. 169.

Bosch is worthless) were heard more often within the PRD organization.[39] The dissatisfaction within the PRD led some observers to conclude that the close knit organization that worked tirelessly for Bosch's victory had all but disappeared once Bosch won the presidency.

As a result of this dissatisfaction a number of factional disputes surfaced within the Party. Angel Miolán, believed by many to be the driving force behind the PRD organization, and Diege Bordas, Bosch's minister of Commerce and Industry, openly fought for control of the Party apparatus. At the same time, the PRD congressional group including José Rafael Molina Ureña, president of the Chamber of Deputies, Juan Cassanova Garrido, president of the Senate and Senator Thelma Frias fell into disagreement with Bosch over his poor legislative reform record and his lackluster administrative capabilities.[40]

The serious difficulties that Bosch faced in midsummer did not cease. Bosch did make some attempts at implementing his revolutionary platform with the signing of a multi-million dollar foreign loan, the beginning of a land reform program, and the initiation of a number of social

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[39]Martin, p. 465.

[40]This information is taken from a chapter on Dominican political parties in an unpublished manuscript of Howard Wiarda entitled "Interest Aggregation; Political Parties and Party Systems," Chapter XIII in Dictatorship, Development and Disintegration: The Political System of the Dominican Republic, pp. 836-839.

welfare efforts. But the climate was not ripe for a continuation of Juan Bosch's administration. The Church, military, business, and land elite were thoroughly disgusted with Bosch's favortism toward the peasants and the urban laborers, his threats concerning the validity of private property, and his seeming reluctance to rid the nation of the Communist influence.[41] This opposition came to a head on September 25, 1963 when a military junta overthrew the PRD president after only seven months in office. The democratic experiment that many had hoped would be a success failed as a mixture of poor leadership, impossible modernizing demands and entrenched social forces brought the PRD attempt at radical change in Dominican society to a halt. As John Martin, former United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic during the Bosch administration states:

> The bold fact is that the Dominican politicians and cívicos simply refused to accept electoral defeat at Bosch's hands and so defeated him by other means. And yet, it must also be said that Bosch's every move alarmed, repelled and disgusted them; that if they were poor losers, so was he a poor winner. It is not surprising that they practiced, as did Bosch himself, not the politics of democracy, but the politics of annihilation.[42]

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[41]For some of the best analysis of the Bosch administration and its demise see a series of four articles in the New Leader, October 14, 1963 by Juan Bosch, John Roche, Theodore Draper and Karl Meyer.

[42]Martin, p. 719.

With Juan Bosch safely sequestered in San Juan, Puerto Rico and the PRD party offices and affiliated associations closed down by government decree, an interim Triumvirate headed initially by Emilio de los Santosand later by Donald Reid Cabral attempted to restore calm and less radical modernizing programs to the Dominican nation. Reid Cabral, a successful businessman, ran into numerous problems as the Dominican leader. Frequent outbursts of political violence scarred the capital, and eventually the countryside, as many "constitutionalists" or supporters of the deposed Juan Bosch came under attack from the National Police.[43]

Under Reid Cabral the national economy was hard hit. Because of exceptionally low world prices for Dominican exports of sugar, cocoa and coffee, inflation got steadily out of hand, while the balance of payments reached crisis proportions.[44] To deepen the problems, Reid Cabral found himself embroiled in a struggle with the armed forces over special import favors and charges of rampant corruption. The

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[43]In fact one of the members of the ruling Triumvirate, Emilio de los Santos, resigned when his nephew became a victim of the increased violence in the country as the military cracked down, and in one tragic instance massacred a group of rebel youths who belonged to the 14th of June movement, a radical anti-Trujillista organization.

[44]Abraham Lowenthal in The Dominican Intervention (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1972) has the most detailed account of the Reid Cabral years available; see pp. 33-61. Also see Jerome Slater's Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

efforts of Reid Cabral to curtail such practices angered the military and weakened one of the main underpinnings of his political power.

The extensive problems that Reid Cabral encountered as the Dominican leader in the post-Bosch period cannot hide the fact that he tried, albeit halfheartedly, to place the country on the road to modernization. Efforts were made to continue agrarian reform projects, political parties were allowed to renew their activities, and a strict austerity program was undertaken to curb the economic stagnation.[45] But for all Reid Cabral's efforts, he remained an enemy to most of the powerful elements in Dominican society. To the pro-PRD supporters, now led by the radical Juan Peña Gómez, the protégé of Juan Bosch, Reid Cabral symbolized the inability of the government to crack down on the extensive repression that was present throughout the country and the unwillingness of the elites to accept the presidency of Juan Bosch. To the military, Reid Cabral stood for the rigorous efforts being undertaken to root out corruption and favoritism in the armed forces. And to the business community, Reid Cabral represented the hated austerity program and the economic crisis that it was supposed to alleviate.

The PRD, for its part, tried to counteract the conservative drift of the Reid Cabral regime, even though Juan

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[45]Lowenthal, The Dominican Intervention, pp. 33-61.

Bosch was out of the country. The central party headquarters were reopened as the Party once again attempted to rouse the spirits of the Dominican masses. The achievement of such mass solidarity and action was not easily attained as the PRD found itself beset by internal factionalism that stemmed from the 1963 disagreements between Bosch and Miolán. Although the disagreements were part personal, the primary fissure arose over the role of the PRD in the presidential elections tentatively scheduled for sometime in 1965. Miolán, being an adroit political tactician, favored a renewed effort by the PRD to win back power, while Bosch, feeling the sting of one coup, was vigorous in his rejection of renewed political activity.[46] Faced with disagreement at the heart of the PRD leadership and increasing barriers to effective action in the Dominican Republic, some Party members along with other opposition groups turned to the plotting of a clandestine revolutionary movement which would hopefully hasten the return of Juan Bosch and the restoration of the 1963 constitution.[47]

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[46]Wiarda's unpublished manuscript, Chapter XIII, "Interest Aggregation," again is the main source of this discussion on the PRD during the Reid Cabral administration.

[47]One of the more interesting aspects of this political intrigue was the number of plots that developed in order to bring down the regime of Reid Cabral. But even more interesting is the fact that the plotters (who worked in as many as four groups) organized independently of each other and did not seem aware of the fact that resistance was developing on such a large scale. See Lowenthal, The Dominican Intervention, pp. 50-60.

The anti-Reid Cabral plotting came to a head on April 24, 1965 when the "constitutionalists," a diverse group of PRD leaders, young military officers, communist sympathizers, labor unionists, students, and intellectuals named Rafael Molina Ureña, the PRD leader in the Dominican Chamber of Deputies under Bosch, as its interim president and declared itself the rightful governing regime in the country. The declaration of the "constitutionalists" caused an immediate response from the old-line military led primarily by tank commander General Elías Wessin y Wessin whose interests coincided with the traditional elite. The declarations of both groups set the stage for all-out civil war as the question of Juan Bosch, the PRD and radical change in the Dominican Republic left the polling places and the legislative chamber and moved into the streets.

As in most violent and emotional revolutionary situations it is not easy to organize and present in an ordered fashion the complex of events and personalities that surface during such a chaotic period. But it is possible to view the Dominican civil war as occurring in four distinct phases. In the first phase a small band of "constitutionalist" supporters freed six military officers who were being held prisoners for allegedly plotting to overthrow the Reid Cabral regime. This unprecedented action stirred the rebel forces to greater mobilization efforts and awakened the conservative military to the developing attempt to return Juan Bosch to

power. Gen. Wessin's response to this rebel activity was first to engage in negotiations with the rebel government of Molina Ureña. When these negotiations failed to pacify the adamant rebel group, Wessin ordered the strafing of the National Palace where the "constitutionalists" were situated. This extreme action widened the scope of the revolution and brought the angry pro-Bosch forces into the streets. For three days the fighting raged furiously as both sides sought to gain key sections of the city. On April 27th the "loyalists" (Wessin's forces) tried to cross the Duartebridge which serves as the main entrance into the capital. Leaders of the "constitutionalists," at this point, attempted to negotiate a cease-fire using the United States Embassy as the mediator. The response of the embassy was to reject the rebels' offer, as Ambassador Tapley Bennett urged the "constitutionalist" to lay down their arms and surrender to the "loyalists."[48]

In the second phase of the civil war the refusal of the United States to help bring an equitable settlement to the crisis led to two key decisions on the part of the rebels. The PRD leadership cadre, which was at the forefront of the rebel movement, experienced a number of defections as men like Peña Gómez, Molina Ureña and Cassanovas Garrido, among others, sought asylum. It was their judgement that the

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[48]Martin, pp. 705-706. Slater is much more critical of Bennett; see pp. 12-13.

"constitutionalist" cause was doomed without United States mediation.[49] With key PRD activists in hiding and Juan Bosch unable to return to the Dominican Republic, the leadership of the "constitutionalists" shifted to Lt. Colonels Caamaño Deño and Montes Arache.[50] Both these men left the meeting with the United States ambassador and returned to the fight, according to one source, more for the sake of military honor than for the return to the 1963 constitution. The rebels had in a sense lost their legitimacy and were fighting a different kind of revolution. The fight was now more for survival and revenge than for democratic principles.[51]

Although some of the major PRD activists were no longer on the scene, the PRD organization remained largely intact within the rebel zone and worked effectively to continue the battle against the Wessin forces.[52] But the void

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[49]Jose Moreno in his book Barrios in Arms: Revolution in Santo Domingo (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970) offers a view of the PRD and their decision to seek asylum, pp. 28-30.

[50]Caamaño Deño was a dissident Lt. Colonel who once served in the National Police under Trujillo. Montes Arache was a Navy Lt. Colonel and former director of the Navy school of frogmen, the elite fighters of the Dominican armed forces.

[51]Moreno, who was present in the rebel camp throughout the revolution, holds this view. See pp. 39-40.

[52]Moreno, pp. 39-42. Moreno is very adamant in his characterization of the PRD role in the revolution. He emphasizes in his book the central place that the Party organization played in the rebel areas despite the fact that the major leaders of the Party were not part of the rebellion in its later stages.

created by the departure of the key PRD activists opened the way for a number of Left-wing communists sympathizers who took over some crucial organizational and logistical positions in the "constitutionalist" zone. Men like Héctor Aristy, Manolo González and Fafa Tavéras were increasingly called upon to advise Caamaño Deño and maintain strength within the embattled rebel zone. The importance of these men, though, was not merely related to their leadership abilities and their close connections to some of the key commando groups within the rebel-held areas of Santo Domingo. The pro-Communist allegiances of Aristy, González and Tavéras greatly influenced the course of United States policy in the Dominican Republic and the eventual outcome of the civil war.[53]

With the shape of the revolution drastically changed, Caamaño Deño and his men gained surprising victories against the loyalist forces. The success of the rebels and the sad state of the demoralized "loyalist" troops prompted Gen. Wessin to seek military support from the United States. On April 28th the United States under orders from President

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[53]The belief by Ambassador Bennett that the Dominican Revolution would turn Communist if the rebels were not stopped served as the basis for President Johnson's decision to intervene. It is interesting to note that when an attempt was made by the embassy to list the number of Communists in the Dominican Republic, the list could include only about one hundred people (some names were used twice, some people were out of the country, some were dead, others in jail).

Lyndon Johnson landed support troops in Santo Domingo and thereby took the Dominican civil war into a third and crucial stage.

President Johnson, fearing an immanent takeover of the nation by the Communist sympathizers in the Caamaño Deño camp, felt that it was necessary to land troops in the city and aid in any way possible the fledging "loyalist" troops.[54] The United States troops immediately set to work at dividing the rebel forces. After setting up an International Security Zone (ISZ) around the United States Embassy and the western part of the city, the United States troops attacked the "constitutionalists" and formed a link between the ISZ and the "loyalist" camp at San Isidro Air Force Base. The effect of this action was to split the "constitutionalists" and reduce their strength and organization. From this corridor the United States soldiers proceeded to "tighten the noose" around the rebels in the central city. The "constitutionalists" came to realize that they were being forced into a position of weakness, a position that would be detrimental once negotiations for a settlement began again.

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[54]The original declaration of President Johnson was that the United States troops were being landed to protect U.S. citizens and to aid, in an "humanitarian" effort, those victims of the revolution. As history has shown the United States troops served also as "controllers of the revolution" with a definite loyalist bias. See Lowenthal, The Dominican Intervention, pp. 63-131.

Finally, with the fate of the rebel forces sealed by the effective maneuvering of the United States troops, the "constitutionalists" were forced to meet with United States negotiators and representatives of the "loyalist" government (now called the Government of National Reconciliation and headed by Trujillo assassin Gen. Antonio Imbert Barrera). The bulk of the negotiation between the rebels and the United States sponsored government was conducted by a three-man OAS team headed by United States diplomat Ellsworth Bunker.[55] The negotiations lasted for some three months with the two sides wrangling over key concession points as the deportation of central figures in the war, the length of the interim government, the status of the 1963 constitution and the choice of a provisional leader. By September 3, 1965 the negotiations were concluded with Héctor García Godoy, a moderate diplomat, taking the reins of power until June 1, 1966 when elections were to be held for a permanent national leader.[56]

The settlement in September, 1965 ended one of the most tragic periods in Dominican history. From the promise and excitement that filled the nation in the post-Trujillo election period, the Dominican people had seen their first

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[55]Slater, Intervention and Negotiation, has the best analysis of the negotiations surrounding the Dominican Revolution.

[56]Ibid., pp. 71-162.

freely elected president in over thirty years deposed and a cruel civil war ensue. The Dominican Republic in September of 1965 was in shambles; the future held only the necessity of reuniting and rebuilding a society that had tried to make the democratic experiment work, but had failed dismally.

The PRD, as with most political organizations in Dominican society, was in disarray after the September settlement. Torn by political infighting and the fear of government harassment, the PRD leadership was only half its former self. Leaders like Bosch and Peña Gómez returned to the Dominican political scene, but other activists like Miolán, among others, were noticeably absent or unwilling to carry the PRD banner. Furthermore, many middle-level organizers and functionaries were killed in the fighting or were merely quiescent as they yearned for a rest-bit from the horrible course that politics had taken in their country.

The PRD with its great setback in the civil war looked apprehensively toward the June elections. The remaining activists in the PRD were filled with deep misgivings as many who favored the "constitutionalist" cause recognized the fundamental problems that a democratic governmental structure must face in a rigid Dominican social system. The PRD had experienced too many hardships to think that the Dominican Republic could leave the terrible legacy of the civil war and start anew on the road to democratic development. Nevertheless,

Juan Bosch began rebuilding the PRD organization in preparation for the June, 1966 presidential elections.

The apprehensiveness of Bosch and the PRD over the ability of Dominican society to readjust to the democratic framework as formulated in 1962-63 was well founded. Bosch and his party were repeatedly subject to police and military harassment as they sought to campaign in the countryside. Bosch so feared for his life that he made only two journeys outside his home in Santo Domingo.[57] Bosch and the PRD also ran up against a Dominican electorate that seemed to be depoliticized (or just tired) and generally unwilling to be invigorated with the rhetoric of revolutionary change. The PRD found it increasingly difficult to excite the Dominican people over a Bosch victory, since many sensed a possible replay of the events of 1963-1965. All it seemed the Dominican people wanted was peace and prosperity. The promise of radical change did not hold their attention as it formerly had.

Finally, Bosch and the PRD experienced problems in the 1966 election campaign because Joaquín Balaguer was putting up a formidable challenge to the popular revolutionary leader. Balaguer, although strongly connected with the

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[57]One of the best short articles which shows the sad state that the Dominican Republic and the PRD were in after the revolution can be found in James Petras' "Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration," New Left Review (Nov.-Dec., 1966): 75-84 and (Jan.-Feb. 1967): 64-69.

Trujillo regime, came out of exile in New York as the head of the Partido Reformista and began to campaign actively throughout the countryside. Balaguer, because of his policy in 1961-62 of redistributing Trujillo lands and possessions to the peasantry, gained considerable support from this most populous of Dominican social strata. Balaguer, unlike Bosch, was also favored by the traditional forces in Dominican society and thus was able to campaign freely spreading his name and his promises to the Dominican people.[58]

Faced with elite intransigence, an apathetic citizenry and a popular opponent, Juan Bosch and the PRD went down to defeat in the June elections. Balaguer soundly trounced Bosch as he gained 769,265 votes to Bosch's 525,230 votes.[59] The defeat of Juan Bosch and the PRD was a stinging blow to the Party which only three years before was the most popular political organization in the country. More than the loss of prestige that comes with defeat, the PRD in June of 1966 was faced with the realization that it

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[58]Slater, pp. 163-190, has a very comprehensive analysis of the 1966 election period which points up the difficulties of Juan Bosch and the PRD.

[59]See Penn Kemble, "Why Bosch Lost," in The Lingering Crisis - A Case Study of the Dominican Republic, ed: Eugenio Chaing-Rodriguez (New York: Las Americas Publ., 1969). See also Seldon Rodman, "Why Balaguer Won," in The Lingering Crisis - A Case Study of the Dominican Republic, ed: Eugenio Chaing-Rodriguez (New York: Las Americas Publ., 1969), pp. 89-99.

would become the democratic opposition in a governing system that had no real experience or interest in this most fundamental of political rights. Dominican politics had for years been founded upon an opposition framework of interchanging caudillos. But never before was the nation placed in a situation where a once powerful political party was relegated to an opposition status and expected to function effectively in this position.[60]

Although the Dominican people, and in particular the PRD, entered into a so-called "new democratic phase" in their historical development, the future was viewed with a mixed sense of uncertainty and pragmatism. Wide-eyed optimism was a commodity that the Dominicans could not bring to their political perspective. The course of history had been too unkind to the Dominicans for them to approach the Balaguer regime with anything but apprehension. With a legacy that included Spanish and Haitian despoilment, self-serving caudillos, foreign interventions, the longest and most repressive dictatorship in Latin America, and a brief attempt at democracy that ended in civil war, the Dominican people could hardly be expected to feel confident with the promises of democracy made by President Balaguer. To most Dominicans the Balaguer regime represented a continuation (perhaps in a more

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[60] El Caribe, June 2, 1966, p. 1. The PRD captured only six Senate seats and twenty-six Chamber of Deputies seats, while the PR was dominant with twenty-one Senate seats and forty-six Chamber seats.

sophisticated manner) of the historical patterns of paternalism, factionalism, class entrenchment, foreign exploitation and economic stagnation that had been common practice in this country for some three hundred years.

The Dominicans more than the United States officials, who urged them on to this renewed effort to develop Anglo-American democracy, realized that the influence of history, culture and social structure cannot be easily reconstructed, or what is more, erased. Nevertheless, the experiment was undertaken, and in many respects the fate of opposition politics in the new governmental framework would be a key sign pointing to the success or failure of Dominican democracy.

As the body of this research will show, however, historical precedent would have a crucial role in determining the future of Anglo-American democracy in the Dominican Republic. The past does not easily fade away in this country, nor do the entrenched power groups who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. What would change in the Dominican Republic after 1966 is a recognition by national leaders that it is possible, even beneficial, to maintain a semblance of Anglo-American democracy, while continuing to handle the matters of politics in a manner more compatible with past experience.

Social and Political Forces in the Dominican Republic

This introductory view of Dominican and PRD history would be incomplete without spending some time describing the major social and political forces that are present in the contemporary Dominican Republic. In order to better understand the problems faced by the PRD opposition throughout this modern period, it may be helpful if we look not merely at the dominance of the Balaguer regime, but the groups that surround the political system and exert considerable influence over its operation and development. The important point to be made here is that although the basic theme of Dominican politics stressed in this thesis is the conflict between opposition and government, the interaction between the PRD and Balaguer occurs in a complex political system where opposition strategy and governmental policy are the result of contact and compromise with a number of key social, economic, and political groups.[61]

Of course in discussing prominent Dominican interest

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[61]For a much broader discussion of the social and political groups in the Dominican Republic see The Area Handbook for the Dominican Republic #550-54 (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area studies of the American University, 1970) Section #2; Abraham Lowenthal's article entitled "The Dominican Republic; the Politics of Chaos," in Reform and Revolution: Readings in Latin American Politics, eds: Arpad von Lazar and Robert Kaufman (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969); and Howard Wiarda's Dominican Republic: Nation in Transition.

groups the military must be acknowledged as extremely influential. The Dominican military is in many respects the heart of the political system. Since the days of independence the Dominican Republic has been led and misled by a series of military leaders. The present internal situation in the nation is no different. President Balaguer is constantly surrounded by military officers who, some allege, actually make the crucial policy decisions, especially with regard to anti-opposition strategies and tactics. Although such views on presidential power are open to challenge by those who see Balaguer as an independent leader, there is no question that the military exerts a profound influence on the quality of politics in the Dominican Republic. The knowledge that the military has the arms and the manpower to remove a president and control the country is forever in the minds of national leaders and the Dominican people.

Not only is the military a powerful group in Dominican society, but it is also a popular group. The military has long been a means for lower class youth to ascend to middle class status in Dominican society. The promise of a uniform, training, a steady job and the chance of promotion has made the military an attractive profession and one that is highly respected (and feared) by the people. With the power and popularity that it holds in Dominican society, the military can never be overlooked or taken lightly by

the government or the opposition. The governing regime must constantly work to maintain the allegiance of the military, while the opposition must seek some sort of accommodation or working arrangement with a force that could easily destroy it.

In the Dominican Republic force is not only the private domain of the military. The country also has a National Police force which is actually the front line of repression against government opposition. Where the military is prone to stay out of the public eye and remain in their headquarters that surround Santo Domingo, the National Police are found everywhere in Dominican society. They guard banks, patrol the streets and spend a considerable amount of time in the poor barrios intimidating those who would dare act against the Balaguer regime. The National Police are headed by a military officer and function as a military institution. The only difference between the National Police and the military is that the police are the day-to-day reminders of authoritarian rule in the Dominican Republic, while the military seem content to remain the final arbiters of political power and thus stay aloof from the ordinary interchange of Dominican politics.[62]

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[62]As a point of clarification it is important to state that in the rural areas the military is perhaps more visible than in the capital city of Santo Domingo and do exert considerable influence over the peasant population. Nevertheless the National Police receive the most publicity as the enforcers of Balaguer's rule.

Although the armed forces and the National Police are perhaps the most visible and influential groups in Dominican society, the phenomenal economic growth experienced since 1966 has raised the policy-input potential of the new business-financial middle class. Traditionally a weak segment of Dominican society, the new middle class is receiving increased attention and cooperation from the Balaguer government. The economic advances achieved in Dominican society since 1966 have been significant not only in terms of GNP, investment rates, export conditions, and physical infrastructure, but more importantly from the standpoint of a larger, richer, more involved and influential middle class. The so-called "Dominican miracle" is primarily a middle class "miracle" that has brought the Balaguer regime and the newly rich closer together. The Dominican middle class is now the backbone of the government and, more important, its legitimizer. Without middle class support Balaguer would most surely be a mere puppet of the military. With the support of the middle class, however, Balaguer is an established, popular and effective leader.

The rise in influence of the new middle class does not mean that the traditional social groups in Dominican society--the landed aristocracy and the Catholic Church--are on the decline. The Dominican Republic remains a thoroughly Spanish country in which large sections of the useable land

are held by a small, elite group of "latifundistas," while large numbers of poor campesinos continue to eke out a meager existence on worn out plots of land. President Balaguer has recently attempted to bring some changes to the agrarian sectors (which we will examine later), but in the tradition of the conservative Latin American caudillo, the Dominican leader has been quick to soothe the fears of landowners who stand to lose considerable holdings. The landowners, especially in the rich Cibão region around Santiago, remain a powerful interest group for the purpose of retaining the traditional landholding system. Despite their efforts, however, the landowners are slowly being pushed out of privileged governmental circles. The recent drive for modernization coupled with the rising power of the urban, industrial middle class has made the preservation efforts of the landowners obsolete and furthermore an obstacle in the path of national development. The economic power and political influence of the landed aristocracy certainly cannot be ignored in contemporary Dominican society, but the new age of modernization has strained the relationship between the governing regime and this traditional pillar of conservative support.

This incidence of shifting power and influence is also evident with regard to the Catholic Church. Although the Catholic Church remains a key socializing agent in

Dominican society, it no longer seeks or seems to be able to gain a prominent role in national politics and governmental policy-making. Where the Church was quite vocal during the Bosch presidency in 1963 and took an active part in the peace settlements during the 1965 civil war, the Catholic hierarchy has remained noticeably silent in the Balaguer years and has been primarily concerned with its ministry and charity work. The recent influx of Protestant ministers and lay people has perhaps forced the Church to concern itself with religious matters, but many opposition leaders seem to feel that bishops and priests have either been intimidated into silence by the Balaguer regime or merely support the conservative government.

The sad result of this shift in emphasis is that Dominican politics has lost its conscience. During the frequent reigns of terror against the PRD and the Left in general, the Church chose to remain out of the political thicket and made little or no comment on governmental efforts to squelch criticism and dissent. The Catholic Church thus has made no real attempt to assert itself since 1966 as the conscience of Dominican society, and it appears it has no intention of doing so in the future.

The Balaguer regime, as shown above, is bolstered by a number of key conservative and/or traditionalist societal groups. What is missing from this configuration of support is the external influence of the United States. The United

State no longer has a military role in Dominican politics, but its economic and strategic influence is significant, if not overpowering. The role of the United States in Dominican politics will be touched on at numerous points in this discussion, but at this juncture it is enough to say that the economic development of the country is closely tied in with decisions on sugar quotas, aid projects, and business investments made in Washington. It must also be mentioned that although the Marines have left Dominican shores, the United States still sees the necessity of maintaining a stable pro-American government in the Dominican Republic. The United States thus has a profound effect on the shape and tenor of internal Dominican politics. Dominican leaders both in government and in the opposition recognize that the symbiotic relationship between the two countries will be very difficult, if not impossible, to sever. Because of the hold of the United States on the Dominican future, it is not an overstatement to say that the Americans are the real controlling force in Dominican politics. The United States acts as a type of overseer who in many instances makes decisions that have a direct influence on the course of Dominican development.

This discussion of the dominant forces in Dominican society would also be incomplete without touching on those groups who are furthest from the centers of governmental

power. Just as there are a number of obvious supporting groups attached to the government, so too are there sectors of Dominican society that can be classified as the opposition.

The Dominican opposition forces can best be introduced from two perspectives. On one level it is possible to talk about the rural peasantry, the urban laborers and unemployed and the student-intellectuals as the dominant social groups that generally line up in opposition to the government. From another viewpoint it is also instructive to introduce the opposition forces by naming the various political party organizations that have formed since 1966 to challenge Balaguer's presidency.

Among the individual groups seen as a strong source of opposition to the Balaguer regime, the rural peasantry appear crucial. The largely rural nature of the Dominican Republic makes the campesino a prime electoral target of those who wish to unseat the governing regime. Juan Bosch's presidential victory in 1963 was attributed in great part to the PRD leader's ability to convince the peasantry that equitable land reform would best be achieved by his victory. Since the 1965 civil war, however, the peasants have remained generally silent and content with Balaguer's piecemeal reform programs. The peasants, away from the pressurized political climate of Santo Domingo, are extremely difficult to politicize for the opposition, especially in the wake of Balaguer's

vigorous attempts to modernize rural society. Yet it is important to point out that an undercurrent of dissatisfaction remains among the peasants as they see their lives change only minimally over the years. It is this dissatisfaction that spurs opposition parties to action and causes uneasiness among governmental leaders.

The most secure base of opposition support in the Dominican Republic comes from the urban workers and poor. Situated in the run down barrios of Santo Domingo, the urban workers and the unemployed (and underemployed) have given unswerving support for opposition activity to the Balaguer regime. The main stimulus for the opposition strength of the urban resident is the high unemployment rate coupled with the lack of government initiative to remedy the health, education and welfare problems which are so prominent in Dominican society. The urban poor are continually heard saying that Balaguer builds highways and dams, but give them no hospitals, schools or jobs.

Support for the Left opposition by the urban poor has become a recognized force in Dominican politics. Key Santo Domingo based unions like the dockworkers and the taxi-drivers are strongly opposed to the government for its reluctance to equalize the economic benefits achieved in recent years. Without the services of these urban workers the Dominican economy would be in serious straits, and the

generally strong position that Balaguer holds in the political system could be weakened considerably.

As in many Latin American countries the Dominican university students have constantly been at odds with the governing regime. The Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (USAD) is a hotbed of anti-Balaguer feeling which on numerous occasions erupts into violent confrontations between student groups and the National Police. Unfortunately, although the students are one in their opposition to the Balaguer regime, they have shown a marked tendency to factionalize into an almost endless stream of dissident groups. Student opposition covers the spectrum from extreme Left Maoists, Trotskyists and Soviet-oriented Communists to more middle of the road Leftists Social Christians and PRD groups. There is little conservative, pro-government support on the Dominican campus. The sad element of student opposition to the Balaguer regime is that these young Dominicans have very little bargaining leverage with the government. Their call for a strike has a minimal effect on Dominican society compared to an action taken by organized urban unions. Furthermore, Dominican students are caught in the bind of getting a job after their university years which tends to make them "four-year revolutionaries."

The general framework of opposition in Dominican politics, as stated earlier, can also be seen by introducing the political party organizations that seek to unify the divergent opposition groups discussed above into a powerful challenger of the Balaguer regime. Besides the PRD which is the subject of this discussion, and the most successful party from the standpoint of developing an ongoing organization for expressing dissent against the government, Dominican politics is replete with a number of parties that represent a vast array of ideological sentiments.

On the center Right one finds parties like the Movement for Democratic Integration (MIDA) headed by former vice-president Augusto Lora. Prevented by Balaguer from being his successor to the presidency, Lora branched out on his own and formed a middle class party with strong ties in the Santiago and Cibão areas. Lora is an attractive candidate with a political posture that is acceptable to the dominant forces in Dominican society, but his party has not been able to gain the support from the major groups that oppose the Balaguer regime. The MIDA thus remains a conservative party that is overshadowed by the conservative nature of the government.

Also in the conservative bracket is the Partido Quisqueya Dominicano (PQD) of Gen. Elías Wessin y Wessin. Wessin is most well known for his extreme anti-communist views which were prominent in his decision to lead military units against

the "constitutionalist" forces. Wessin, as leader of the PQD, has not necessarily changed his views about Communism, but he has become an able politican and recognizes that Balaguer can only be defeated through some union with the PRD. Like the PRD, Wessin's party is active among the poor in urban and rural areas, but unlike the PRD, the PQD has achieved no where near the support from these groups as the PRD. Wessin's ability to strengthen the PQD has been diminished somewhat because of his penchant for scheming with high military officers in order to forcefully bring the Balaguer regime down. Such scheming has led to Wessin's deportation and the decline of the highly personalist PQD.

At the ideological center of Dominican opposition politics is the Christian Democratic Party (PRSC) and the Movement for National Conciliation (MCN). The PRSC is a party that during the civil war period was a tower of strength on the side of the "constitutionalists" as it had a powerful organization and a number of dedicated activists, especially in the labor union movement. In the contemporary era the PRSC is definitely on the decline as its leadership factionalizes and its support shifts to other parties. Christian Democracy, which was once seen as an alternative opposition ideology, seems no longer to provide a viable answer to the internal political problems in the Dominican Republic.

TheMCN is likewise a middle of the road party that is on the decline. The MCN was originally the political vehicle of Héctor Garciá Godoy, the provisional president of the Dominican Republic after the 1965 civil war. After leaving the presidency for Balaguer, Garciá Godoy remained one of the most trusted and popular leaders in Dominican politics. In 1970 it was thought by political observers that Garciá Godoy and the MCN might have a chance of defeating Balaguer. Unfortunately Garciá Godoy suffered a heart attack before the campaign opened and his party lost its leader and its inspiration. The MCN is still active in Dominican politics under new leadership, but it has never regained the popularity that it had when Garciá Godoy was alive.

The PRD of course is considered the dominant party on the Left in Dominican politics, but besides the PRD it is possible to name a number of other parties, psuedo parties, clubs and temporary movements that not only seek the demise of the Balaguer government, but also the radical reorganization of Dominican society. The Communist Party (PCD) is perhaps the most stable Left-wing voice besides the PRD. The Party has attempted to develop a strong opposition voice, although on many occasions the leadership has seemed more concerned with attacking the positions of the PRD than criticizing Balaguer. The Communists dilemma is

not only the competition with the PRD for Left-wing support. The PCD is struggling internally with the problem of the correct response to government repression and intimidation. There are those in the party who favor Castro-type guerrilla activities as the only means of toppling the Balaguer regime. Others in the PCD maintain that the Party must continue to organize and agitate in Dominican society if Communism is to be successful. What is missing in this interchange is the fact that the PCD remains a minor party in Dominican politics, and whatever position it takes will have but a minimal effect on the shape and tenor of the political system.

While the PCD is better organized and has a larger membership role, the Movimiento Popular Dominicano (MPD) has received by far the most publicity of any opposition party or group. The MPD is a small group of hardened revolutionaries who espouse the doctrine of Castro, Mao and Guevarra. They have been responsible for numerous attacks on government and National Police officials and gained national and international attention for their kidnapping of a United States air force attache and for their bold bank robbing efforts. The MPD feel that only through urban guerrilla activities can opposition groups diminish the power of the Balaguer government. Those like the PRD who organize and function in hopes of some political victory are foolish dreamers according to the MPD. The MPD, like the PCD, has had its internal

difficulties which have lessened its involvement in Dominican politics and tarnished its name among the citizenry. MPD members have shown a propensity for personal bickering which has led to numerous fights and an occasional murder.

MPD members have also linked up with government forces in exchange for their freedom. Many members of the infamous La Banda terrorist group were ex-MPD activists who renounced their revolutionary aims in order to attack the enemies of the Balaguer regime. The violent nature of the MPD and their desire to make themselves the dominant Left-wing opposition force in the Dominican Republic will necessitate further examination of this group and their interchange with the PRD.

With this discussion of the dominant social and political groups in present day Dominican society the introduction to the Dominican Republic and the setting for PRD opposition is now complete. The general overview of Dominican society, the sad historical legacy of authoritarian rule and economic inequality, and the continuous efforts of opposition groups to stimulate radical change sets the stage for the indepth investigation of the PRD and its life and death struggle with the Balaguer government.

CHAPTER III

THE STRATEGIES OF PRD OPPOSITION

One of the first questions that a losing political party like the PRD must ask itself in the post-election period is how it can function with some degree of effectiveness while in a minority position? Although the opposition party does not hold the reins of national power, it must nevertheless make a determination as to what influence it does have within the political system and how to employ that influence efficiently. The need for an honest appraisal by the opposition of its capabilities and the political climate that it will operate in are mandatory prerequisites for constructing a realistic strategy that will counteract, or at least challenge, the policies and actions of the governing regime. Just as the ruling political leadership develops its list of policy-making goals, the opposition party must also set forth what it believes to be the most advantageous approach to performing its role of contesting governmental decisions and representing the views of its constituents. Strategy thus is central to the post-election activity of the opposition political party. Without some clearly articulated, broadly supported opposition method of response to the governing regime, the minority party will grope aimlessly

in the political arena unable to assert itself as an influential dissenting voice.

More than merely setting forth its general plans of opposition, the losing political party, particularly in the Latin American context, is faced with an even greater task. Not only must the opposition party formulate a position that will provide an effective response to the policies and actions of the national government, but it must also structure that position with a keen recognition of the unique rules of political behavior found in Latin American societies. As numerous opposition parties in Latin America have found out in the past, it is not enough to merely enunciate a series of position statements that the party will take while in the minority. Too often parties have failed to recognize the "unwritten rules" of Latin American politics which render opposition strategies meaningless and degrade the very notion of "loyal opposition."

Opposition strategies thus demand a realistic appraisal of the capabilities of the party and of the political system. Opposition politics is a hazardous business in Latin America. Any political party like the PRD in the Dominican Republic must face the severe limitations placed on opposition activity and develop a strategy that responds to immediate political circumstances. This is not to say that opposition political parties are helpless when thrust

into a minority position within their own political system. But as the case of the PRD shows, the Balaguer regime and the tenor of Dominican politics placed a great strain on the opposition and made opposition strategy formation a frustrating and often times controversial procedure.

Oposición Creadora

After the June election defeat by Joaquín Balaguer, the PRD was faced with the realization that it would have to examine its position and future role in Dominican politics. The PRD was no longer an exile party or the primary national leadership group, or even the dominant electoral force in the Dominican Republic. Instead the PRD was relegated to the position of a minority opposition political party in a new and shaky political system. Despite its long history of popularity and influence in Dominican politics and its desire to bring revolutionary reform to the country, the PRD reluctantly assumed the role of providing the Balaguer regime with a legitimate opposition voice. After years of fighting for a "new" Dominican Republic, the PRD had arrived at a point where it found itself not only in a secondary political position, but worse yet, as a tacit supporter of a regime that it detested.

Although the PRD accepted its new position in Dominican politics, the Party was not the least bit encouraged by the "political climate" it was entering. PRD leaders in the

first place were bitter over the election victory. Many Party leaders felt Balaguer either bought the election or won because of repressive measures. The election campaign was furthermore seen by the Party leadership as a preview of the power--military, police, financial and the church--that Balaguer could muster against an opposition reformist party.[1] The PRD also realized the feebleness of the democratic institutions through which it was expected to carry on a viable opposition campaign. A nation which has been weaned on a history of paternalism, personalism and military intervention does not easily adjust to the rigors of democratic practice, especially a democracy that was haphazardly constructed and poorly supported. Finally, the PRD understood that the Dominican people still retained an image of the Party as the major proponent of revolutionary change in the country. For the PRD to assume the position of "loyal opposition" was tantamount to turning away from all those who fought and died for the "constitutionalist cause" in the 1965 civil war. The PRD was too proud a political party to stand idle while the Balaguer regime governed the Dominican Republic.[2]

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[1]See James Petras' "A Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration" for a detailed account of the problems encountered by the PRD in the 1966 election campaign and its aftermath.

[2]Although Bosch accepted defeat on June 14, 1966 he promised a vigorous opposition fight. See El Caribe (Santo Domingo) for June 14, 1966.

Despite these serious reservations about the advisability of participating in the new democratic experiment of President Balaguer, the PRD smoothed over its feelings of apprehension and began forming an opposition strategy that would meet the policies and actions of the Balaguer government. The early opposition strategy of the PRD was based on a series of exchanges between Juan Bosch and President Balaguer in the 1966 elections. Balaguer, perhaps sensing his impending victory in the upcoming elections, but recognizing the power of the PRD, suggested that the two parties engage in some form of cooperative politics after the election.[3] The cooperation would be in the form of a unity or coalition government based on joint consultation and non-partisan cabinet appointments.[4]

Juan Bosch never really accepted these suggestions of Balaguer. To Bosch cooperation as Balaguer presented it was cooptation in disguise and certain death for the PRD as a distinctly revolutionary party. Bosch stated that coalition government was "impossible" since it would only "leave

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[3]Balaguer on a number of occasions suggested that the two major parties enter into this coalition, but his statement on the day of his electoral victory sums up his inclination to create a unity government. See El Caribe, June 6, 1966. After some seven years of political repression against the PRD it is very difficult to believe that Balaguer actually was serious about some form of coalition government.

[4]Later revelations of Balaguer showed that there was talk in June, 1966 of forming a National Front on the example of Colombia where the two major antagonists would alternate in power every four years.

the (opposition) road to others."[5]

The PRD may have been deeply disturbed over its new role as government opposition, but the Party eventually did make a decision to participate in the Dominican political system of Joaquín Balaguer. Bosch and the Party leadership was not about to allow the PRD to become a puppet of the government or another in a long line of indistinguishable minority parties. The PRD would work in the system, but it would not be used or manipulated by that system.

Even though the PRD had carefully avoided any acceptance of Balaguer's cooperative opposition overtures, the Party in the post-election period made some basic concessions which showed its willingness to tone down its revolutionary rhetoric. The first tangible sign of the PRD's desire to develop a working relationship with the Balaguer government came with the introduction of the "Oposición Creadora" strategy.[6] "Oposición Creadora," as defined by Bosch, was designed as a much stronger approach to anti-regime behavior than Balaguer planned on. "Oposición Creadora" pledged the PRD to an opposition role that sought to lessen tensions between government and the Party. The strategy, however,

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[5]El Caribe, June 13, 1966; also see Ahora, June 20, 1966.

[6]See "El Gobierno de Balaguer y la 'Oposición Creadora'" in Ahora, June 27, 1966 for the most concise explanation of what the PRD's first opposition strategy consisted of.

did not compromise the right of the PRD to challenge the policies and actions of the Balaguer regime. The principle of "Oposición Creadora" also assured the national government that PRD technicians and administrators, so vital to national reconstruction, would be encouraged to lend their assistance to the development of the nation.[7]

Perhaps the most significant aspect of "Oposición Creadora" was that it did not seek the downfall of the Balaguer regime. "Oposición Creadora" was not a strategy of strikes, demonstrations or even revolutionary rhetoric. The first PRD opposition strategy was rather an open-minded attempt by the Party to coexist in the new political system set up by the Balaguer forces. The spirit of "Oposición Creadora" suggested that the PRD realized the importance of engendering some degree of order and cooperation into a war-torn political system. Furthermore, even though Balaguer's victory was repugnant to the PRD, the mild-mannered president was thought by many Party faithful to be the best of all possible evils, and therefore should not be viewed as a hated tyrant that must be toppled.[8]

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[7]Ibid.

[8]It is a well known fact that some members of the PRD including Juan Bosch hold no real animosity toward President Balaguer. Some had Balaguer as their law professor at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, while others were on good terms with the shy but friendly president. There was definitely no sign of the intense hatred that Trujillo engendered in opposition forces.

The extreme caution that the PRD opposition showed as it entered into its role of "loyal opposition" was soon justified. The so-called democratic structures of the Balaguer administration fell prey to the ingrained paternalism and social antagonism that have long been a part of Dominican politics. One of the first areas where the PRD noticed the failure of democratic opposition politics was in the Dominican Congress. After some initial weeks in which the Dominican legislature functioned in an atmosphere of cooperation and professional confidence, the PRD quickly realized that the Balaguer regime was not interested in the proposals of the five PRD senators and twenty-six deputies. Countless examples can be forwarded which reveal the utter futility encountered by the PRD legislative bloc as they attempted to conduct themselves as the "loyal opposition." PRD legislative proposals ranging from pay raises for the urban workers to public service projects for outlying areas to attempts at breaking the nation's ties with the United States were systematically ignored, emasculated or reworded by the Partido Reformista majority in the legislature.[9] Even minor bills concerned with Dominican television commercials and

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[9]To PRD legislators the most offensive action of the PR congressmen was their close cooperation with foreign economic concerns like the Falconbridge Nickel Company and the Gulf and Western Company which reaped huge land and tax concessions from the Balaguer dominated Dominican Senate and Chamber of Deputies.

child centers were ignored by the Balaguer majority, only later to be reintroduced as government sponsored bills.[10] The controversial "Ley Tregua" bill (sponsored by Balaguer and designed to curtail political activity three months prior to any election) was perhaps the only piece of legislation in which the PRD Congressional delegation showed some effectiveness. After a huge propaganda campaign by the Party and enormous pressure placed on the president, the bill was withdrawn.[11]

Besides these daily signs of unwillingness on the part of the president and his legislative majority to conduct politics with a measure of respect for the PRD, the opposition bloc of the PRD also had to face the constant dependence of the Partido Reformista leadership in the Congress on Balaguer. According to one former PRD legislator, the opposition delegation soon recognized how legislative politics were really being conducted.[12] The Partido Reformista majority was under the complete tutelage of the

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[10]One former PRD deputy, Emmanuel Espinal, who at the time of my visit was the Party's press secretary, talked at length to me about the corruption of legislative practice in the Dominican Congress. Espinal had a seemingly endless list of stories about the unfortunate state of legislative politics under the Balaguer administration. Interview, July 10, 1972, Santo Domingo.

[11]El Caribe for August 12th and 13th and August 30th, 1966.

[12]These additional viewpoints about Dominican legislative politics were gained from an interview with former PRD deputy Ruben Suro. Interview, July 15, 1972, Santo Domingo.

Balaguer regime and acted as its "messenger" in the Dominican Congress. The legislature was so lacking in democratic procedure and professional autonomy that the PR leaders frequently telephoned the National Palace to receive instructions from the President on how the PR should stand on a key legislative question.[13] The only conclusion that the PRD legislative bloc could arrive at was that the Dominican Congress had lost its legitimacy as an open and autonomous institution and that effective opposition activity was hopeless. The Reformista majority was unwilling to conduct its business in a spirit of cooperation and non-partisan bargaining, and furthermore was unable to break away from the traditional practices of paternalistic leadership.

PRD Opposition under Peña Gómez

The failure of democratic opposition politics in the Dominican legislature was but a small indication of the difficulties that the PRD would encounter in Balaguer's political system. Soon after the installation of the Balaguer government, the problems of the PRD in the legislature were expanded to other realms as Party activists throughout the country became the target of harassment, injury,

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[13]Suro pointed out that not only were the PR legislators dependent on Balaguer for instructions, but they were well rewarded for their obedience with lucrative kickbacks. On the other hand Suro stated that he could safely state that no PRD legislator made anything above his salary while in office.

incarceration and assassination. The Dominican newspapers recorded almost daily a picture of political repression against the PRD. It seemed that the Balaguer government had now decided not only to frustrate the PRD opposition, but also to destroy its very foundations. The cries of the PRD leadership to stop the onslaught against the Party went unheeded as President Balaguer seemed to possess neither the power or the desire to act affirmatively against the terror.[14] It appeared that opposition politics was on the verge of returning to its most primitive, Trujillista state in the Dominican Republic as democratic opposition was replaced by an all-out effort to crush legitimate dissent.

The inability of the PRD Congressmen to participate effectively in the Dominican legislature coupled with the increasing terror present in the country prompted the PRD leadership, under the guidance of Juan Francisco Peña Gómez, to "phase out" the principle of "Oposición Creadora." Peña Gómez, who took over the PRD leadership after Juan Bosch decided to leave the country for Europe in November, 1966, pronounced a strategy of hardnose opposition that aimed at vigorously replying to the oppressive nature of Dominican politics. Under Peña Gómez the PRD no longer sought to

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[14]The question of Balaguer's ability to control the violence is a crucial one and will be discussed at length in Chapters 6 and 7. The question of violence and police power is central to Dominican politics since it is connected with the whole problem of determining exactly who runs the Dominican Republic.

meet with Balaguer and work towards cooperative policy-making. Peña Gómez actively criticized the government either in newspaper interviews, official party pronouncements or over the Party radio program, Tribuna Democratica. The PRD as a whole took on a more forceful anti-Balaguer posture as the younger, more radical Party leaders expressed no desire to be shackled by Balaguer's promise of opposition guarantees and smooth democratic procedure. To the PRD leadership the masquerade was over. Opposition politics would be played in the traditional Dominican manner with those in power oppressing the groups out of power, while the minority fights to retain its influence and its very existence.[15]

Although Peña Gómez instilled in the PRD a more realistic understanding of opposition politics in the Dominican Republic, the fiery leader was more adept at opposition rhetoric than opposition organization and discipline. Under Peña Gómez PRD opposition strategy took on an increasingly disparate and ill-conceived appearance. The PRD seemed listless without Juan Bosch at the controls. The Party lost adherents, its finances dwindled, its local organizations fell into disarray, and most importantly its leadership cadre

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[15]See Ahora, August 7, 1967 and October 9, 1967 for some examples of Peña Gómez's new stand toward the Balaguer regime. The official announcement by Peña Gómez of a new policy of opposition vis-à-vis Balaguer's government can be found in El Nacional (Santo Domingo), November 1 and 7, 1966.

openly voiced criticism of the young and "immature" leader of the Party.[16]

Peña Gómez faulted his own leadership and publicly announced the grave troubles the Party was in as a result of government repression.[17] But the self-criticism of Peña Gómez would not replace a cohesive opposition strategy which set forth dynamic guidelines to challenge Balaguer and the legitimacy of his regime. The PRD under Peña Gómez was merely reacting to the actions and policies of the national government, rather than mounting a large scale offensive against Balaguer.

In defense of Peña Gómez some PRD activists stated that even though the Party experienced "difficulties" without Bosch at the helm, his young protégé performed admirably under great stress from conservatives in the Party and from increasing harassment and repression by the government.[18] Despite such examples of understanding and praise, the fact remains that the PRD under Peña Gómez slowly became

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[16]It is perhaps interesting to note that when older PRD leaders talk about the Party under Peña Gómez they fault the radical leader for his "immaturity," but younger PRD faithful praise his courage and his early recognition that democratic opposition was doomed to failure.

[17]Peña Gómez once threatened to quit the Party leadership. See El Nacional, October 27, 1967. Also once Bosch returned from Europe, Peña Gómez made a public criticism of his leadership of the PRD. See El Nacional, September 26, 1970.

[18]Interview with Emmanuel Espinal, June 9, 1972, Santo Domingo.

indistinguishable from other opposition parties in Dominican politics. At a time when the Party was most in need of leadership and a strategy for answering the activities of the Balaguer regime, the PRD could only stab back aimlessly at an enemy that was far too powerful to be challenged by a disorganized and disgruntled political party.

While the PRD opposition deteriorated in the Dominican Republic, Juan Bosch was sequestered in Spain preparing what the Party needed most--a strategy for meeting the repressive policies of Balaguer and for revitalizing the draining spirit and popularity of the PRD. The importance of Juan Bosch--the man, the strategist and the polemicist--could be seen by the frequency with which Peña Gómez and the hierarchy of the PRD consulted with the "asesor" (one of the titles Bosch held after leaving the Party leadership to Peña Gómez). The PRD waited anxiously for Juan Bosch, the strategies that he was developing, and the personal charisma that he brought to the Dominican people and to Party circles. PRD faithful felt certain that Juan Bosch was the only challenger worthy of opposing the power of President Balaguer and the makeshift democracy that he created and corrupted.

Despite the clamor within the Party encouraging Bosch to return home, the PRD leader was not eager to take up the fight for revolutionary change. Bosch seemed

satisfied to remain in Spain to write, to do research, and to direct the PRD from abroad. From his apartment in Benidorm in the South of Spain, Bosch sent forth a continuous flow of pronouncements castigating the Balaguer government, praising the bravery of the PRD activists and almost always criticizing the extent of United States influence in Dominican affairs.

Sensing the difficulties in the PRD, Bosch slowly exerted his influence as the PRD leader and began directing the Party toward a new opposition strategy which totally rejected any support of the existing Dominican political system. This new opposition strategy sought to push the PRD away from participation in the "sham" democratic procedures and guarantees of the Balaguer government and toward complete non-involvement in and legitimation of that regime. Even tough Bosch was absent from the Dominican Republic and from internal party politics, he was powerful enough to convince the Party hierarchy to readjust their strategy and begin shunning any actions which might register tacit acceptance of the present political system. The aim of Bosch's maneuvers was to have the PRD not only challenge the present regime, but also question its fundamental legitimacy as a true democracy and the rightful leadership group within Dominican society. Heretofore the PRD had merely responded to the actions of the government, but now

Bosch was determined to have the PRD attack the basic foundations of the Balaguer regime by concerted offensive action.

Bosch's first move in restructuring the PRD opposition strategy was to seek Party approval for the tactic of boycotting the 1968 municipal elections. Bosch felt that the abstention of the PRD from the elections would be a vivid comment on the lack of support for Balaguer's "democracy" and the power of the PRD to influence the extent of voter turnout. After a great deal of internal conflict in the PRD between moderate, pro-participation elements and radical abstentionists, the Party accepted Bosch's plan to have the PRD abstain from the 1968 elections. As the returns from the May election came in showing an abstention rate reaching levels anywhere from 400,000 to 750,000 votes, radicals in the Party felt that Bosch's new strategy of electoral boycott was a valuable means of exposing the weakness of the Balaguer regime among the Dominican populace.

The 1968 abstention tactic of the PRD was but a prelude to further actions by Bosch since the Party leader was committed to expanding the boycott of elections to a full-scale rejection of democratic practice as it was conducted in the Dominican Republic. The importance of electoral abstention as a signal of where PRD opposition strategy was heading was made more forceful by the signing

of the Benidorm accord in December, 1968. The accord, signed by a Commission of the Party's Executive Committee, stressed the diverse nature of the PRD organization and the mass support the Party could claim in Dominican society. The document further criticized the dependence of the Dominican Republic on the United States and pledged to liberate the country from this stifling relationship. Finally, and most importantly, the document stated that elections in the Dominican Republic are not a guaranteed means of victory, but can be seen under certain circumstances to be an acceptable means of achieving national independence.[19] What had started out under Peña Gómez as a seemingly desperate response to the repression of the Balaguer regime had with the Benidorm accord begun the transformation of PRD strategy to an opposition status outside the normal channels of the Dominican political system. Political participation along traditional democratic avenues thus became secondary as Bosch pushed and pulled the PRD to a new level of opposition strategy.

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[19] El Nacional, January 11, 1969. See also a discussion of the Benidorm accords in Boletion Buro Coordinador de la International Socialista en America Latina, Primer Trimestre, 1969, p. 201.

Bosch's Thesis of Popular Dictatorship

The decision of the PRD not to participate in the Dominican political system that was initiated with the electoral abstention in the 1968 municipal elections and solidified with the Benidorm accord provided the foundation for what was to become the Party's fundamental ideological position. Based on the rhetoric and actions of the PRD in 1968, it came as no surprise when Juan Bosch formally unveiled his long awaited thesis on democracy and national development.[20] Entitled Dictadura con Respaldo Popular--Dictatorship with Popular Support--the thesis sought to clarify the conflicting claims made about democracy in the Dominican Republic and the role that the PRD should play in forming the most realistic and effective framework for national development.[21]

The Bosch thesis expanded the position of the Party taken in the Benidorm accord by criticizing the lack of democratic institutions, procedures and guarantees in the Dominican Republic. In a situation of repression and illegality Bosch points out the utter impossibility of conducting fruitful democratic opposition politics. Besides these

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[20]It is important to point out that Bosch's thesis of Dictadura con Respaldo Popular was introduced incrementally starting as early as 1968, but was not formally published in book form until 1970.

[21]The heart of Bosch's thesis of Popular Dictatorship is contained in pp. 5-59 of El Promimo Paso: Dictadura Con Respaldo Popular, Santo Domingo, 1970.

common PRD complaints about politics in the Dominican Republic, the Bosch thesis enters new territory by claiming that Anglo-American democracy is unworkable in a developing Latin American nation.[22] The conservative social groups, the high degree of factionalism, the extreme poverty, the low level of political awareness and participation, and the influence of traditional customs and procedures in a country like the Dominican Republic make the formation of a representative democracy nearly impossible, if not foolhardy. Quite simply, Latin America, according to Bosch, is not prepared to practice Anglo-American democracy and can never hope to have success in staging fair elections, transferring political power or respecting the rights of oppositions.

What Bosch proposes in place of a traditional democratic framework is some form of benevolent dictatorship, or as Shils calls it "tutelary democracy."[23] The dictator would

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[22]For a fuller discussion of the Bosch thesis and its implications for Latin American politics see Howard Wiarda's "The New Developmental Alternatives in Latin America: Nasserism and Dictatorship with Popular Support," a paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies, University of California at Santa Barbara, November 6-7, 1970, also in article form in Western Political Quarterly (September 1972): 464-490.

[23]See Shils' article "The Military in the Political Development of New States," in The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries, ed: John Johnson (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 54.

be the head of a mass political movement much like the PRD. He would assume office (either by election or by some "forced" change of power) and conduct the affairs of state without the controls that an Anglo-American democratic system places on its leaders. Once in power the popular dictatorship would be constructed in the manner of a syndicatist state in which the various groups in society, such as the peasants or workers, feed demands directly to the center of power.[24] Because the popular dictator represents the masses of people, rather than specialized interests, he will speed the modernizing process and bring radical change to the nation unencumbered by elections, legislatures and opposition guarantees. As Wiarda states about the Bosch thesis:

> Bosch is arguing for a broad-based mass mobilizing movement, led by a popular party such as his PRD and committed to staying in power until national sovereignty and identity have been restored, until the foundations of a more just and democratic society have been firmly established and until far-reaching changes of socio-economic and political reconstruction have been effectively implemented.[25]

It is interesting to note just in the way of commenting on the Dictatorship with Popular Support that for all of Bosch's

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[24]Bosch's model of non-Western democratic change is quite similar to the Peruvian military regime which took power in 1968.

[25]Wiarda, "New Developmental Alternatives."

claims of developing a revolutionary means of democratic organization and national modernization, the structure of the "Dictatorship" is very similar to the paternalistic caudillo figure that Dominicans have recognized and followed for hundreds of years. The only aspect of the Dictatorship with Popular Support that has changed from the traditional structure of political organization is that a new segment of Dominican society will control the reins of power rather than the customary military-landed-business elite.[26]

The Bosch thesis of Dictatorship with Popular Support thus became the focal point for the PRD opposition to the Balaguer regime. With the enunciation of the thesis, the PRD left the Dominican political system and freed itself to challenge not just Balaguer, but his political system as well. The PRD would no longer participate in the institutions and procedures of Balaguer's system of paternalism, conservatism and repression. Instead the Party would concern itself with radical, anti-regime opposition activity that questioned the validity of the entire governing structure. Opposition thus took on a new appearance under the ideological guidance of the Bosch thesis. The Dictatorship

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[26]For a more comprehensive view of the traditional Latin American sociopolitical structure that Bosch's thesis seems modeled after see Howard Wiarda's "Toward a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Iberic-Latin Tradition - The Corporative Model."

with Popular Support had in effect raised the stakes of political competition in the Dominican Republic and warned the government that the PRD would no longer play opposition politics according to the rules set forth by Balaguer's psuedo-democracy.

Although the Bosch thesis of Dictatorship with Popular Support was introduced with much fanfare in the Dominican Republic and was hailed by many PRD activists as the only realistic opposition strategy the Party could adhere to, the thesis itself came under sharp attack from inside and outside the ranks of the Party.[27] Criticism initially was so strong that the thesis ran into difficulty attaining official status. Even when the thesis was formally accepted, strong pro-democratic elements within the Party continued to fight the claim that Bosch's Popular Dictatorship was the sole opposition strategy and future guidepost of the PRD. Critics continually harped on the vagueness of Bosch's model for democratic change and expressed fear that the so-called benevolent dictator could undermine the spirit of his position by becoming a tyrant in the tradition of Trujillo. For his part Bosch rejected these criticisms by stating that the thesis is an evolving framework that does not need precise definition

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[27]One of Bosch's sharpest critics is Juan Isidro Jimenes Grullon whose articles in Ahora took the thesis apart and criticized it extensively. For an example of such attacks see Ahora, June 1, 1970.

or written guarantees. Once in power the dictator, because he is a man of the people, will work in the best interests of the people.[28]

Despite the fact that the Bosch thesis has been attacked vigorously from all sides, the principle of Dictatorship with Popular Support has held the dominant position within the ideological configuration of the PRD. The influence of Juan Bosch has been so overpowering within the ranks of the Party that even though the thesis lacked unanimous support, it nevertheless continued to set the tone for the Party's position toward the Balaguer regime and its view of the future. The opposition rhetoric that the PRD sent out through its leaders, its literature and its radio program was founded on the Party's belief that the government of President Balaguer is corrupt and must be replaced not by an Anglo-American democracy, but by a new kind of democracy--the Dictatorship with Popular Support.

The Bosch thesis of Dictatorship with Popular Support, besides totally revamping the PRD's opposition strategy and its ideological vision, has had a noticeable impact in other areas of the Party's behavior as well. The PRD, in conjunction with its decision to abstain from Dominican

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[28]Party leaders continually claim that the thesis is being carefully examined and expanded by PRD theoreticians so that when the day comes for the Party to step into national power, the thesis will be sufficiently explicated that it can serve as the master plan for the revolution.

elections, also refused to align itself with other minority parties in a movement similar to a national front of opposition.

Parties such as the Social Christians (PRSC), Gen. Wessin y Wessin's personalistic Partido Quisqueya Dominicana (PQD), the Movement for Democratic Integration of ex-vice-president Augusto Lora (MIDA) and the Movement of National Conciliation (MCN) headed by Héctor García Godoy, along with other smaller parties, were anxious to form an opposition coalition and challenge Balaguer in the 1970 presidential elections.[29] Juan Bosch and the PRD were adamant in their rejection of such a coalition venture. Bosch often emphasized the desire of the PRD to remain aloof from the electoral process as a result of his commitment to the Dictatorship with Popular Support thesis. The PRD also saw itself as the most powerful and popular political party in the country and was not about to jeopardize that position by entering into an alliance that would lessen its visability and influence. As a result the PRD refused to enter into a union with the other "bungling" (as Bosch termed them) opposition parties in any form of electoral coalition.[30]

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[29]See El Nacional for April 17 and 19, 1970 for a discussion of these parties' attempts to bring the PRD into the coalition fold.

[30]El Nacional, April 30, 1970.

Without the presence of the PRD to anchor the coalition, the remaining opposition parties were unable to reach a firm accord on the national front of opposition. The weakness of the opposition parties without the PRD left the door open for Balaguer's victory in the 1970 elections.

Where Bosch and the PRD refused to unite in electoral coalition with the moderate to conservative opposition parties, there was also a grave reluctance on the part of the Party to link itself with the radical Left. Bosch, on numerous occasions, made every effort to castigate the Leftist Movimiento Popular Dominicana (MPD) for its brand of revolutionary politics. Bosch severely criticized the Marxist oriented militant tactics of the MPD saying that they only led to more violence and served no constructive purpose.[31] Bosch even went as far as to accuse the MPD of aligning with the Right-wing in a conspiracy to destroy the PRD and to assassinate key leaders like Peña Gómez. The attacks by Bosch on the MPD were perhaps his sharpest (sometimes even sharper than those against Balaguer) and were clearly intended to separate the PRD from the radical fringe. The PRD was definitely anti-system and increasingly anti-Anglo-American democracy, but it was not about to be replaced

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[31]The caustic interchanges between the MPD and Bosch were conducted from the end of the 1970 presidential election in May to October of the same year. Some examples of these attacks can be seen by examining El Nacional, September 2 and 3, 1970.

as the major revolutionary force in the Dominican Republic. With Bosch's announcement of the Dictatorship with Popular Support, the PRD felt that it had staked out the claim as the only real alternative to the Balaguer regime. The PRD was not going to abandon that claim by entering into agreements with weak minority parties or by supporting violent and doctrineless revolutionaries.

It is important at this juncture to stress the fact that Bosch, even today, is reluctant to link his theory of Popular Dictatorship with the revolutionary socialism of countries like China, North Vietnam and Cuba. Although he has visited many Communist and Socialist countries, Bosch has stated that he is not a Marxist-Leninist and does not believe that such ideological constructs would mesh with Latin American society and politics.[32] Despite his criticism of democracy and the United States, Bosch still maintains close contacts with some Western European democratic socialist parties, i.e., primarily in West Germany and Sweden, and talks more in terms of refining the socioeconomic basis of Dominican society rather than installing another foreign model of national development.

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[32]Although Bosch uses examples from the revolutions in Cuba, China and Soviet Russia, he is quick to separate the Dominican Republic and the PRD from too close a connection with the revolutionary environment in these countries and the need to develop a Marxist-Leninist revolution. See El Proximo Paso, pp. 107-124.

The Bosch thesis and PRD organization. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Bosch thesis of Dictatorship with Popular Support is the affect that it had on the PRD organizational structure. With the return of Juan Bosch to the Dominican Republic in 1970 from his self-imposed exile in Spain and with the extensive promulgation of his thoughts on democracy, the PRD took on a new appearance as an opposition party. The Party, which was in a shambles and hard pressed by government supported repression during Bosch's sabbatical, reexamined itself and initiated a widespread effort to prepare the Dominican citizenry for the eventual success of the Dictatorship with Popular Support. The PRD, after the 1970 elections and continuing on into 1972, went to work to reorganize the national Party structure.[33] The aim was to make the PRD more representative, and subsequently more in line with the requirements of the Bosch thesis. If the PRD was going to lead a mass movement that eventually would serve as the basis for national development, it had to go out into the campo and educate the peasantry and stir up their desire for radical change.

The reorganization efforts undertaken in the post-1970 election period were all-encompassing and persistent in their desire to restructure the Party and weed out members

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[33]El Nacional, September 11, 1970.

who were anti-thesis.[34] After an extensive housecleaning campaign, the PRD leadership began an education program which sought to make the Dominican citizen aware of the Bosch thesis and the corruption of the Balaguer regime. Everywhere one traveled in PRD circles little white books of Bosch's writings were given out to prospective PRD supporters. The books were designed to clarify the people's understanding of Bosch's views on the course of Dominican history and the possibilities for future change.[35]

Besides this purging activity and the emphasis on educational preparation, the PRD found it necessary to revert to a practice employed in the early 1960's of including all strata of Dominican society in its reorganization efforts. The Party sought to incorporate lawyers, doctors and other professionals into its ranks by developing social action programs. Prominent Dominicans were recruited to head various PRD professional groups and

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[34]One Party leader related to me that in some areas PRD organizers were not performing their duties of education and organization and in effect were helping the Balaguer regime by their laxity. Interview with Casimiro Castro, Santo Domingo, July 14, 1972. For the official announcement of the reorganization plan see El Nacional, October 17, 1970.

[35]The PRD has an extensive propaganda network. Besides its radio programs over the Party station, Tribuna Democratica, and the little white booklets of Bosch's thought, the Party has recently started publishing a monthly journal titled Politica (which according to Rueben Suro is doing very well). Also the Party publishes a monthly bulletin which discusses the internal organization and policy decisions of the PRD.

thereby bring a certain degree of respectability and increased legitimacy to the opposition movement and to the Bosch thesis.[36]

The most advantageous effect of the reorganization efforts of the PRD in the post-1970 election period was to create a spirit of enthusiasm and discipline.[37] Even though the Bosch thesis continued to be unpopular in some quarters of the Party hierarchy, it was quite evident that the principle of Popular Dictatorship reinvigorated the PRD and fired the minds of many youthful PRD supporters. With the Bosch thesis serving as the center of opposition strategy and forming a picture of future societal organization, the PRD found new hope in its minority position. Where the idealistic "Oposicíon Creadora" and the lackluster leadership of Peña Gómez brought only dissension and demoralization to the PRD, the thesis of Juan Bosch germinated a will to defeat the Balaguer regime and to implement a truly democratic system. Moreover the demands of preparing the Dominican

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[36]As an example of this decision to incorporate more middle class support for the Party see El Nacional, July 15, 1972 which discusses the PRD's attempts to initiate so-called "medical fronts" or teams of PRD-oriented doctors who will set up clinics to aid the poor of Santo Domingo.

[37]The PRD was so "alive" in these days that I found it extremely difficult to contact key Party leaders because they were out organizing or installing a new Party unit somewhere in the campo. In summer of 1972 when I was in the Dominican Republic the newspapers were constantly reporting on the organizational efforts of the PRD.

people for the Popular Dictatorship also instilled a quite visible sense of discipline and determination within the ranks of the Party. The PRD gave off the appearance of a very patient, methodical, political organization that was working diligently to lay the foundation for a future take-over of national power. PRD leaders after 1970 seemed quite prepared to wait whatever length of time until conditions were ripe for their ascension to national power. Bosch supported this position by stating the PRD would pick and choose its battles with Balaguer, while continuing its educational and mobilization efforts with the Dominican people.[38]

The transformation of the PRD after 1970 was so thorough and complete that the Party even broke away from its ties with the Aprista movement. Throughout its exile period and its participation in the ill-fated experiment in democracy during the early sixties, the PRD was always linked with the democratic Left reform parties or Aprista parties that can be found in many Latin American nations. With the advent of the Bosch thesis, the PRD shifted away from its Aprista ties and moved toward a new level of radical activism that Party leaders claim is modeled after the early

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[38]See El Nacional, January 18, 1972 for the best example of Bosch's "new" philosophy of opposition.

National Revolutionary parties such as the PRI of Mexico.[39] Bosch himself has criticized those like United States scholar Robert Alexander for suggesting that the PRD was indeed an Aprista type political party.[40] To Bosch, the PRD has left behind those parties that still cling to the hope of building Anglo-American style democracy in Latin America. The PRD, under Bosch, has seen the impossibility of achieving representative democracy in a Latin American context and has responded by opting for the model of revolutionary democracy which is more conducive to the special problems of an underdeveloped nation like the Dominican Republic.

The Current Status of PRD Strategy

Despite the desire to assert itself as a truly distinct and aggressive opposition political party, the PRD is continually faced with the reality that President Balaguer is a popular and powerful leader. The PRD, for all its claims of increasing popularity, organizational strength, and ideological inventiveness, cannot avoid the fact that the Party is in a minority position, that its leadership refuses to compromise with the Balaguer regime and that the

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[39]This link with the PRI of Mexico came as an answer to a question I posed to Emmanuel Espinal about how he would characterize the PRD as a political party in Latin America.

[40]El Nacional, May 10, 1972.

PRD's claim of future control of Dominican society is based on the hope of somehow being swept into power.

The serious predicament of the PRD was brought home vividly in early 1973 when the rebel leader of the 1965 civil war, Caamaño Deño, led a small guerrilla operation into the Dominican Republic that was quickly snuffed out by the military. In brief, Caamaño Deño and a group of some nine or ten Cuban trained guerrillas, landed on the South coast of the Dominican Republic in the province of Azua on February 4, 1973. The landing immediately was detected by military patrols. President Balaguer wasted no time in responding to the "mini-invasion" as he dispatched 2,000 troops to squelch the guerrillas and instituted a near state of seige. Balaguer's actions virtually closed down the major population centers and stifled all political activity. The importance of the invasion, however, was not necessarily that Caamaño Deño had returned to the Dominican Republic and attempted to renew the 1965 civil war, but that the Balaguer administration sought to link the PRD to the invasion and charged Bosch and Peña Gómez as the main organizers of the landing. Caamaño Deño and seven of the other guerrillas were killed within weeks of the invasion, but the PRD and its leaders were subjected to intensive harassment and

pressure from the government.[41]

Although the landing and its ramifications on the PRD will be discussed at greater length throughout the remainder of this thesis, it is important at this juncture to point out that the Party was severely damaged by this incident. The solidarity that had been achieved throughout the 1970-72 period as a result of the reorganization campaign was negated by the anti-PRD repression and harassment that followed the abortive coup attempt. The thesis of popular dictatorship still remained as the ultimate guideline and catalyst for political action in the Party, but the spirit of opposition was crushed to the point where it was most difficult to recognize any attempt to expand or refine strategy options. Instead a new makeshift strategy of simple survival surfaced and now seems securely entrenched within Party circles. The PRD has become noticeably silent and disorganized with no real plan for responding to the attacks of the government or for reconstructing a viable opposition posture.

The failure of the Caamaño Deño invasion and the repressive measures meted out against the PRD not only vividly point out the dilemmas of opposition party politics in the "democracy" of Joaquín Balaguer, but also express the

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[41]See El Caribe for the period from February 4, 1973 to May, 1973 when Bosch came out of hiding and "unofficially" ended the invasion controversy.

inappropriateness of Anglo-American models for political behavior. From a strictly American or British point of view it may seem very easy to criticize the historical development of PRD opposition strategy as ineffectual, overly ideological and simple wishful thinking. To the PRD, however, opposition based on the Bosch thesis is the only course the Party feels it can take. To oppose the Balaguer regime on its terms by participating in the legislature and in elections would only leave the Party open to government harassment, intimidation and probably embarrassment. Moreover, by its participation in the Balaguer political system the PRD would seem to be giving legitimacy to all the corrupted and anti-democratic aspects of that system. In the mind of the PRD its only recourse is to make the Party and the Dominican people as best prepared as possible for what the leadership hopes will be another opportunity to revolutionize the national political system. The Party is in effect banking on the basic instability of Dominican politics to bring it back into power. There is no question that the PRD is living with a dream of eventual victory, but to the Party leadership opposition that is only geared to the present reality of Dominican politics seems fruitless and counter-productive. Opposition of necessity must be future oriented and aimed at creating a new democratic political system for the Dominican people. The predicament of the PRD is not an enviable one

and can be viewed as perhaps a hopeless one. Candidly there is really very little the Party can do to extricate itself from the stifling atmosphere of present day Dominican politics. Whatever strategy it does develop is fraught with danger and the promise of Party dissension.

CHAPTER IV

THE TACTICS OF PRD OPPOSITION

In the preceding chapter we have seen the various phases of opposition strategy that the PRD passed through as it sought to resist the policies and actions of the Balaguer regime. In this chapter we will examine the PRD opposition more thoroughly by viewing the wide array of tactics employed by the Party in order to implement the Party's strategy decisions and to respond to the numerous campaigns of repression either initiated, sponsored or condoned by the Balaguer regime.

The tactics employed by a political organization, whether it be in political power or in the opposition, often times take a back seat to the overall strategy decisions enunciated by individual leaders or leadership groups. The theory and polemic of the strategy pronouncements, like Bosch's thesis, make more interesting reading and controversial discussion than an examination of the party's tactical responses to government policy and action. But in the case of the PRD, the tactics used by the Party to register displeasure (and in some cases horror) with the Balaguer government cannot be brushed aside. The PRD opposition tactics were not only the immediate challenges

to governmental policies and actions, but more importantly, they covered a wide range of maneuvers which were designed to achieve maximum protest, nationwide education of the citizenry and a curtailment, or at least a compromise, of adverse government policy-making. A study of political party opposition thus would indeed be lacking if an examination of opposition strategy was not complemented by an indepth investigation of opposition tactics. As we will see, effective political opposition in the Dominican Republic boils down not so much to strategic decisions, but to the choice of tactics and their implementation. A party like the PRD can designate a strategic framework for opposition and praise its vision and inventiveness, but if it is going to be successful in the role of opposition, the party must develop a gallery of aggressive tactical responses and deploy them with determination and courage.

The opposition tactics used by the PRD early in the post-1966 election period matched closely the spirit of "loyal opposition" that "Oposición Creadora" sought to achieve. Instead of badgering the Balaguer regime with a continuous barrage of criticism and hostility, the PRD was content to point out in a gentlemanly manner the course that the newly elected president should take. Juan Bosch met at least four times with President Balaguer to present his views on how the country should be guided after the 1965

civil war.[1] Newspaper reports characterized the meetings as friendly and intimated that a loyal, cooperative relationship was developing between the two major political leaders in the country.

In the legislature a guardedly hopeful spirit was also present as PRD Congressional leaders were content to introduce legislation and suggest changes rather than to criticize the President or his Reformista legislative majority. Only on matters of economic policy such as wages and benefits for the urban workers did the PRD show early signs of being angered by the policies of the government. Balaguer's austerity program, although an economic necessity, hit hard at the urban workers.

But despite the PRD warnings over the austerity program, the plight of the urban worker went unrecognized as the government pushed through its controls on wages and benefits.[2] The early refusal of the government to bend to

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[1]See the article by Georgie Anne Geyer reprinted from the Miami Herald in Listin Diario (Santo Domingo), June 13, 1966. Sacha Volman, a close friend of Bosch with connections in the Balaguer camp and the United States Embassy, was instrumental in arranging these meetings.

[2]El Caribe, July 6, 1966. The other crucial issue over which the PRD was at odds with the Balaguer regime was the reorganization efforts of the government in the sugar industry. The PRD opposition wanted the government to diversify and move away from dependence on the one-crop sugar industry. Balaguer for his part was interested in consolidating his power to control the sugar industry and to get as much out of sugar as possible, even if that meant the development of a symbiotic relationship with the United States.

the PRD demands on the economic issues alerted the Party leadership and its legislative bloc to the fruitlessness of conducting relations with a government that was not interested in consultation and compromise.

The honeymoon between both major political forces, as shown above, ended quite soon after President Balaguer took office. Although the unccoperative and undemocratic practices of the government only strengthened the belief of the PRD that the Balaguer regime was indeed corrupt, the attempted fire-bomb assassination of the PRD Senator Juan Pablo Casimiro Castro in a downtown Santo Domingo street severely shook the Party leadership and forced it out of its lethargy.[3] Casimiro Castro, at the time of the assassination attempt, was perhaps the second most popular figure in the Party and certainly one of the finest examples of a responsible legislator that Dominican democracy will ever see. Casimiro Castro had become unofficial spokesman of the PRD in the Dominican Congress and had worked hard to introduce legislation that would provide for the desperately poor of the country. In fact Casimiro Castro was one of the few Congressmen to listen to the wishes and perform services for his constituents. Thus because of his stature in the PRD

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[3]Casimiro Castro was riding in a cab on a Santo Domingo street when an unidentified assassin threw a phosphorous bomb in the car. Two other persons in the cab were killed, while Casimiro was burned on the right side of his body.

and in the Dominican Congress, the attack on Casimiro was viewed as an attack not only on the Party, but on Dominican democracy itself. The PRD felt it had to register some kind of protest.

The PRD decided on the tactic of the legislative walk-out as the most visible means of showing the Dominican people and Balaguer the seriousness of the attack.[4] The legislative walk-out came as somewhat of a blow to the Balaguer regime as the government was interested at this early date in creating a semblance of democratic procedure and legitimacy. On a number of occasions the President urged the PRD legislative bloc to return to the Congress and resume its duties.[5] For its part, the PRD held out until guarantees were made that the terror against the Party would cease.

After a series of meetings between the PRD leaders and the President, the Party leaders seemed satisfied that they had made their point and that attacks against Party activists would be curtailed. As a result, the PRD delegation returned to the Congress on May 26th after over two weeks of protest. It is interesting to note that the PRD legislative delegation was not in full agreement over the Party's return to the Congress. The majority consensus at

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[4]The legislative walk-out received extensive coverage in the Dominican press. See El Nacional, May 9, 1967.

[5]See El Nacional, May 8 and 16, 1967.

this early date was that the Party could accomplish more by being present in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. PRD legislative dissidents expressed skepticism over Balaguer's ability to control the terrorist forces in the country and the overall wisdom of lending legitimacy to the present political system.[6] The PRD legislative dissidents revealed perhaps the first real questioning within the PRD of the participation strategy to which the Party was adhering.

The opposition tactic of the legislative walk-out was used a number of times after the Casimiro Castro incident to express PRD displeasure over the internal political situation in the Dominican Republic. The PRD left the Congress to register complaints about general government harassment of Party activists, the closing of the Party radio station, and the irresponsibility of the Reformista majority in the legislature. The most serious of the walk-outs, though, occurred in April, 1969 when again the PRD retired from the legislature because of the increased level of violence that was present in the country.[7] As opposed to the 1967 walk-out, the PRD in 1969 was at the end of its rope due to seemingly endless attacks on Party activists.

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[6]El Nacional, May 26, 1967. Deputy Luis Vargas from Puerto Plata surfaced as the spokesman of the dissident group.

[7]El Nacional, April 15, 1969.

The Right-wing violence reached such an intensity during this period that the PRD threatened to remain out of the legislature permanently. President Balaguer again made his cursory promises of security and shifted a few National Police officials. The PRD. however, could not accept these gestures as genuine or sufficient.

Rather than remain an inactive legislative delegation during the walk-out, the PRD congressmen formed educational "car pools" that traveled all over the countryside informing the residents of the terror being meted out against the PRD opposition.[8] Casimiro Castro, (now healthy, but scarred for life) Peña Gómez, Senator Gíl Morales, Deputy Emmanuel Espínal and other Congressmen drove to as many towns and hamlets as possible in a show of force and courage. The PRD delegation eventually did return to the Dominican Congress for the final session before the 1970 elections, although some legislators refused to finish up their required term.

As the 1970 elections neared the PRD legislative bloc no longer harbored any hopes that the Party could function effectively and safely in the Dominican Republic. The legislators had done everything possible in their term to perform as responsible Senators and Deputies. When obstacles were placed in their way, the Congressmen responded as beat they could through the walk-outs and various propaganda efforts.

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[8]El Nacional, October 2, 1969.

Despite these efforts the PRD legislators realized that there was really nothing they could do from within the system to counteract the policies of the Balaguer regime.

The plight of the PRD legislators was but a microcosm of the dilemma the Party was in as a whole. The PRD was faced with a governing regime that would not recognize the rights and responsibilities of the opposition party. The problem for the PRD thus became how best to respond to this glaring neglect of democratic procedure. Obviously the legislature was not the proper arena to challenge the Balaguer regime. A new tactic would have to be implemented that would stir up the public to recognize the illegitimacy of Balaguer's political system.

The new major opposition tactic that came to the forefront of attention within the PRD was electoral abstention. Fueled by the disparaging views of Juan Bosch toward democracy in the Dominican Republic, the PRD leadership saw abstention as the only viable means of registering dissent. Electoral abstention seemed just the right tactic for exposing the illegality of the Balaguer regime and for showing the world the shallowness of its support. Through electoral abstention the PRD felt that it could move on the offensive and pressure Balaguer to respect the influence of the Party in the Dominican Republic. With the large numbers of PRD supporters in the nation, and what was termed a large mass

of "latent" support, the Party leadership was optimistic that the tactic of electoral abstention would succeed in establishing a strong bargaining position for the Party.

The desire, first, to abstain from the 1968 municipal election was a critical one for the Party. Many PRD moderates felt the Party would lose whatever influence it held in the political arena by relinquishing its electoral role.[9] But despite these warnings of the potentially serious consequences of abstention, the followers of Bosch's position prevailed. The majority of PRD leaders were not about to lend support to the Balaguer regime by participating in an election that was tinged with such great violence and illegality. Even if the PRD did participate and did win sizeable majorities, Party leaders reasoned that an electoral victory would be worthless since the Balaguer government was not about to permit the mayors and the city councils to function effectively.

When the May municipal elections were held, the proponents of the abstention policy claimed victory. The official election results showed that some 415,573 Dominicans abstained from the voting, the bulk of that figure

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[9]Casimiro Castro termed the abstention policy "incapaz" and led the fight within the PRD to curtail the movement toward electoral boycott.

coming from a reported 27% abstention rate in the interior of the country.[10]

Although the PRD could claim a moral victory as a result of the abstention rate, it must be stated that the determination of abstention is a point of conflict in the Dominican Republic. A truly scientific count of the electoral abstention is extremely difficult to achieve due to the problems of separating an indifferent from an intentional boycott, accurately accounting for newly enfranchised voters, determining the extent that votes for other minor parties were cast as a form of protest against the Balaguer government, and finally clearly deciphering whether those who boycotted the vote would have actually cast their ballot for the PRD, if the Party did participate.

To compound the difficulties with determining the rate of electoral abstention in 1968, some officials of the PRD stated that abstention was in reality in the neighborhood of 750,000 votes.[11] The reasoning behind this claim was that there are between 1.5 million to 2 million eligible voters in the Dominican Republic. When the total vote cast in 1968 was tabulated--approximately 957,480--it was not unreasonable to speculate that perhaps more than the 415,573 figure stated

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[10]Ahora, May 27, 1968, pp. 4-6.

[11]El Caribe, May 19, 1968.

by the Central Election Board abstained from the elections.[12] Unfortunately for the PRD position, no Party spokesman mentioned the fact that 1968 was an off-year, non-presidential election in which normally a lower voter turnout is expected. Yet despite such a disclaimer, there is evidence that the Party was justified in holding its ground on the extent of abstention.

One crucial aspect of Dominican electoral politics that may bolster the PRD's claim of extensive abstention in 1968 is the fact that voting is formally a national duty and informally an act that, if neglected, can have profound implications for the Dominican citizen. Dominican law states specifically that citizens eighteen or married are eligible to vote. Failure to vote is punishable by a fine of one to two hundred pesos. Only those seventy years of age, those living more than one hundred kilometers from the nearest polling place, and those who are physically unable to vote are exempt.

But besides these legal requirements, most Dominicans feel social pressure to vote. On voting day all citizens are asked to dip their finger in ink and have their forehand shaved as a sign that they participated in the electoral process. They are thus visibly marked as not only

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[12]The argument simply boils down to who do you believe--Balaguer's electoral committee or Bosch and the PRD.

voting, but as legitimizing the shape of Dominican democracy. To abstain from such a process can mean criticism from their peer group and, worse yet, trouble from the police and the military.[13] Thus for some 400,000 Dominicans officially to abstain in 1968 seems to show that a sizeable number of citizens were willing to place aside national duty, social ostracism and possible police harassment in order to register objection with the Balaguer regime.

Because of the great controversy over the success of the abstention in 1968, the extent of the boycott can also be seen from other perspectives. In 16 out of 26 provinces in the nation the abstention rate was such that Balaguer's Partido Reformista actually lost considerable electoral support, even though the party was victorious overall. To show the probable extent of electoral abstention, the popular vote from ten of the Dominican Republic's largest urban centers is listed below by political party. As a means of better understanding the rate with which Dominicans stayed away from the polls, the 1968 figures are compared with the 1966 voter turnout both by individual party and in total.[14]

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[13]Car registration forms and emigration visas are also connected with participation in the electoral process.

[14]These figures are from tabulations reported in El Caribe, May 16, 1968.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF VOTER TURNOUT IN THE 1968 AND 1966 ELECTIONS

District and Party	Year 1968	Year 1966	Total Vote 1968	Total Vote 1966
1. National				
Santo Domingo and vicinity				
Reformista	100,118	91,128	165,623	248,528*
PRSC	44,314	10,313		
MODACAPI*	8,432			
MPR**	8,316			
MIPCM***	4,443			
Total	165,623	101,441	PRD--147,087	
2. Higuey				
Reformista	4,047	14,971	17,086	23,161
Frente Indp. Higueyano	13,039			
Total	17,086			
3. Barahona				
Reformista	9,946	8,260	19,558	22,011
Independente	6,783			
PRSC	2,829			
Total	19,558			
4. Moca				
Reformista	18,847	30,807	32,808	42,372
PRSC	13,961	1,240		
Total	32,808	32,047		
5. Nagua				
Reformista	8,945	10,903	15,895	20,785
Movimiento Indp.	6,950			
Total	15,895			

Table 1--Continued

District and Party	Year 1968	Year 1966	Total Vote 1968	Total Vote 1966
6. Puerto Plata				
Reformista	17,693	22,530	25,467	32,246
Mov. Engrandeciento Popular	4,889			
Union Puerto Platena	1,743			
PRSC	1,142			
Total	25,467			
7. San Cristobal				
Reformista	29,141	33,427	37,081	52,527
PRSC	7,940	1,154		
Total	37,081	34,581		
8. San Juan Maguana				
Reformista	21,794	22,952	27,581	33,189
PRSC	5,787			
Total	27,581			
9. Santiago				
Reformista	39,881	60,206	83,358	95,303
Mov. Todo por Santiago	18,564			
Mov. Candidatura Conciliatoria	22,793			
PRSC	2,120			
Total	83,358			
10. La Vega				
Reformista	20,396	33,363	39,686	59,426
Agrupacion Indp. Vegano	16,578			
PRSC	2,712			
Total	39,686			

*Movimiento de Accion Capitalena Indp.
**Movimiento Republica Dominicana.
***Movimiento Independente.

As these election figures graphically point out, in eight of the ten cities the Reformista vote was less in 1968 than in 1966 (the National District and Barahona being the exceptions).[15] What happened in five of the eight cities where the Reformistas lost support is that independent political parties sprung up in an attempt to stymie a PR landslide. Although the independent party movement was successful in only one of the ten cities, these makeshift organizations were able to take a considerable amount of voter support away from the Reformistas. It is not known exactly how much PRD support was registered through these independent parties, but political analysts feel that there was some shifting of PRD allegiance to the small parties.[16] Perhaps the most significant figures from the ten cities is the total vote returns. What these figures point to is a quite considerable drop in voter turnout ranging from 82,805 in the National District to 11,940 in Santiago, the second largest city to 19,750 in La Vega, the third largest city.

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[15]One can indeed state that the 1968 election was an off-year contest and thus did not attract voters, but the PRD clings strongly to the belief that the low turnout was due to massive abstentions by Dominican voters. In fact in conversations with Emmanuel Espinal at the time of my visit, the PRD press secretary tried to support his case by stating that United States Embassy officials who were watching the polls during these elections told him (Espinal) that abstention was definitely a factor.

[16]Reuben Suro told me that there was large PRD support in these independent parties.

Again it is extremely difficult to confidently describe these losses as abstentions, but they certainly do point to a lack of interest in voting and a significant loss of Reformista support. When a governing political party loses 159,112 votes from its 1966 total national vote total (759,887 in 1966 to 600,775 in 1968) and over 400,000 are officially designated as political abstainers, then the only conclusion that can be arrived at is that the Partido Reformista of President Balaguer could not be characterized as a party with a secure hold in Dominican politics. In fact the 1968 elections raised grave doubts about Balaguer's aspirations in 1970 and fired the minds of the pro-abstentionist PRD activists.

Even though the abstention figures were impressive, and the PRD seemed to have made a vivid comment on the questionable popularity of the Balaguer regime, the tactic of boycotting the municipal election was not without its drawbacks. The abstention did indeed make a point about support for Balaguer's "democracy" in the Dominican Republic, but the fact remained that the Reformistas took over 54 of the country's city and town governments and all the patronage power that went with those governmental positions. The PRD, which once held a strong position in many of the municipalities of the Dominican Republic, was relegated to an outsider's role without any power or patronage. The PRD reveled in its

boycott victory by running a two-page advertisement stating "the People have won." Although the advertisement suggests that the people had registered a political protest of massive proportions, the PRD moved one step closer to a final rejection of the Dominican political system.

Despite the evident drawbacks that an abstention policy can bring to an opposition political party, the PRD continued to implement this policy in 1970. Again this decision brought anguished cries from PRD stalwarts like Casimiro Castro. In 1970, as in 1968, the voices of Juan Bosch and Peña Gómez carried more weight than that of Casimiro Castro. As Bosch stated, "to go to the polls is betrayal."

The silent protest that Bosch was seeking was again achieved in the 1970 presidential elections, although the PRD was expecting a much broader response than it actually did receive. Where the 1968 elections revealed a definite and widespread decline in Reformista support, the 1970 figures showed Balaguer regaining some of the support he lost in 1968, while other opposition parties like the MIDA, MCN, and the PQD made significant inroads into the total anti-Balaguer vote. Using 1966 as the base year for voting turnout comparisons, the 1970 turnout was 1,159,841 as compared to the 1966 figure of 1,345,404. Balaguer himself received 152,170 votes less than in his first term victory.

As in 1968, precise analysis of voter abstention is difficult, but again the PRD placed the figure around 700,000 to 800,000, while Balaguer made a statement that abstention in 1970 was much less than he expected. In order to again make a cursory judgement on the extent of abstention, the draining of Balaguer's popularity, and the steadfastness of the PRD support, the following table compares the vote totals for the major parties in the same ten cities for the years 1966, 1968 and 1970.[17]

The electoral figures of 1966, 1968 and 1970 in Table 2 point out that President Balaguer regained a solid portion of the popular support that did not surface in 1968. Only in Moca was the 1970 vote total for the Reformista ticket lower than in 1968. In all the other nine cities the Balaguer forces made significant advances over their performance in 1968. Also in the plus category for the Balaguer supporters was the increasing rate of citizen participation in the voting process. After the dismal showing of their party in 1968, the Reformistas were anxious to determine the depth of their support.

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[17]The figures in Table 2 are from Listin Diario, May 18, 1970.

Table 2

COMPARISON OF VOTER TURNOUT IN THE 1970, 1968 AND 1966 ELECTIONS

District and Party	Year 1970	Year 1968	Year 1966	Total Vote 1970	Total Vote 1968	Total Vote 1966
1. National						
				236,272	165,723	248,528
MCN	11,270					
MIDA	87,732					
PR + MNJ*	97,926	100,118	91,128			
PQD	28,318					
PRSC	11,026					
2. Higuey						
				23,874	17,086	23,161
MCN	523					
MIDA	8,730					
PR + MNJ	12,482	4,047	14,971			
PQD	1,975					
PRSC	164					
3. Barahona						
				19,214	19,558	22,011
MCN	839					
MIDA	4,286					
PR + MNJ	10,597	9,946	8,460			
PQD	3,143					
PRSC	349					

Table 2--Continued

District and Party	Year 1970	1968	1966	Total Vote 1970	1968	1966
4. Moca						
				34,296	32,808	42,372
MCN	1,466					
MIDA	3,972					
PR + MNJ	16,993	18,847	30,807			
PQD	7,649					
PRSC	4,216	13,961	1,240			
5. Nagua						
				17,423	15,895	20,785
MCN	311					
MIDA	1,633					
PR + MNJ	12,507	8,945	10,903			
PQD	2,705					
PRSC	267					
6. Puerto Plata						
				30,964	25,467	32,346
MCN	1,440					
MIDA	3,458					
PR + MNJ	20,443	17,693	22,530			
PQD	4,126					
PRSC	1,497	1,142				

Table 2--Continued

District and Party	Year 1970	1968	1966	Total Vote 1970	1968	1966
7. San Cristobal						
				43,889	37,081	52,522
MCN	1,684					
MIDA	5,984					
PR + MNJ	31,609	29,141	33,427			
PQD	3,376					
PRSC	1,236	7,940	1,154			
8. San Juan Maguana						
				31,398	27,581	33,189
MCN	736					
MIDA	1,382					
PR + MNJ	23,696	21,794	22,952			
PQD	3,162					
PRSC	2,422	5,787				
9. Santiago						
				78,437	83,363	95,303
MCN	4,432					
MIDA	15,235					
PR + MNJ	43,846	39,881	60,206			
PQD	8,863					
PRSC	6,061					

Table 2--Continued

District and Party	Year 1970	Year 1968	Year 1966	Total Vote 1970	Total Vote 1968	Total Vote 1966
10. La Vega						
				48,178	39,373	59,426
MCN	1,154					
MIDA	8,479					
PR + MNJ	21,710	20,396	33,363			
PQD	12,626					
PRSC	4,209	2,712				

*The Partido Movimiento Nacional de la Juventud (MNJ) is a minor party aligned with the Partido Reformista.

The final political party vote totals for the 1970 presidential election, according to official government figures, are as follows:

Partido Reformista	607,717
Partido Movimiento de Int. Democratica	240,557
Partido Quisqueyano Democratica	153,591
Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano	58,949
Partido Movimiento de Conc. Nacional	51,039
Partido Movimiento Macional de la Juventud	47,988
Total	1,159,841

To best understand the extent of voter participation in the 1970 elections, it is beneficial to make a comparison with the 1966 totals. In each of the ten cities tested the voter turnout for 1970, in most instances, matched quite closely the 1966 total. There is no question that by comparing the 1966 and 1970 voter turnout figures one can safely speculate that abstention was still an integral part of Dominican electoral behavior.[18] But at the same time, by using official election results, it appears that electoral participation in 1970 showed signs of returning to previous levels of citizen voting. PRD leaders would surely quarrel with such a conclusion and have told me that abstention was heavy in 1970 and greatly underestimated by political

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[18]For a good account of this controversy over the 1970 abstention rate see James Nelson Goodsell's article "Dominican Election Hardens Political Polarity" in The Christian Science Monitor, May 25, 1970.

analysts.[19] The official record, however, is the only guide to electoral participation in 1970 and it points to a decrease in the Dominican citizens' desire to boycott national elections.[20]

Whether the published figures were correct or the electoral analysis erroneous, the PRD again took pride in its base of citizen support, despite the government's campaign of repression. The PRD reasoned that the high abstention rate in 1968 and 1970 acted as a reminder to Balaguer of his tenuous position in Dominican politics and society. Yet in the face of this optimism, the PRD could not ignore the fact that the Party was no longer represented in any politically powerful offices in the country. The abstention of 1970 finalized the break with the Dominican political system. The PRD was truly in opposition.

With the PRD out of elective office and the Party leadership increasingly opposed to participation in a representative democracy, the PRD turned to other opposition

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[19]As in 1968 the PRD placed observers at the numerous electoral "mesas" in the country in an attempt to verify their claim of widespread abstention. The Party also sought to legitimize its claim by stating again that independent observers (unidentified United States foreign service officers) verified the fact that abstention was indeed widespread. Unfortunately, none of these claims were ever substantiated.

[20]For an overall view of the 1970 election and the problems of abstention and voting in the Dominican Republic see Howard Wiarda's "Dominican Republic: The Fuse Still Sputters," unpublished paper, 1970.

tactics to register protest against the Balaguer regime. Juan Bosch, upon his return to the Dominican Republic in 1970, sought to bait Balaguer through his nationally famous radio broadcasts. Bosch had always been adept at rousing the Dominican people with his noontime radio speeches, but as a result of the three-year absence of the PRD leader, the Party lost its most potent and effective opposition weapon. When Bosch came back to the Dominican Republic for the 1970 elections, the country once again could turn on their radios and hear the political haranges of perhaps their nation's greatest charismatic leader. Bosch is a master of political attack as his broadcasts never fail to recite the evils of the Balaguer regime, the sad state of the Dominican economy, and the glories of the PRD. From 1970 onward the Bosch radio programs were one of the main opposition channels used by the PRD to attack the Balaguer government.

The radio haranges of Bosch, although many times merely Party rhetoric, were most effective in forcing the government to answer the charges made by the PRD or to speed up action on a particular proposal that the Party saw as urgent. President Balaguer often felt that it was necessary to answer the charges of Bosch, a gesture which only pointed to the importance of the broadcasts and their expected impact on the Dominican citizenry. The use of

radio polemics may seem a weak opposition tactic in face of the overpowering political machine that President Balaguer has at his command, but in the Dominican Republic these shows serve as one of the best means of attacking the government and also spotlighting the PRD's real strength--Juan Bosch. As proof of the radio speeches importance to Dominican society and to the PRD, one need only watch the number of Dominicans who turn their radios on at noontime to hear the words of Juan Bosch.[21] Where legislative participation failed and electoral abstention struck deep at the Party's political power, the noontime radio speeches of Juan Bosch kept the Party visible, retained citizen interest in the PRD and its policies, and, most important of all, forced Balaguer to answer his accusers.

In conjunction with the stress placed on the radio attacks of Juan Bosch, the PRD, especially after 1970, attempted to focus world opinion on the extreme terror and harassment of the Balaguer regime by staging parades, threatening strikes and organizing vigilante groups. Ever since the 1966 presidential elections, the PRD had been the target of governmental sponsored or governmental condoned repression. But in 1970 and 1971 the terror increased to such an extent that the PRD felt drastic measures had to be

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[21]It is interesting to note that on occasion Bosch's radio show has been sponsored by Coca-Cola, one of those imperialistic economic concerns that the PRD constantly attacks.

taken if the Party was to survive. Roving bands of youth called La Banda (ex-MPD thugs who were bought off or pardoned by the National Police and conservative businessmen in exchange for violent services) were responsible for numerous attacks on PRD activists and the destruction of Party property. Even associations supportive of the PRD, such as the taxi and dock workers unions, were subject to terrorist attacks. As usual the 9,000 men National Police force seemed unable to control the youths.

The PRD did not wait for the Balaguer government to curtail the terror, but instead took the initiative with a number of tactics designed to either stop the violence or make the Dominican citizenry and the world conscious of what was going on in the country. The PRD, under the leadership of Peña Gómez, staged a number of parades in the Dominican Republic and in the United States (New York and Washington, D.C.) as one means of forcing Balaguer to crack down on the perpetrators of terror.[22] Although on a number of occasions the Balaguer government frequently refused to allow the Party to have a parade permit, the PRD persisted in its demand for a show of force and usually won the right to parade. The "manifestaciones" of the PRD were quite successful as the Party was often able to interest large numbers of people in

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[22]For more about the Washington, D.C. parade see El Nacional, August 25, 1971.

marching against the Balaguer regime. One such parade in 1970 was estimated at 10,000 people with some 2,000 cars blocking the streets of Santo Domingo.[23]

The PRD also made some effort to conduct one day general strikes in the country as another means of focusing attention on the internal condition in the country. This call for a general strike, although supported by the Party, never really was stressed by the PRD leadership. The strike effort thus received only minimum attention and interest from the Party. There were incidents of general strikes in Santo Domingo, San Cristobal, and Las Minas, but the PRD did not appear to be the central motivating force behind these efforts.[24]

As the terror in the country increased and Dominican Leftists became daily victims of La Banda violence, the PRD leadership decided to become more forceful in its opposition tactics. The PRD, at one point, threatened to start neighborhood vigilante committees as a means of protecting PRD supporters from Right-wing terrorism. The policy of "Tierra Arrasada" or "Clean Earth" was proclaimed by the PRD as its answer to La Banda.[25] The vigilante committees were to be

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[23]Bosch termed the demonstration a "march of silence." See El Nacional, March 15, 1970.

[24]El Nacional, December 9 and 15, 1970.

[25]Ibid., November 16, 1969.

organized through the local PRD barrio headquarters and would be responsible to the Party hierarchy. The policy of "Tierra Arrasada" was not clear on the matter of how the vigilante groups would protect themselves or how they would attempt to quell terrorist activity. But the importance of "Tierra Arrasada" was not so much in its implementation, since there is no real evidence of the movement actually getting off the ground. Rather the importance of the vigilante groups can be found in the unwillingness of the PRD to sit idly by and merely criticize the Balaguer government for its lack of protection. With the development of the "Tierra Arrasada" plan opposition to government supported terror took on militant perspective.

As evidence of the PRD's increased militancy toward the terror in Dominican society, the Party complemented its outward demonstrations against repression with a determined effort to stir up world opinion.[26] Juan Bosch claimed that the PRD had amicable relations with some seventy-six political parties throughout Europe and the developing countries. Using these parties as public opinion springboards, the PRD hoped to focus the attention of powerful governments, especially the United States, (since Balaguer depended heavily on

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[26]As an example of this propaganda policy see the article on Dominican violence in Boletin Internacional Socialista, November-December, 1971, p. 83.

United States aid and the sugar quota) on the violence and repression in the Dominican Republic.[27]

The public relations efforts of the PRD appeared to have contributed somewhat to the decline of political violence and the arrest of sizeable numbers of the La Banda group. United States newspapers became aware of the internal situation in the Dominican Republic and sent reporters to check out the allegations. Major United States papers like the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Miami Herald published scathing attacks on the Balaguer regime's inability to control the rampant violence.[28] Within days of these exposes, La Banda activity was curtailed as Balaguer's new chief of the National Police, Gen. Neit Nivar Seijas, made a determined effort to jail the terrorists and weed out their supporters within the military ranks. PRD leaders felt that where Party pressure had failed, the ploy of arousing world opinion had forced Balaguer to get his military supporters in line so as not to jeopardize U.S.-Dominican

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[27]Bosch in his travels to Europe spoke at Social-Democratic Congresses in Sweden and had conferences with Socialist leaders in Germany. It is alleged by some observers of the PRD that the PRD receives financial aid from the Frederick Abert Foundation, an organization connected with the Social Democratic Party in Germany.

[28]See A. Kent MacDougall's expose in the Wall Street Journal, September 7, 1971 as an example of the United States view of Balaguer's "democracy" that surfaced after Bosch decided to seek out world opinion on the internal situation in the Dominican Republic. It is no secret now that the United States put pressure on Balaguer to tone down the repression during the La Banda period.

relations. Terrorist activity against the PRD and members of Left-leaning organizations continues in the Dominican Republic, but the public relations activities of the Party have proven to be a useful tool in forcing the Balaguer regime to recognize the economic and international ramifications of government supported violence.

The PRD's arsenal of opposition tactics, despite the Party's quite visible increase in militancy, has never included violent revolutionary action. Party leaders stress the fact that the PRD is a revolutionary organization that will come to power not by guerrilla campaigns, but by widespread recruiting and educational efforts, intelligent use of opposition resources, and a firm belief that the opportunity to regain power will be afforded the Party. Furthermore, the PRD leadership has realistically appraised the internal situation within the country and has seen that the basic ingredients for effective guerrilla activity are not present in the Dominican Republic.

In the first place, the Dominican armed forces and National Police are well trained and equipped. Military aid and training from the United States and a huge budget (30%) has made the armed forces a formidable adversary for any guerrilla group. Secondly, the Dominican Republic is small enough that guerrilla activities on the scale of Cuba or Bolivia would not benefit from large uninhabited regions.

The Dominican shore line is well protected as army and police units are stationed throughout the country. A number of invasions against the Trujillo regime and the recent Caamaño Deño invasion near San Cristobal failed because the guerrillas were easily spotted and defeated.[29] Finally, the internal climate is such in the Dominican Republic that popular support for a guerrilla invasion would be questionable. The "era of Balaguer" has brought the Dominican people a reasonable amount of peace and prosperity. There is thus no reason to believe that these gains would be placed in danger by efforts once again to gather arms and renew the revolutionary effort. As far as traditional PRD thinking is concerned, the route of guerrilla activity to attain political power is not recognized as a viable alternative to the present course of preparing the nation for the Dictatorship with Popular Support. The Party may acknowledge the example of Castro or Guevarra and praise the successes of Cuba's revolution, but the PRD does not seem to be interested in paying the price for violent revolutionary change.

This view of non-violent revolution within the leadership ranks of the PRD may have to be further analyzed

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[29]The Caamaño guerrillas felt that they had strong support from the PRD and its leadership and thus were led to believe that once in the Dominican Republic they could begin the "second revolution." Both Bosch and Peña Gómez deny such a tacit understanding and the fact that the rebels received no popular support once in the country seems to substantiate the view that the invasion was an exercise in delusion.

in light of the 1973 invasion and its aftermath. The Balaguer government claimed that the invasion was planned and conducted under the leadership of Juan Bosch and Peña Gómez,[30] and was "a movement of aggression against the legitimate government" of the Dominican Republic. Because of such a view, the government sought out Bosch and Peña Gómez as the criminal perpetrators of the plot. Both Bosch and Peña Gómez denied the charges of Balaguer stating that they had no hand in the planning or execution of the guerrilla landing. Despite these denials some observers suggest that there were contacts between the PRD and the guerrillas, especially through Peña Gómez.[31] After the landing, even Bosch seemed to move beyond the traditional PRD position toward overt revolutionary activity by stating the Party, "has thousands of members who have had military instruction and experience since they took part in the revolution of April, 1965." Bosch further solidified his position as a newfound proponent of revolutionary activity by claiming the PRD was prepared to continue clandestine struggle against the Balaguer regime.[32] The alleged activities of Peña Gómez

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[30]See the Times of the Americas, April 4, 1973.

[31]There is some evidence available which suggests that at least Peña Gómez might have had sporadic contact with the Caamaño Deño group, but not enough to set up a full scale revolutionary situation. See Latin America, February 23, 1973.

[32]See the Times of the Americas, February 21, 1973.

and the increasingly belligerent comments of Juan Bosch should not be interpreted as meaning the PRD has decided on violence as the only means left for achieving national political power. But what these words and actions do point out is that as the hold of the Balaguer regime grows more secure, the PRD finds itself assuming the role of "outlaw" opposition and continually being backed into a corner. With this condition intensifying rather than abating, it should not be surprising to see the Party, or at least elements in the Party, begin to accept the option of violent revolution.

The strategies that the PRD developed to guide its opposition and the tactics that it employed to register its opposition have, as we have seen, been dictated by the shape and tenor of politics in Balaguer's Dominican Republic. The necessity for restructuring the Party's strategy positions with respect to the Balaguer regime and the intensification of its tactical responses point to the quandry that the PRD is in as the major opposition force in Dominican politics. As the Party views its position in contemporary Dominican society, there is really not much more the leadership can do short of advocating revolution to create the atmosphere it believes is necessary for a new Dominican society. It is not the PRD that will have to change, it is rather the "rules of politics" as played in the Dominican Republic that will have

to readjust so that modernization can be brought to all societal groups and legitimate dissent can be registered without fear of retribution.

CHAPTER V

INTERNAL PARTY POLITICS IN THE PRD; THE PROBLEMS OF DISSENSION, FACTIONALISM AND SEPARATION

Political parties in power, despite their external appearance of strength and self-assurance, are in reality highly fragile organizations. Parties in positions of national dominance are deeply influenced by a complexity of political circumstances, ideological positions and personal interactions which force them to constantly reevaluate and readjust their status vis-à-vis the groups that are in opposition. Dominant political parties thus often function in a state of flux as the element of power politics places them into conflict situations that many times threaten their unity and continued hold on the reins of national government.

When the discussion of parties, however, shifts to the internal condition of the opposition organization, the above view does not change, but rather is amplified. Opposition parties also seek to exude the sense of confidence and dynamism that attracts voters and intimidates the governing regime. But behind this facade of unity and vigor, opposition parties often times reveal deep inner conflicts that create disruptive factionalism and threaten the eventual destruction of the party structure.

Because of the inherent dangers that can arise once a political party is in a secondary power position, this chapter will be concerned with investigating the history of internal politics within the PRD leadership structure. The major emphasis of this study will be on examining two crucial areas of party activity: (1) an examination of the ideological and tactical disputes that caused divisions in the PRD since 1966, and (2) a general analysis of the PRD organization touching especially on the questions of factionalism, discipline and cohesiveness, and the relationship developed between members of the leadership cadre.

Internal Party Disputes

The critical problems within the PRD leadership did not develop until Juan Bosch left for Europe to write his controversial thesis on Dictatorship with Popular Support. Prior to Bosch's departure the Party was mainly concerned with analyzing the June electoral loss to Balaguer and reviewing its newly acquired opposition status in the Dominican political system. By October, though, with the convening of the Congress (in which the PRD was for the first time a minority) and the drafting of the new Balaguer constitution, activity within the Party increased. In its national convention the PRD took the first steps toward revitalizing the Party apparatus by naming a new executive

committee and pledging a massive organizational effort.[1]

In the convention Juan Bosch, as a prelude to his decision to leave the country, stepped down from his position as president of the Party and left the control of the organization in the hands of Peña Gómez. Bosch did accept the title of "asesor" and stated that the PRD was in a solid position as an opposition force and not rife with dissension and Left-wing fanaticism as some journalistic interpretations had suggested.[2] The PRD, on the eve of Bosch's exit from the Dominican political scene, thus tried to give off the appearance that it was on the road to recovery and filled with organizational enthusiasm. The external observations of disorder and conflict in the Party, according to official PRD statements, were merely the signs of change and increasing strength. The PRD was a dynamic party in a period of introspection and reformation.

Despite Bosch's positive view of party organization, long standing personal antagonisms and disagreements over ideology and policy were brought out into the open. Conservative PRD leaders such as Martínez Francisco and José Brea Peña sharply criticized what they felt was a visible shifting toward Leftist ideology under the tutelage of Peña Gómez.

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[1]See El Nacional, October 24th through October 29th, 1966.

[2]Bosch stated that the PRD was not in the throes of factionalism but was engaging in a new form of organizing.

Martínez and Brea claimed that the PRD membership was predominantly moderate and completely against the leadership course taken by Peña Gómez. The two dissident leaders stated further that if the PRD continued to advocate a "hard-line" toward the Balaguer regime, they had no choice but to form their own "ortodox" PRD as a means of preserving the Party's traditional democratic values.[3]

Martínez and Brea did offer the radical PRD leadership some room with which to bargain by pledging to curtail their efforts at creating another party if the PRD sought the resignation of such prominent leaders as Jottín Cury and Rafa Gamundi (and if possible Peña Gómez as well).[4] With these men out of the picture, the "ortodoxos" (as they came to be called) hoped to keep the PRD within the boundaries of its "Oposición Creadora" strategy, instead of moving toward radical political opposition as suggested by Bosch and Peña Gómez. It must be emphasized that both Martínez and Brea were strong advocates of the cooperative approach toward opposition and went so far as to accept positions in

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[3]El Nacional, November 3, 1966 and December 2, 1966. Martínez continually claimed that the PRD was being infiltrated by the Communists and had to be purified. Martínez' claim is not far-fetched as there has long been knowledge of Communist infiltration of the PRD labor sector.

[4]Ahora, January 23, 1967. The so-called deal was made at a meeting between the "ortodoxos" and the Party regulars set up by Manuel Fernandez Marmol, the political officer of the PRD at that time and a supporter of a moderate opposition stance. Needless to say the request of the "ortodoxos" was never recognized.

the Balaguer cabinet while still members of the PRD.[5]

Martínez and Brea were not alone in their crusade for party reform along moderate, if not blatantly collaborationist, lines. Influential PRD leaders like Jose Molina Ureña, Enriquillo del Rosario Caballos, Jaime Acosta Torres and Juan Casanovas Garrido--all PRD leaders from its early days in 1962--expressed doubt over the "emotionalism" of the new leadership and its inability to face the "reality" of politics in the Dominican Republic. Molina Ureña, who was Speaker of the House during Bosch's presidency, (and who eventually accepted a position as the Dominican representative to the United Nations) candidly criticized the radical drift in the PRD. Molina stated the Party should be more realistic in its opposition stance and hinted that some form of collaboration with the Balaguer regime was sound policy.[6]

It was not surprising that the PRD leadership looked with great disfavor on the actions and statements of men like Martínez, Brea and Molina. The discipline committee of the PRD, upon hearing of this movement to create a rival

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[5]Martínez Francisco was appointed Secretary of Finance and Brea Peña was named Secretary of Industry and Commerce. Both Martínez Francisco and Brea Peña have long been considered the closest contacts of the PRD in the United States Embassy.

[6]El Nacional, January 7, 1967.

party and reacting against the collaboration of some leaders with the Balaguer government, promptly expelled the "ortodoxos" from their ranks. The expulsions served as a warning to all others that participation in efforts to change the Party's opposition policies would meet with a quick exit from the membership ranks.[7]

Although the "ortodoxos" could point to what seemed to be substantial high level support among old line PRD figures, the effort to redirect the Party away from its radical stance was orchestrated by Martínez and Brea. Both worked tirelessly to make their position known within the Party. Their main objective was to call an "ortodox" convention which would serve as the arena for their charges that the leadership of Peña Gómez was ruining the political future of the PRD. Needless to say both dissident leaders ran into considerable difficulty in their efforts at forming an "ortodox" convention. There were recorded instances of fights breaking out between local PRD barrio organizers and representatives of the Martínez-Brea group.[8] Despite these obstacles, Martínez and Brea continued their organization

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[7]El Caribe, February 3, 1967. Both Molina Ureña and Rosario Caballos were expelled from the Party, while Torres Acosta was suspended for a year. At an earlier Party meeting Martinez Francisco was expelled and Brea Peña quit the Party in support of his friend.

[8]El Nacional, October 15, 1967.

and educational campaign to bring as many moderate PRD activists into their ranks as possible.

In order to achieve their goal of setting up a national convention and eventually a rival PRD, Martínez and Brea hoped to entice the PRD leader of Santiago, Antonio Guzman, a former cabinet minister in the Bosch government in 1963 and a would-be compromise candidate for president during the 1965 revolution, into their ranks. Guzman was a powerful figure in the Party and could be influential in switching the power base of the PRD away from the radical element in Santo Domingo.

The work of Martínez and Brea to secure Guzman's support went to naught as the Santiago leader refused to associate himself with the dissident movement. Undaunted, however, by this serious setback, the reform convention was held on December 3, 1967 in Santiago.[9] Martínez and Brea played up the meeting as a significant challenge to the regular PRD organization, but in reality the attempt to set up a counter structure failed dismally. The PRD organization held firm behind Peña Gómez and saw the conservative-

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[9]Ibid., November 30, 1967. Martínez boasted at the large turnout and the potent challenge that had been directed at the regular PRD, but there was never any doubt that the convention was a weak response to the course that the Party had taken under Peña Gómez. Many PRD leaders took pleasure in the defeat of Martínez since he had been a hated figure in the Party ever since his alleged collaboration with the conservative military elements in the 1965 civil war.

collaborationist policies of the "ortodoxos" as self-defeating and a mockery of all the Party stood for in Dominican society.

Although the "ortodox" movement was never able to get off the ground, the efforts of Martínez and Brea to turn the PRD away from its radical stance were not totally in vain. In August of 1967 the PRD added three moderate members to an expanded Executive Committee.[10] Virgilio Maynardi Reina, Manuel Emilio Ledesma Perez and Jacobo Majluta, all with some inclination toward the "ortodox" position, assumed influential positions within the PRD hierarchy. The official rationale offered by the Party was that the PRD, in order to remain a cohesive and active opposition force, had to "modify" some of its views. But published reports point to the fact that moderates within the PRD leadership pressured Peña Gómez to accept the three new members as the only acceptable alternative to save the Party from disastrous factional disputes.[11]

Peña Gómez, for his part, reluctantly agreed to the new additions stating that it was necessary to include three moderates in the Executive Committee "who do not frighten the oligarchy." Probably the best analysis of the Peña Gómez decision comes from the Dominican Communist Party

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[10] Ahora, August 7, 1967.

[11] Ibid.

(PCD) which speculated that the PRD leader was forced to make the Executive Committee additions because middle-class supporters of the Party were threatening to hold back financial aid if the Party did not modify its ideological positions.[12] The moderate changes agreed to by Peña Gómez revealed that the PRD was in the midst of a serious internal dispute that questioned the authority of the leadership and the opposition strategies of the Party. The efforts of Martínez and Brea to challenge the PRD may have failed, but their movement for moderation refused to die. The initial compromise with the moderate-conservative elements was but the beginning of a long struggle for control of the Party and the guidance of its opposition capabilities and strategies.

The news of the change in the PRD Executive Committee greatly angered Juan Bosch. From his home in Spain Bosch promptly rejected the title of "asesor" and expressed disgust that the PRD had bowed to conservative pressure.[13] Bosch's vehement criticism of the new developments in the PRD sent Peña Gómez on an emergency trip to Europe to meet with Bosch and analyze the deteriorating situation within

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[12]See El Nacional, June 16, 1967. Obviously the PCD recognized at an early date that the PRD was receiving pressure from moderate middle class contributors to tone down its radical rhetoric.

[13]Ibid., August 3, 1967. Bosch termed his decision "irrevocable."

the leadership cadre of the Party. The talks between the two PRD leaders centered on the growing separation evident in the Party and the distinct possibility of two groups forming. Where the Party hierarchy took a somewhat casual, unconcerned attitude toward the efforts of the "ortodoxos," Bosch and Peña Gómez seemed increasingly disturbed by the growing sentiment for moderation in the Party's opposition approach.

The Bosch-Peña Gómez talks proved vitally important to the future of the PRD. Juan Bosch, realizing the intense pressure that Peña Gómez was under from moderate elements in the Party, came to the aid of the young leader and used his considerable influence in the Party to sway the membership toward radical opposition. But besides Bosch's pledge of increased involvement in everyday party affairs, the task of radicalizing the PRD rank and file was made much easier by the mounting repression against party activists and the obvious failure of democratic institutions. With the normal avenues of opposition politics being increasingly closed to the Party through repression and terror, radical alternatives for registering political dissent were given more and more of a hearing within the PRD.

The primary radical alternative that Bosch and Peña Gómez worked tirelessly to implement was electoral abstention. Both Party leaders felt that where legislative action,

legal procedure and cooperation with the government had failed to curb the excesses of the Balaguer regime, a sizeable drop in voter turnout in the 1968 municipal elections would embarrass the government and reveal the true strength of the PRD. The call for electoral abstention was not an easy step to take since much more was at stake for the PRD than merely making a point about the popularity of Balaguer. The boycott held serious implications for the future of the Party and its role as an opposition force in Dominican politics. The plea for the electoral boycott by Bosch and Peña Gómez was designed to go beyond its stated goal of showing Balaguer's lack of public support. Abstention was seen as laying the groundwork for divorcing the PRD from participation in the Dominican political system. The two radical leaders felt that if they could be successful in convincing the PRD membership to accept the abstention policy, the first step would have been taken towards redirecting the Party away from tacit acceptance of the Balaguer regime to revolutionary opposition which aimed at ridding Dominican society of his government.

Because of the long range implications of the abstention policy favored by Bosch and Peña Gómez, the PRD became embroiled in its most serious internal confrontation as an opposition party. The tension that had been building in the Party since the days of the "ortodox" movement came

to the surface and began separating the membership into two distinct camps. The main battleground for deciding the merits of the abstention policy and for viewing the formation and conflict of the opposing groups in the PRD was in the 1968 and 1970 party conventions. In both these Party meetings the question of abstention and the more general problem of Bosch's desire to "cleanse" the PRD of its Anglo-American democratic ideological baggage and allegiance received extensive airings. In the 1968 convention the opposition to the abstention policy centered around Fernando Silíe Gatón and Casimiro Castro.[14] Silíe Gatón questioned the openness of the convention charging that the abstention policy was being pushed through the meeting without taking into consideration the wide opposition to the policy in the ranks of the PRD. He called for a new convention, preferably outside of Santo Domingo, so that the pro-Bosch forces centered in the capital city could not influence the proceedings.[15] Casimiro Castro supported Silíe Gatón's move by citing the fact that although the pro-abstention group

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[14] El Caribe, March 2, 1968.

[15] A definite pattern is emerging in which the moderate forces within the PRD recognize that one of the key ways in which to redirect the Party is to have the base of power moved from Santo Domingo to Santiago, a smaller, more conservative city. The shift in cities supposedly would have created a different climate for making Party decisions.

claimed to have two hundred Party leaders in favor of the electoral boycott, the anti-abstention group also claimed to have a similar number of supporters. In the end, however, the efforts of Silíe and Casimiro were fruitless as the pressure placed by Bosch and Peña Gómez was forceful enough to convince a majority of the Party faithful over to the side of abstention. The forces of electoral participation may have lost, but they took consolation in the fact that abstention was not voted on unanimously and that Bosch's power was being questioned on a more frequent basis.

The conflict between the supporters of active participation in the present political system in the Dominican Republic and the followers of Bosch's popular dictatorship alternative was by no means resolved in the 1968 convention. The disputed abstention level in the municipal elections (anywhere from 400,000 to 750,000) coupled with the moderate view in the PRD that the Party had missed a golden opportunity to establish a firm foothold in Dominican politics caused serious disruptions within the leadership ranks. In the two years between the 1968 elections and the Party's 1970 convention the two opposing groups fired verbal salvos at each other's position. On a number of occasions Casimiro Castro decried the political ramifications of an electoral boycott. He stated that further abstention would mean the

"death of the Party."[16] Abstention to Casimiro might function effectively as a statement of public disgust with the Balaguer regime, but from the standpoint of politics and party organization, abstention could only hamper the internal strength of the PRD and weaken its position and popularity in Dominican society.

Bosch and Peña Gómez, for their part, constantly chided the naivete of the proponents of democratic participation. Participation in a Dominican election, in their opinion, would only support the farce of democracy that Balaguer had created and, worse yet, make PRD candidates and workers welcome targets for Right-wing gunmen. To Bosch and Peña Gómez the boycott was the only avenue of opposition open to the Party; any system supporting alternatives would severely compromise the status of the Party as an enemy of the Balaguer regime and a model of revolutionary change.

Although the supporters of abstention were led by the PRD's two major leaders, the moderate wing of the Party was not without strong spokesmen and considerable backing from the rank and file. Casimiro Castro emerged after the 1968 convention as the definitive spokesman of the pro-democratic forces in the PRD. Casimiro, unlike Martínez Francisco and Brea Peña, was a figure of some influence in the country and certainly in the Party. He had been the

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[16]Ahora, July 15, 1968.

only dominant political figure to come out of the poor Pedernales region in the Dominican Southwest and was without a doubt one of the most respected figures in the country. The key, though, to Casimiro's influence was his position as the number three man in the PRD hierarchy behind Bosch and Peña Gómez.[17] The supporters of active participation in the political system were thus not led by second or third level members of the Party whose power in PRD leadership circles was limited. Rather those party members who felt it necessary to participate in Dominican electoral politics were led by a figure of national importance and substantial political standing who spoke convincingly and courageously in favor of moderation.

Casimiro was joined in his battle with the advocates of abstention by other high PRD officials. Washington de Peña, the head of the Party organization in Santo Domingo and a former president of the Party in 1962, the legislators Luis Vargas, Lovatón Pittaluga and Gil Morales, and the one-time political officer of the Party, Fernández Marmol, to name but a few, all expressed allegiance to the view that

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[17]As will be discussed later the Party leaders are extremely reluctant to place a "power value" on individual members. Theoretically every member of the PRD hierarchy is supposed to be equal, yet Party leaders state emphatically that Casimiro, up to at least 1971, was the third most important decision-maker in the PRD behind Bosch and Peña Gómez.

the PRD should not move away from its traditionally democratic mold. With the ranks of the anti-abstention advocates gaining increasing influential support, Bosch and Peña Gómez recognized that their drive to radicalize the PRD would be difficult and might possibly cause permanent divisions in the Party. Sensing the potential power of the Casimiro Castro group, Bosch and Peña Gómez sought to convince the moderates that their opposition to abstention was harmful to the Party. Their please for unity fell on deaf ears. The PRD showed distinct signs of a polarized leadership structure.

Despite the dangers inherent in challenging the policy decisions of Bosch and Peña Gómez, the moderates continued their campaign of hostility toward abstention and what they perceived as its wider ramifications for future PRD opposition. In at least two instances in 1968 and 1969 Washington de Peña openly called for the expulsion of Bosch from the PRD.[18] De Peña felt that not only was Bosch's popular dictatorship stance detrimental to the success of the PRD as a viable opposition, but that his absence from the Dominican Republic was having a deleterious effect on

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[18] El Nacional, December 15, 1968 and May 12, 1969. De Peña charged also that Bosch had interfered in the politics of base committees, which probably means that he was using his considerable influence to sway the membership into accepting the abstention policy.

Party morale. De Peña begged Bosch to come home and heal the PRD which he saw as revealing a "ramshackle quality."[19] The expulsion moves of Washington de Peña cannot be considered idle threats that only sought to scare Bosch. There is ample evidence that numerous members of the PRD were also contemplating sacking Bosch and electing a new leader.[20] Fortunately for Bosch these expulsion efforts were not successful, yet they did point out that elements with the PRD organization seriously questioned the radical policies of the present leadership.

The challenges to Bosch's authority did not stop with the overt moves to drop him from the leadership ranks. As it became clear that the PRD and Juan Bosch would most probably not participate in the 1970 presidential elections, influential members of the moderate group in the Party pushed for what became known as "hybrid" candidates to carry the PRD banner in place of Bosch. Three primary "hybrid" candidates surfaced before the election. Rafael Bonnelly (former member of the six-man junta which ran the Dominican Republic in 1961-62), Héctor García-Godoy (the provisional

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[19]It is interesting to note that De Peña's election to be the chief PRD leader in the National District was hotly contested. De Peña eventually won over his opponent by a slim margin, but his victory was certainly no consolation to Bosch and Peña Gómez. See El Nacional, August 28, 1967 and September 2, 1967.

[20]El Nacional, January 2, 1970.

president of the Dominican Republic after the 1965 civil war) and Julio Castaños Espaillat (former rector of the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo) were each pegged by certain PRD moderates to assume the Party's candidacy.[21] The "hybrid" candidacy of Bonnelly was the most frequently discussed since his campaign manager, Manolo Bordas, worked vigorously to gather moderate PRD support for his man. The Deputy Luis Vargas and Casimiro Castro maneuvered quietly behind the scenes for García-Godoy and Castaños Espaillat, respectively, in an attempt to see just how much support there was for such an open challenge to the leadership of Juan Bosch.[22] The whole "hybrid" controversy, for all the publicity that it generated, never really posed a threat to the leadership of Juan Bosch. The substitution of proxy candidates for Juan Bosch did reveal the level of antagonism toward his policies and the extent of opposition that the moderate group would employ to register its displeasure with the strategic and tactical route the PRD was following.

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[21]See Ahora articles of March 3, 1969 and October 13, 1969.

[22]There is some evidence that tension developed between Casimiro Castro and Peña Gómez over Casimiro's efforts to push Castaños' candidacy. It seems that Casimiro and Peña were to travel to the Northeastern part of the country with Castaños on party business. But Peña soon got wind of Casimiro's desire to use the trip to introduce Castaños to the Dominican people as a possible PRD candidate for president. Peña Gómez promptly called off his participation in the trip.

The extent of power that the moderate group could generate was perhaps best seen at the crucial 1970 Party convention. Held in February, 1970, the fifth national meeting of the Party brought together 306 delegates from 98 municipalities plus New York and Caracas. The importance of the convention centered in the attempt by Bosch and Peña Gómez to once again gain Party acceptance of the abstention policy. In 1970, however, Bosch and Peña Gómez also sought to gain official recognition of the controversial "Dictatorship with Popular Support" thesis which, if passed, would totally reorder the policies and goals of the PRD.

In a stormy convention the moderates led by Casimiro Castro were not able to withstand the continuing pressure for electoral abstention within the rank and file membership. But in a stunning blow to Bosch his prize thesis received only token acceptance by the Party membership and was not given official status as the central ideological position of the PRD. For the record, the final decision of the thesis was put aside for six months to a year as Casimiro's forces were able to gather upwards of 100 delegates who were opposed to the radical concept of popular dictatorship.[23] Peña Gómez expressed displeasure with the decision but felt confident that the thesis would receive official recognition. The Bosch thesis did

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[23]Ahora, March 9, 1970. The vote would have had to be unanimous to pass.

eventually gain recognition in the PRD and continues to serve as the center of discussion when the topic of the Party's future is raised. Nevertheless, opposition to the concept of "Dictatorship with Popular Support" has remained vigorous as moderates refuse to be associated with any form of "dictatorship."

The 1970 national convention marked the high point of dissension within the ranks of the PRD. After the February meeting the controversies that had been so dominant in Party circles subsided due to two central factors. In the first place, the level of violence against opposition activists increased substantially. The daily terror tactics of the La Banda groups and the National Police strengthened Bosch's claim that the moderate, system-supporting position taken by individuals like Casimiro Castro was wishful thinking and a hollow response to the oppression that was slowly destroying the Party organization from without. As the arm of government-supported violence touched larger numbers of PRD workers, the Party leadership was able to convince more and more of its membership that active, radical resistance outside of the present political system was the only possible opposition route for the Party.

Secondly, Bosch and Peña Gómez launched the previously discussed reorganization campaign of 1971. The primary aim of this effort was to strengthen the PRD's

opposition status by creating a totally new and expanded internal party structure. The most interesting facet of the organizational campaign, though, was not so much the formation of a rejuvenated PRD, but the subtle shifts of power that it caused within the Party hierarchy. Under the guise of vitalizing the fledging PRD organizational structure, Bosch and Peña Gómez were able to sift out or demote some of their harshest critics.

Probably one of the more visible signs of the Bosch-Peña Gómez desire to silence internal Party dissent through the vehicle of reorganization was the demotion of both Casimiro Castro and Washington de Peña. In the case of Casimiro, he remained a voting member in the newly structured Executive Committee that was formed in 1971 and was often seen working actively at Party headquarters and in the campo. But with the Party shake-up gaining more momentum, Casimiro was called upon less frequently to formulate policy.[24] His cautious political pragmatism was no longer

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[24]After the 1970 elections Casimiro's stock both politically and financially declined. Politically Casimiro on at least one occasion stormed out of a Party meeting in disgust over the direction that opposition strategy had taken. Casimiro still spends time in the Party headquarters and remains a popular figure, but many sources questioned feel that he no longer is the third most important figure in the Party. Financially Casimiro has run into difficulty. Most people agree he has no income, except what he makes tutoring students. I once saw him teaching a class in a downtown Santo Domingo bar. Casimiro still maintains that jovial attitude and deep concern for his Party and his country, but he seems to have left the mainstream of power.

recognized as a viable approach to the repression that the PRD was experiencing almost daily. Washington de Peña met even a worse fate as a result of the reorganization. De Peña was taken out of his position as head of the PRD in the National District and replaced by Pedro Franco Badíe, a less vigorous opponent of Bosch and the "new" look in the Party. So complete was the censure of de Peña that the one-time critic of the radical wing was not even included as a member of the National Executive Committee.

While men like Casimiro Castro and Washington de Peña were being dropped from positions of power, Juan Bosch and Peña Gómez were solidifying their own power base in the newly designed Permanent (Standing) Commission which they formed as the major decision-making body in the PRD organizational structure. The Commission, until recently, was headed by both Bosch and Peña Gómez and included either new supporters of the radical opposition approach like Rafael Alburquerque Castro (secretary of organization) and Rafael Antonio Luna (labor organizer) or individuals like Castaños Espaillat, José Joaquin Bidó Medina and Antonio Abreu Flores whose formidable position in Dominican society gave the Party a sense of middle class legitimacy.

It should be emphasized at this point that the Party leaders are very reluctant to place a "power value" on certain members of the Standing Commission. The PRD tries to

create the impression that power is held on an equal and democratic basis among all members, and that no one individual is a dominant force.[25] Nevertheless, it is common knowledge both in and out of PRD circles that the reorganization efforts strengthened Bosch's hold on the Party and increased the number of radical supporters in positions of importance. PRD leaders like Castaños Espaillat, Bidó Medina and Abreu Flores may be seen frequently in the newspapers, and thus appear as key policy-makers in the Party. The Party role, however, of these men is largely public relations (recruiting new members and opening up new Party headquarters) and is not as important as that of Bosch and Peña Gómez and the two radicals added to the Commission--Alburquerque and Luna.[26]

In the thirty-two man/woman National Executive Committee structure as of July, 1972, (see the following list) it is still possible to find the names of the moderate

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[25]In an interview in Santo Domingo, July 9, 1972, with Emmanual Espínal, the PRD press secretary at the time of my visit to the Dominican Republic, I tried to pin him down on who made the decisions in the Party, but to no avail. He constantly maintained that the PRD is a mass party with no real power structure.

[26]Manny Espínal also intimated in his conversations with me that although Castaños Espaillat was on the Standing Commission and an important figure in the Party he was not a recognized voice of authority in the Party and did not know very much about internal Party politics. Although he did not say it, Manny was characterizing Castaños as a middle class legitimizer of the PRD and not a hard and fast activist. He also joined the Party late and was never in on much of the internal politics.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PRD--JULY, 1972

1.	Juan Bosch	President
2.	José Francisco Peña Gómez	Secretary General
3.	Dr. Rafael Abinader	Member
4.	Dr. Antonio Abreu Flores	"
5.	Dr. Miriam Abreu de Minguijon	"
6.	Félix Alburquerque	"
7.	Dr. Rafael Alburquerque Castro	"
8.	Dr. Franklin Almeyda	"
9.	Dr. Abraham Bautista Alcántara	"
10.	Dr. José Joaquin Bidó Medina	"
11.	Ofelia Cáceres	"
12.	Dr. Julio César Castaños Espaillat	"
13.	Pablo Rafael Casimiro Castro	"
14.	Lic. Hatuey de Camps	"
15.	Emmanuel Espinal	"
16.	Manuel A. Fernández Marmol	"
17.	Dr. Mario García Alvarado	"
18.	Dr. Secundino Gil Morales	"
19.	Dr. Almanzor González Canahuate	"
20.	Silvestre Antonio Guzman	"
21.	Dr. Juan López	"
22.	Lic. Máximo Lovatón Pittaluga	"
23.	Rafael Antonio Luna	"
24.	José Mariano Peña	"
25.	Dr. Gilberto Martínez	"
26.	Dr. Bienvenido Mejia y Mejia	"
27.	Dr. Bartolomé Moquete Andino	"
28.	Dr. Milagros Ortiz de Basanta	"
29.	Dr. Leonor Sánchez Baret	"
30.	Dr. Santos Sena Pérez	"
31.	Dr. Aristides Victoria José	"

MEMBERS OF THE PERMANENT (STANDING) COMMISSION

1.	Juan Bosch	President
2.	José Francisco Peña Gómez	Secretary General
3.	Dr. Antonio Abreu Flores	Member
4.	Dr. Rafael Alburquerque Castro	"
5.	Dr. José Joaquin Bidó Medina	"
6.	Dr. Julio César Castaños Espaillat	"
7.	Rafael Antonio Luna	"

grouping in the PRD like Casimiro, Fernández Marmol, Gil Morales and Lovatón Pittaluga, but the influence of these men, and indeed that of the National Executive Committee as a whole, has decreased markedly. The National Executive Committee is mandated to meet every three months (the Permanent Commission meets once a week) and takes on primarily the duties of a Party forum for discussion and a legitimizer of policy decisions that the seven-man Permanent Commission reaches. Recently, with Bosch and Peña Gómez underground after the Caamaño Deño invasion, the National Executive Committee served as the interim leadership of the Party and handled the daily affairs of organization.

Despite these recent signs of activity and influence, the National Executive Committee is basically a democratic "fixture." It has often been used by Bosch to show the openness of the PRD and its diverse organizational structure. In reality the committee has shown itself to be a repository for many old line moderate Party functionaries who do not share Bosch's radical ideas of politics and change in present day Dominican Republic. The real power, as stated before, is controlled by a much smaller group of individuals in the Permanent Commission who support

Bosch and his thesis of "Dictatorship with Popular Support."[27]

The powers and importance of the National Executive Committee vis-à-vis the Permanent (Standing) Commission set off the most recent and potentially dangerous conflict within the PRD organization. The fireworks started as Juan Bosch made preparations to come out of hiding after almost three months of alluding police patrols in connection with the abortive guerrilla landing of Caamaño Deño. It seems that while Bosch and Peña Gómez were underground, the moderate elements in the Party were active again. There was renewed speculation that the PRD might join other opposition parties in a "united front" for the 1974 presidential elections. Also leading moderates like Casimiro Castro were seen in the company of other opposition leaders like the Trujillo assassin Luis Amiama Tío, presumably to discuss plans for such a "united front."[28]

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[27]The membership on the Executive Committee fluctuates frequently, especially now as a result of the Caamaño invasion and the repercussions that it caused in the Party. This listing is correct up to July, 1972. Since that time the PRD added two new members to the list--Diomedes Mercedes and Eclides Gutierrez Felix, both lawyers and both arrested and later released in connection with the guerrilla landing. Although the membership does shift, most of the individuals listed on page 191 still occupy prominent positions in the PRD leadership.

[28]El Caribe, May 5, 1973. Later Casimiro said he was merely making a social call.

It was not long before Bosch got wind of these maneuvers and promptly expelled Casimiro from the Party along with four other prominent activists. Bosch again stated that the official policy of the PRD prohibits anyone from engaging in talks with other opposition groups without the consent of the Party hierarchy. Bosch also took the opportunity to reaffirm his abhorence to opposition unity saying that no party or group of parties is going to "lead" the PRD.[29]

Along with the expulsion of Casimiro and the others and the reaffirmation by Bosch of the PRD's continuation as an autonomous opposition to the Balaguer regime, there was another development which, in a sense, revealed the extent and depth of internal maneuvering within the Party leadership group. Two members of the National Executive Committee, Pedro Franco Badíe and Jacobo Majluta, were suspended by Bosch for allegedly criticizing the decisions of the Permanent Commission. Although these charges were not amplified by Party spokesmen, it appears that both men were disturbed by the power that Bosch had assumed and the dictatorial manner in which he was directing the Party.[30]

The suspension of Franco Badíe and Jacobo Majluta opened up the floodgates of controversy and thrust the PRD into a serious organizational dispute. In a surprising and

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[29]Ibid. [30]Ibid.

shocking move Peña Gómez resigned from his position as General Secretary of the Party stating that his decision was "irrevocable." The reason for Peña Gómez' resignation was twofold. Firstly, Peña was disturbed over the extensive housecleaning that Bosch had undertaken. Peña wanted to place limits on the expulsion and suspension of Party leaders. Without mentioning names he said that the PRD was doing too much purging and as a result was losing "men of merit."[31] It was quite obvious that the youthful Party leader was becoming aware that the PRD could not retain a mass based quality if it was constantly expelling popular Party activists.

But more importantly than his questioning of the expulsions and suspensions, Peña Gómez openly attacked the democratic nature of the PRD hierarchy. In a frank statement to the press Peña called the decisions of the Permanent Commission "illegal." He further commented that the Permanent Commission was elected in an "irregular manner" which negated any chance of making major decisions openly and equally as Party statutes demand.[32] Peña's solution to this problem was that the PRD had to expand the powers of the Executive Committee and make the Standing Commission more responsive to the dictates of Party assemblies.

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[31]Ibid.

[32]El Caribe, May 12, 1973.

The resignation of Peña Gómez held far ranging implications for the Party and for the leadership capabilities of Juan Bosch. At the heart of Peña Gómez' criticism of the organizational structure of the PRD was a direct attack on the increasing power that Juan Bosch was accumulating. Rather than retain the democratic framework that the PRD had long adhered to, Peña Gómez saw Bosch as using the present crisis situation to assume more power and cleanse the Party of major opponents. It was as if Bosch had decided to implement his "Dictatorship with Popular Support" not from a position of political dominance, but from a position of increasing weakness. The criticism of Peña Gómez was perhaps most important because it brought to center stage the question of how far ideological purity can go before the PRD becomes a Party bereft of organization diversity and shifts to one of total "personalismo." Bosch has always disliked those who oppose his radical policies from within the Party. This recent attempt, however, to cleanse the Party and bolster his position heightened the level of conflict in the PRD and cast grave doubts on the quality of leadership in the upper levels of the organization.

As for Bosch, he minimized the resignation of Peña Gómez saying that the Russian revolution lost Trotsky and the Chinese revolution lost Lin Piao and still moved forward

toward success. What Bosch unfortunately failed to understand in his allusion to the Russian and Chinese revolutions was that the leaders of those movements were not only ideologues, but practical proponents of armed conflict who left their theories and desires for purity behind and created the revolution.

To the dismay of many in the PRD the story of intra-party factionalism does not end with the resignation of Peña Gómez and the power politics of Juan Bosch. The conflicts that arose in May of 1973 continued on into the year. Eventually pressure built up in the Party for the reinstatement of Casimiro and the others who had felt the wrath of Juan Bosch. The reinstatement, unfortunately, did nothing to heal the wounds in the PRD. At the heart of the problem facing the Party after the Caamaño Deño fiasco was the question of the 1974 presidential elections and the desire by many moderates in the PRD to join in the previously mentioned "united front."

As the PRD moved closer in September and October to finalizing a coalition agreement with the PRSC, the PQD and MIDA (and eight other minor parties) Juan Bosch and the radical wing of the PRD became increasingly opposed to a "united front" approach. Bosch had earlier given his reluctant approval to exploratory talks on the coalition, but as

sentiment built up for this alternative, he slowly backed away.[33]

The end result of Bosch's opposition to the coalition was his startling decision to quit the PRD and form his own party.[34] After thirty-five years of leadership in the PRD Bosch founded the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) in November, 1973. The PLD is made up primarily of Left-wing supporters of Bosch like the former number three man in the PRD, Rafael Alburquerque and Antonio Luna, the labor organizer. Bosch was unable to bring over some key members of the PRD like Casimiro Castro, Maximo Lovatón Pittaluga, Ambiorex Diáz Estrella (head of the Party in Santiago), Fernández Marmol, Castaños Espaillat and surprisingly, Peña Gómez.[35] Peña Gómez, in fact, resurfaced after the break with Bosch as the so-called "official voice" of the PRD. The position of Peña Gómez as the "official voice" of the Party is somewhat of a mystery since he has traditionally aligned himself with Bosch and has felt uncomfortable with

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[33]See Times of the Americas, April 18, 1973.

[34]Bosch made his announcement on November 18, 1973. For a discussion of the new party see Renovacion, November 30, 1973.

[35]Only nine of twenty-four members of the National Executive Committee followed Bosch to his new political party which was a severe blow since he had planned to purge the PRD of its moderates by the formation of the PLD. The plan in effect backfired and left Bosch without the broad societal support that has made the PRD popular in Dominican politics.

many of the moderates in the Party. One can only speculate that Peña Gómez has perhaps placed his love of the PRD and the desire for its survival above ideological considerations.

What is left in the PRD after the departure of Juan Bosch is a moderate, pro-democratic organization with some old faces (Molina Ureña is back in the fold along with Hatuey de Camps, the radical student leader who had been out of the country) and a distinct willingness to direct the Party along more traditional lines of opposition behavior.[36] The PRD has already established a commission headed by Molina Ureña to revise the Party's by-laws so that they are more in line with the intent and goals of the 1963 constitution.[37] There is as yet no discussion on the fate of the "Dictatorship with Popular Support" thesis of Bosch. A clearer view of the "new" PRD will most certainly emerge as the Party holds its national convention and decides on the official position toward electoral politics.

As for Bosch and the PLD it is also too early to comment on the party's strength and its viability as a competitor with the PRD for opposition dominance. One can even speculate that the departure of Juan Bosch represents another of his temper tantrums that will eventually subside

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[36] El Caribe, January 4, 1974.

[37] Times of the Americas, January 9, 1974.

and bring the aging caudillo back into the PRD fold. In fact, Bosch's recent charge that he will not give up the PRD headquarters to the new leadership unless the Peña Gómez forces reverse their moderate posture is but one example of the tentative nature of Bosch's resignation.

Whatever may happen in the future to Bosch and the PRD, the fact remains that the Party will continue to be divided and constantly open to personal and factional disputes. But more importantly, the continued propensity to engage in power politics and personnel purges has tarnished the image of the PRD as a vehicle for responsible and effective change. With every self-inflicted wound the PRD loses an insurmountable amount of national prestige. The popularity and success of the PRD has traditionally been founded not so much on the uniqueness or revolutionary quality of its ideology, but on the stature of its leadership. The series of internal disputes in the PRD since 1966 has only hampered the Party's ability to rally the Dominican masses behind the banner of radical reform. Without strong, unified leadership the PRD can never expect to rise once again to national dominance.

The "Políticos" and the "Ideologues"

Although the history of intra-party squabbles in the PRD chronicles an important facet of party opposition in the

contemporary Dominican Republic, it is an unfinished view in that the Party's ideological divisions must be more thoroughly analyzed. It is not enough to see the historical ebb and flow of group and personal conflicts that the PRD experienced since assuming the opposition role in 1966. Rather the divisions that surfaced within the PRD can also be viewed from a number of other vantage points. This new perspective will enable us to delve more deeply into internal party politics and explore the PRD at close range.

The harmful splits that arose (and perhaps will surface again) within the PRD leadership can be traced to a basic disagreement over the questions of what should be attempted and what can be accomplished in a Balaguer-controlled political system. Party leaders like Casimiro Castro see opposition politics as a contest for recognition, influence, and allegiance using the normal institutional channels. These "políticos" (a more precise title than moderates) recognize full well the inequities of the Dominican political system, but feel strongly that the PRD could best achieve some input into the government only if the Party continues to participate in national politics. The "políticos" further emphasize that any action which separates the Party from its traditional moorings in democratic practice would weaken the hold that the PRD has had in Dominican society and lessen its chances of recruiting

new members. To men like Casimiro an opposition party that works outside the existing political system only hurts its image with the Dominican voter who has become increasingly skeptical of radical anti-system movements. The "políticos" are thus emphasizing what they consider smart, practical political behavior in which the PRD works to the best of its ability despite an admittedly harsh, repressive regime. The key, though, is that the PRD continues to keep active and visible within the system and not forfeit whatever leverage and patronage it may have or can attain because of uncompromising ideological commitments.

On the other side of the internal conflicts within the PRD are what might be termed the "ideologues." The "ideologues" hold a much less tolerant view of the Balaguer regime and are committed to working outside the established boundaries of political behavior. The "ideologues" like Bosch, Rafael Alburquerque and, to a lesser extent, Peña Gómez consider themselves as realists who are not blinded by the scant hope of democratic reform that the "políticos" cling to. Contrary to the view of Casimiro Castro, this group is convinced that the PRD will be corrupted and lose its revolutionary identity if it continues to seek societal change through the present institutional structure constructed by Balaguer. The "ideologues" fully realize that their radical position of favoring a so-called Dictatorship

with Popular Support contradicts the PRD's long history of traditional democratic participation, but they feel that to work within the present political atmosphere brings the Party disgrace rather than positive gain. The "ideologues" thus would remain outside of the current Dominican political system and prepare for a time when a new type of democracy can be implemented.

The dilemma thus within the ranks of the PRD is who has correctly interpreted the problems and possibilities of the present Dominican political system? In a real sense there is no simple way to reconcile the two opposing positions since the "políticos" and the "ideologues" not only view the Balaguer regime differently, but the role of the Party as well. The "políticos" constantly discuss the merits of their position in terms that would seem very logical to citizens of an established Anglo-American democracy. The "políticos" talk of participation, patronage, and institutional opposition. From an American or British point of view they are the realists, the men who understand the essentials of politics, the purposes of party activity and the problems of clinging too closely to ideology and radical rhetoric. On the other hand the "ideologues" speak a different political language. They see the Party organization more as a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas and propaganda, rather than as a political agent that must be adept

at bargaining and compromise. As a result the "ideologues" hardly ever discuss opposition politics in the present tense. They reside in the future and see no hope of working effectively in the present political system.

A convincing resolution of this dilemma is of course not easily attained. Yet a way out of this conflict can be seen if one recognizes the PRD's problems as not a failure of democratic opposition, but a continuation of an authoritarian system that has never been put to rest. Where the "políticos" have failed is in their belief that a liberal democratic state could be achieved without ridding the political system of its dictatorial heritage. As a result the "políticos" continue to search for ways to make the system work, despite the fact that the spectre of 150 years of authoritarian rule hangs heavily over the Dominican Republic. The "ideologues," despite their often times unnecessary and contradictory adherence to revolutionary dogma and their unsupported hope of another chance at wielding power, realize the limits of traditional democracy in the Dominican Republic and therefore speak of a new democracy that can only be achieved after the country has been cleansed of its past. The participant approach to opposition as favored by the "políticos" may still be looked upon as a legitimate means of opposition, and quite possibly could be an effective strategy for gaining concessions from

the Balaguer regime (although that assumption has yet to be proven).[38] But it seems more logical and realistic to adhere to a position like that of the "ideologues" which states that participation in Balaguer's repressive political system only perpetuates his regime and makes a mockery out of democratic opposition. With meaningful political activity at a premium in the present Dominican political system, it appears that the "ideologues" are following the only viable avenue of opposition open to them.

Where the "políticos" reside in the dreams of the past, the "ideologues" look only to the future and thus neglect the obvious political concerns of the present. Because of the often idiosyncratic leadership of Juan Bosch, the "ideologues" position has left the PRD without any workable opposition strategy. Even though the PRD views itself as a party of the future, it still cannot avoid engaging in politics. The successful attainment of power in any society necessitates that the group in a minority position recognize that dogmatic pronouncements of ideology must be welded with a keen understanding of bargaining, compromise, and toleration of criticism. What has happened in the PRD is that

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[38]Stanley Plastrik in an article in Dissent states that the PRD must adjust its opposition posture according to the dominant attitudes of the Dominican people which these days are increasingly moving away from political concerns toward national economic development and social mobilization. See "Bosch and Balaguer: Dominican Roulette," Dissent (November-December 1970): 525.

ideology has overshadowed all aspects of Party behavior to the point where organization, discipline, democratic structure and mass support are in grave danger. If the PRD is to regain its dominant position in the Dominican political arena, it must skillfully mesh the promises and the enthusiasm that ideology generates with the respect for diversity and moderation that come with an appreciation of politics.

As the past discussion suggests, it appears that the PRD is continually in turmoil and teetering on the brink of an open schism within its leadership structure. But before jumping to conclusions and characterizing the Party as hopelessly factionalized and near death, it is necessary to examine an often times overlooked quality of the PRD--the Party's unrelenting desire to maintain discipline. In conversations with Party leaders and supporters in 1972 it was made explicit that the Party has traditionally remained a strong opposition force in the repressive Dominican political system because of the unflinching allegiance of the membership to Juan Bosch, the powerful legacy of the PRD, and the promise of future societal change. I was assured by members of the Party that most dissenters from the mainstream of the PRD ideology can be counted on to support the leadership in times of crisis. The Party prides itself on its tolerance of diverse opinions. PRD leaders are confident of the ultimate loyalty of their membership and the

willingness of true PRD activists to subordinate individual preferences for the overall success of the Party. It is only when these dissenters openly challenge the leadership with the formation of a new party or the acceptance of a government position that the PRD becomes less tolerant.[39]

Perhaps the best evidence of this sense of discipline in the PRD can be seen in the furor over the expulsion of Rafa Gamundi. Gamundi was sub-secretary of organization in the Party and also one of the most radical members within the inner leadership cricle. As the story was told to me, Gamundi was so zealous in his desire to spread the dogma of Juan Bosch that he started his own newsletter which became the soundingboard for Communist rather than PRD propaganda.[40]

Gamundi sealed his fate by going one step further and forming his own Communist-oriented youth organization in the campo. The group distributed the paper and attempted to radicalize the peasant population in the name of the PRD. Hearing of Gamundi's activities, the PRD leadership promptly

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[39]One PRD intimate stated confidently that no matter how Casimiro was treated by the Party because of his beliefs he would always stand behind the Party and owe allegiance only to the PRD. As for Peña Gómez, he stated publicly that even though he was resigning his post as General Secretary he would remain loyal to the PRD. As matters turned out Peña Gómez did not stay far away from the PRD, but rather assumed leadership of the Party.

[40]El Nacional, October 11, 1970. Earlier on August 24, 1970 ten members of the Party including three directors of the PRD youth branch--the JRD--were expelled, a move which set the stage for Rafa's expulsion.

cracked down on the young radical and stripped him and his supporters of their membership in the PRD. Gamundi challenged the disciplinary committee's decision and threatened to form his own party, but the PRD leadership stood firm on its action and expressed no concern over Gamundi's threat.[41]

The PRD likewise came down hard on Jottin Cury, the fiery former leader of the PRD in the Dominican legislature. Cury, long a champion of radical causes (he was originally a conservative UCN Congressman in 1962 and the Foreign Minister in the "constitutionalist" government of Caamaño Deño) made a number of critical comments about the policy positions of Juan Bosch and the PRD on a Dominican radio broadcast. Later Cury was also interviewed for a series of newspaper articles in which he commented on the lack of a radical response to the Balaguer regime by the PRD leadership. In that speech Cury praised the platform and activities of the Dominican Communist party. The PRD wasted no time in censuring Cury and eventually he resigned. The regular PRD

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[41]Rafa left the Party stating that Bosch was not revolutionary enough. Again the regular PRD leadership did not seem troubled by Rafa's rhetoric or his threat to start another party. Martinez Francisco had started another party in 1967 and again in 1968; both failed dismally. The Party's prediction turned out to be true. Nothing more was heard of Rafa's new revolutionary party.

leadership never had a fondness for Cury.[42] He was always considered a detriment to effective opposition and a loose-tongued radical who could not be depended upon to loyally support the positions and leaders of the Party.

Party discipline in the most recent times took a new turn. Juan Bosch increasingly assumed much of the responsibility for discipline decisions, a move that caused much consternation in the leadership ranks of the Party. The fear of many PRD activists was that in the name of ideological purity Bosch was steering the Party away from its tradition of democratic organization and toward personalistic-caudillo leadership.[43] The expulsions and suspensions, although generally considered poor decisions, were nothing new to the Party since the PRD has always demanded strict adherence to Party regulations. But what was considered a new departure in Party policy was Bosch's overt attemtps at securing a greater control over PRD policy-making. This

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[42]El Nacional, February 7, 1970. The PRD's charge was that Cury was trying to discredit Peña Gómez and the whole PRD opposition strategy. Meanwhile Cury and his PCD friends were preparing to participate in the university elections. Jottin Cury became rector of the Autonomous University.

[43]See Plastrik, "Bosch and Balaguer," on the "caudillo" nature of Dominican politics. Plastrik feels that both Balaguer and Bosch visualize themselves as caudillo figures and thus conduct their respective organizations in a personalistic and authoritarian manner. The only difference is that Balaguer has real power, the power of the state, while Bosch only has power in the PRD.

action caused many longtime Party functionaries to wonder whether discipline was a mere smokescreen designed to hide a Bosch power play.

The departure of Juan Bosch from the PRD forces one to speculate whether the Party will ever be able to maintain a high level of organizational discipline. The "revolving door" status of individuals like Casimiro Castro and Peña Gómez and the temper tantrums of Juan Bosch cast serious doubt on the value placed on intra-party discipline in present day PRD leadership circles. Bosch himself once stated that for everyone of those who leave the Party there are many others to take their place.[44] This position that a healthy dose of censure is necessary to maintain the ideological spirit of the Party seems to have permanently infected the thinking of many PRD leaders, especially those who have followed Bosch into his new PLD.

The decline in discipline within the Party is beginning to take its toll. Not only has the Party been split into two distinct organizations at present, but it is a known fact that PRD membership has been dropping consistently from its high mark of 200,000 in the early

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[44] El Nacional, July 5, 1971. Bosch stated that for every man or woman expelled from the Party there would be one hundred more to take their place.

sixties.[45] This decline can be traced to a number of sources from an increase in repression to a general decrease in citizen participation. One must also consider, however, the fact that with every so-called discipline problem in the leadership ranks, the PRD creates doubt in the nation as to its ability to remain the primary opposition force.

Besides viewing the PRD as caught in the throes of a conflict between ideology and politics, it is important to step away from the charges and counter-charges and see the internal party disputes as caused also by generational rather than ideological or political considerations. If one examines the ranks of the "políticos" and the "ideologues," it becomes evident that not only are two fundamental approaches to opposition at odds, but two generations as well. The "políticos"--Casimiro Castro, Fernández Marmol, Maximo Lovatón Pittaluga, Gil Morales--are at the same time physically older than the youthful "ideologues" and also have much stronger ties to the PRD organization that developed in exile and matured in the early days of democratic

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[45]The Party has no records of its membership; a raid on Party headquarters destroyed the files. When I pressed Emmanuel Espinal on Party membership he was very vague stating that the PRD had huge mass support. Plastrik, however, questions somewhat the popularity of the PRD. He points to the considerable drop in membership as one sign that the Party is not the same organization as it was in 1962-1963. Plastrik cannot give evidence of this decline in popularity; it is merely an impression which is vigorously refuted by the PRD.

practice when Juan Bosch was president (and perhaps coincidentally when John F. Kennedy was in the White House). As seems to be the case in problems of the so-called generation gap, the older "políticos" adhere to a slower, more moderate approach to opposition and criticize the "ideologues" in patronizing terms suggesting that the youths will someday learn the rewards of moderation and practical politics.

The "ideologues" on the other hand are all in their late twenties or early thirties and do not have the attachment to the PRD of old that many of the "políticos" have. Most of them came to the PRD during or after the revolution of 1965 and have been nurtured in the climate of violence and repression of that period. The "ideologues" see the PRD as a party that must change with the times and look to the future if it is going to lead the nation and bring about radical change. Strangely enough the "ideologues" are led by the ageless Juan Bosch who is the only member of the old-line PRD hierarchy to shift with the dominant trend in the Party (if not actually cause the shift). The "ideologues" include such youthful Party leaders as Rafael Alburquerque, Antonio Luna, Manny Espínal and Peña Gómez--all socialized in greater or lesser degree by the radical student politics of the 1960's. Also gaining prominence within the ranks of the "ideologues" is the youth arm of the PRD, the Juventud

Revolucionario Dominicano (JRD) and the university branch of the Party, the Frente Universitario Socialista Democratica (FUSD). Both the JRD and FUSD are quite active in organizing and propagandizing efforts for the Party.

The "ideologues" match closely the rebellion of all youth in Latin America. These young radicals no longer accept the traditional politics of their fathers, but rather press insistently for revolutionary change. When change is slow in coming, as in the Dominican Republic, the "ideologues" resort to sloganeering and a staunch refusal to compromise with the status quo. It is over this problem of change that the "ideologues" come in conflict with the "políticos," and create the internal disruptions the PRD is undergoing at the present.[46]

The fact that it is possible to trace the deep-seated divisions in the PRD in part to the generation gap is not meant to minimize the present difficulties the Party

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[46]The most cogent example of this generation gap was brought home to me when I visited PRD headquarters on Avenida Independencia one day in connection with an interview with Casimiro Castro. After talking to Casimiro for a while on the status of the Party, he asked if I would like some literature on the Party. Casimiro ran into some trouble trying to convince a young radical worker in the Party named Tonito to provide the literature. Tonito was not only suspicious of me, but he was also visibly at odds with Casimiro. It was as if the fatherly Casimiro was telling his young impetuous "son" Tonito the correct manner of making friends, even though they may be Americans. I finally got the materials from Tonito, but not before I was afforded the opportunity to see that the ideological differences in the PRD had personal tones of the generation gap influencing it.

finds itself in. What it is meant to show is that the internal problems of the Party are extremely complex and derive from a number of sources. It is true that the primary source of agitation is still the unresolved question of whether the PRD should emphasize practical politics or ideological promises in its opposition role. But one cannot ignore the fact that beneath this surface dispute there are other currents of agitation such as the generational conflict. Also of importance is the personality and mannerisms of Juan Bosch which pervade all aspects of the Party structure. Because of his radical impulsiveness and his dislike of Party moderates, Bosch has heated up internal disputes and made amicable solutions extremely difficult. There is no telling how much of the difficulties the PRD finds itself in today could have been avoided had its leader been more diplomatic and less charismatic.

With all the internal problems that the PRD is experiencing at present, future predictions about the shape of the organization structure are indeed difficult to make. The next year will be most important for the PRD since President Balaguer has shown no inclination to leave his position. The old battle between the "políticos" and the "ideologues" seems unavoidable, especially now as a result of the recent controversy over the expulsion or resignation

of key Party faithful.[47]

What course the PRD takes depends to a large degree on how it fares without the leadership of Juan Bosch and the activists that he took with him to the new PLD. From all visible signs it appears that Bosch will continue to favor a position of uncompromising radicalism and preparation for that elusive future opportunity of once again attaining political power. The situation, however, has changed some in that Juan Bosch is now without the strong base of support that the Party organization provided. Bosch just might have to meet some of his critics in the PRD half way and make some concessions with regard to participation in the so-called "united front" opposition, democraticization of the Permanent Commission, and acceptance of a more moderate opposition stance. Whether Bosch sees his options in a similar manner is pure speculation, but the fact remains that the PRD is in serious trouble at the present time and requires drastic modification if it is to survive as a unified opposition voice.

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[47]Balaguer has used close associates like his representative to Puerto Rico, Rafael Bonilla Aybar, to leak out his presidential intentions. Also fervent supporters of the president have placed signs throughout the countryside which read--Balaguer 1974-1980. To bolster these sentiments the Partido Reformista has recently nominated the president for an unprecedented third term. Of course, the Dominican constitution had to be changed in order to make possible Balaguer's plans of continuismo.

CHAPTER VI

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES AGAINST THE PRD OPPOSITION; DEPOLITICIZATION, SUBVERSION AND REPRESSION

The PRD's task of providing continuous, disciplined and effective political opposition to the Balaguer regime, as previous chapters have shown, was often marred not only by the weaknesses of so-called democratic institutions, but also by numerous internal squabbles over strategies and tactics. The PRD's problems as a viable political opposition in the Dominican Republic, however, included more than overcoming the deficiencies of Dominican democracy and the proper balancing of conflicting leadership groups. The PRD from the inception of Balaguer's first term as president faced a three-pronged anti-opposition strategy that aimed at totally undermining the Party's popular base. The strategies designed by the Balaguer regime stressed the depoliticization of Dominican society, subversion of PRD personnel (its affiliated labor and peasant associations, and its public policy positions), and a massive campaign of repression against PRD activists and Left-wing sympathizers of the Party.

The anti-opposition policies of depoliticization, subversion and repression used by the Balaguer regime were

formulated with two very important goals in mind. Firstly, the newly elected president was most concerned with restoring calm and order to his war-torn nation. The civil war of 1965 had not only divided the country politically, but had seriously damaged, if not destroyed, its economic infrastructure. With the fighting ended, the Dominican Republic was at a standstill; its export industry bordered near collapse, its external debts to foreign countries and institutions skyrocketed, internal administration revealed complete disorganization and, most of all, the spirit of the people showed signs of strain and fatigue. Faced with such dismal circumstances, President Balaguer shifted attention away from the political arena and placed full emphasis on rebuilding Dominican society. In order to achieve such a shift, Balaguer chose to move beyond the common pleas for a return to normalcy and introduced a comprehensive developmental strategy that would speed modernization, while controlling its impact on the large majority of the Dominican masses.

But beneath this outward concern with rebuilding Dominican society, Balaguer and his conservative allies sought mainly to control Dominican politics by weakening the PRD and their ability to influence Dominican development. With the substantial electoral victory that he gained in the June, 1966 election and the full support of the United States government, Balaguer felt that the time was

ripe for making a concerted effort to loosen the hold of the PRD on sizeable portions of the Dominican electorate. In a real sense Balaguer needed the PRD to maintain his "democratic" regime, but the Party would only be allowed to exist with minimal influence and reduced political capability.

In order to attain this final emasculation of the PRD, Balaguer utilized the power and influence of his office to push the Party further away from the center of politics in the Dominican Republic. Through a highly adept handling of governmental personnel, police resources, public relations, and the aura of paternalistic rule, Balaguer sought to solidify his position as the new "caudillo figure" whose commands would remain unchallenged. The end product of Balaguer's intricate and devious machinations was to dull the political sensitivities of the Dominican people with mammoth economic programs, tantalize them with lucrative job offers, new-fangled social institutions and pie in the sky promises and, most sinister of all, terrorize them with a vicious campaign of political intimidation and assassination.

Because of the widespread nature of Balaguer's anti-opposition campaign against the PRD and the effect of these activities on the life of the Party, we cannot avoid examining the depoliticization, subversion and repression that

the PRD has faced in the Balaguer years. If we are to understand the full range of problems that an opposition party meets in an authoritarian framework, the anti-opposition policies of the Balaguer regime will serve as one of the best guides. But more than just a view of the obstacles that were placed in the path of the PRD, the actions of the Balaguer government give a candid glimpse of the mechanics of Dominican society and the powers of its paternalistic leadership. The strategies of depoliticization, subversion and repression mirror the lifestyle and traditions that are uniquely Dominican and point squarely to the extreme difficulties of fundamental societal change, change that the PRD and its leadership represent.

The Strategy of Depoliticization

The efforts of the Balaguer regime to depoliticize Dominican society as a means of upsetting (if not silencing) the PRD opposition took many varied forms. One of the most obvious tactics of the government was its use of public relations techniques in the field of economic modernization. President Balaguer, despite his shy unobtrusive demeanor, is a deft master in the use of television, the newspapers and personal appearances. One cannot live in the Dominican Republic a single day without seeing an active, personable president opening up a new housing development, presiding

over the groundbreaking for a new school, inspecting a dam project, handing out a land deed to an appreciative peasant, or merely sitting in his office listening to the problems of his countrymen. The key to Balaguer's success and his ability to defuse the opposition is the sense of movement and progress that he has brought to the Dominican Republic. When the Dominican people see their president moving about the country actively pushing for the development of the nation, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to heap criticism upon him, or worse yet, side with a political party like the PRD. It should be noted that all this movement is achieved in a highly paternalistic fashion, not through mass mobilization as was the case with the PRD in the 1960's.

Much of the movement that is central to the outward appearance of the Balaguer regime is not without some foundation. In a six-year period from July, 1966 to July, 1972 the Balaguer government has made considerable progress in providing the basic necessities for the Dominican people. In this period the Balaguer administration built:

1,667	primary and secondary schools
55	dining halls
37	bridges
759,925	meters of road
109,870	meters of irrigation canals
11	medical centers

20 aqueducts
91 community centers
132 housing developments.[1]

In total the Balaguer government has completed 1,906 development projects and is in the process of finishing 279 more, all at a cost of some $105.9 million. Added to these figures is an impressive increase in exports in 1972 (43%) which has helped increase the GNP to a phenomenal yearly growth rate of 10%, a figure claimed by the government to be one of the largest increases in the Third World.[2] On a number of economic fronts the government is making quite noticeable progress whether in the areas of sugar, nickel or tobacco production or the completion of the huge Tavera Dam complex or the attraction of foreign development loans and investments. In short, the government of Joaquín Balaguer has brought a quite visible measure of economic development to the Dominican Republic. Such development has only strengthened Balaguer's position among the people and caused them to direct their attention to nation-building, not politics.

The PRD well realizes that Balaguer has made some

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[1]The Dominican daily Ultima Hora (Santo Domingo) ran a twenty-two page section on the progress of the Balaguer regime since June, 1966. See Ultima Hora, August 14, 1972.

[2]A two-page advertisement in the New York Times of April 3, 1973 written by Stanley Ross makes this assertion and also contributes numerous positive growth statistics.

noticeable advances in rebuilding the country after the civil war of 1965, and is skillfully employing his victories to solidify his own position. Nevertheless, the PRD worked tirelessly to challenge the claimed economic modernization program of the Balaguer regime. Where the PRD has been most successful in counteracting the depoliticization efforts of the government is in spotlighting the severe inadequacies of life in the Dominican Republic since 1966. Juan Bosch, in his radio addresses, continuously points to the massive unemployment (between 30 and 40% of the work force) and underemployment (another 20%) that is painfully evident in the poor barrios; the unequal distribution of farm land in the campo (1% of farmers own 47.5% of the land, while 82% own fewer than 10 acres); the high incidence of malnutrition and disease (bloated bellies on the young is commonplace and life expectancy is 52 years); the lack of adequate water and drainage facilities in urban areas (30% of city dwellers have bacteriologically acceptable drinking water).[3]

Besides these so-called bread and butter issues, the PRD also criticizes the blatant inequality of Dominican society where the rich have accumulated enormous wealth in this period, while the barrio dwellers remain in abject

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[3]An article by A. Kent MacDougall for the Wall Street Journal, September 7, 1971 has an excellent array of statistics which are uncomplimentary to the prevailing theory of progress during the Balaguer years.

poverty. Bosch correctly points out that for all Balaguer's claims of progress, the Dominican Republic still has one of the lowest per capita income rates in Latin America ($305 which is one half that of Cuba) and one of the highest illiteracy rates (66%). Added to these dismal figures is that fact that national studies show that half of the rural dwellings in the country are categorized as uninhabitable. With poverty and inequality so prevalent it is no wonder that over 200,000 Dominicans have emigrated to the United States in search of a better life.[4]

Although the picture of widespread economic progress painted by President Balaguer is a matter of opinion and social position, the important point is that Balaguer has been able to use whatever economic advance achieved by the government to strengthen his hold on the Dominican people. By creating the appearance of great internal change and movement, Balaguer has stripped from the Dominican consciousness any real and permanent interest in alternative political parties or programs. By placing emphasis on

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[4]The newsletter Latin America cites these emigration figures along with other statistics that raise additional questions about the so-called boom in the Dominican economy. See Latin America, May 15, 1970, pp. 153-54. It is interesting to note that although these 200,000 Dominicans leave their country, they do not leave behind their politics. A New York Times story of November 9, 1970 shows that a number of Dominicans in New York have formed a PRD nucleus which continues the process of education and organization.

socioeconomic concerns and the overall modernization of the nation, Balaguer has shifted public attention away from the fundamental question of who has power and how this power is to be utilized. With the stress placed on increased sugar production, the construction of economic infrastructure, the attraction of foreign investment, and an occasional social change, Balaguer has at once given the people a brief glimpse of economic prosperity, while also laying the groundwork for the destruction of politics.

Besides the emphasis placed on movement and economic progress as a method of depoliticizing the internal political situation, the Balaguer regime, frequently, went beyond the subtleties of its public relations campaign by refusing to provide the Party with a parade permit or by closing its radio station for alleged "inflammatory" statements. Every year on April 28th, (the anniversary of the 1965 civil war) and July 5th, (the date when PRD organizers returned to the Dominican Republic after thirty years in exile) the Party stages memorial parades. The government has seen fit to either refuse permits for these gatherings or to block the path of the marchers. The official position is that the PRD marchers may endanger the public safety. Behind this statement, however, is a conscious desire to rid the nation of all overt political activity. Similar tactics have been used against the Party radio station, Radio Commercial. On

at least two occasions, the most recent one during the 1973 invasion of Caamaño Deño, the government closed the station down. In both instances the radio station was allowed to once again operate and engage in political discussion, but only after extensive bargaining in which the Balaguer regime stressed that the government would not hesitate to intervene in the future if circumstances warranted it.[5]

The heavy reliance of Balaguer on the tactics of economic movement and occasional police suppression of political activity was in a real sense secondary to the president's main tool of depoliticization--a keen realization of the importance that the traditions of paternalism, caudilloism and continuismo have in Dominican society. President Balaguer, who worked closely with the dictator Trujillo, knew well the influence that the patron-type figure held in the Dominican Republic. As a result, Balaguer, from the inception of his rule, sought to build up his image as

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[5]The Balaguer legislature has also recently passed a political campaign law which prohibits party activity for the May 16, 1974 presidential election before the first of January. Before that date parties must receive a permit from the National Police. Balaguer has also recently sought the passage of a press and radio censorship bill which would have the government examine the kind of material that is broadcast or printed in the Dominican Republic.

statesman, peacemaker, and benevolent father of the Dominican people.[6]

Because of the historical precedent for successful paternalistic rule, Balaguer went to work immediately to reap the benefits of the Dominican peoples' age-old respect for the patron. Balaguer constantly set up the dichotomy of the trouble-making Juan Bosch and his PRD as opposed to the peacemaking and modernizing leadership that he could offer. Where Bosch had only given the Dominicans bloodshed and confusion, Balaguer would stabilize the country and give the people a sense of continuity that they had not seen since the death of Trujillo. Where Bosch and his party were squabbling over the correct form of democratic participation and government, Balaguer would reinstitute and intensify the familiar relationship between patron and client, caudillo and loyal subject.

In order to establish himself as the new Dominican patron, Balaguer formed his presidency in the image of a kindly, concerned and, in many instances, generous national leader. Every noontime when the President returned home for lunch and every evening when he was not at a state function,

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[6]Some PRD activists see a great similarity between the style of President Balaguer and Richard Nixon. Both are basically shy, introspective, unassuming individuals who are master politicians and have had to function in an atmosphere of hostile and competing opposition groups.

long lines of peasants and ghetto dwellers would wait to see their patron and beg for a new wheelchair or sewing machine or plow or in many cases a mere handout. The Dominican people remembered well the generosity of the President during the waning Trujillo years and knew that the surest route to having their plea heard was through the direct approach. Of course Balaguer, being an astute politician, recognized that his image as the new patron in Dominican society greatly solidified his power base. Balaguer thus did nothing to weaken his relationship with the people but rather intensified his benevolence. As a result wherever the President travels in the Dominican Republic he carries sizeable amounts of money which he hands out to the people.[7] When a peasant receives title to new land or a community gets a new bridge or irrigation canal, the name of Joaquín Balaguer is constantly emphasized as the sole source of the gift. Balaguer has developed his image as the new, benevolent patron to such an extent that even his sister has formed her own agency called Cruzada de Amer which makes handouts in the name of the President. In short, Balaguer has employed every tactic of the traditional paternalistic leader

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[7]It is perhaps interesting to note that whenver Balaguer shakes hands with a peasant on his many excursions into the campo, the president has an aid hand him a handkerchief so that he can clean himself off.

in his attempt to extend his control over the Dominican populace and speed the process of depoliticization.

A precise determination of the success that Balaguer has had with his comprehensive depoliticization strategy against the popular base of PRD support is indeed difficult to measure, especially since the public opinion apparatus in the Dominican Republic is not equipped to correctly gauge public support for the government in relation to the PRD. Nevertheless, some knowledgeable sources in the country feel strongly that the Balaguer administration has been most effective in chipping away at marginal PRD support, particularly in regions outside the Santo Domingo area.[8] Balaguer's personalismo, his public relations campaigns, and his strong connections with the chief rural socializers--the military and the Catholic Church--have strengthened his popularity considerably.

The fruits of these efforts can be seen frequently in the country's newspapers. Almost every week one can open up a Santo Domingo daily and find a full-page

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[8]These opinions were gained from interviews with key political officials in the United States Embassy during the summer of 1972. A word of caution must be entered here in that observers in the United States Embassy are merely one source of opinion and cannot be recognized as definitive analysts of internal Dominican politics.

advertisement purchased by a small town or village.[9] In the advertisement lavish praise is heaped on the President as the people thank him for a civic improvement. The statement of thanks is relatively short due to the desire of the officials to have as many signatures as possible printed on the page, but there is no question that the people recognize Balaguer as their benefactor. After seeing a number of these advertisements, the large crowds that turn out for his personal appearances, and the quiet respect the Dominicans evince toward their president, it is most difficult to come to a conclusion that sees Balaguer as a leader without solid citizen support. Indeed, some Dominicans go so far as to state that support for the President is nearing the 70% level.[10]

This figure can certainly be questioned considering the lingering discontent in the country over jobs and personal income. Yet the fact remains that the PRD's inability to register a solid abstention front in the 1970 election coupled with the mounting signs of public acceptance of the Balaguer regime point to at least a changed mood in the

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[9]For an example of such a popular outpouring of support for Balaguer and the prosperity he has brought, see El Caribe, June 27, 1972.

[10]The figures, which are by no means scientific, come from conversations held by United States Embassy officials with numerous Dominican businessmen.

Dominican Republic. The mood is not quite that of undying allegiance to the Balaguer regime, but there is a visible tendency in the country to support his leadership and put aside, for the time, the radical alternatives raised by the PRD.

This is not to say that Dominican society has been effectively depoliticized. What has happened is that President Balaguer has given the Dominican people a brief respite from the years of democratic revolution in the 1960's. Balaguer has returned the Dominicans to a more secure and familiar social, economic and political environment. The Dominican people, since the death of Trujillo, were in a state of confusion. Without effective leadership and forced to evolve new institutions and procedures, the Dominican people were seeking a stabilizing political influence. With the end of the war and the election of Balaguer, the Dominican people seemed anxious for a return to normalcy. Such normalcy meant a return to a societal framework based on paternalism, a passive obedience to the caudillo, and a decreasing concern for opposition politics. The rhetoric of Juan Bosch and the new ideology of the PRD may have held the promise of much needed change, but the majority of Dominican people seemed much more willing to sacrifice the changes proposed by the opposition in favor of the stability, security, and glimpse of prosperity that came with

supporting Joaquín Balaguer. As stated earlier, the support for Balaguer does not mean that the Dominican people are thoroughly ecstatic over their new patron or that the figure of Juan Bosch does not excite their interest in change. But when faced with the alternatives of a probable renewal of civil war and incremental social and economic development, the choice becomes obvious.

The Strategy of Subversion

Where the depoliticization strategy of the Balaguer regime was designed primarily to shift attention away from the major social and policital concerns stressed by the PRD, the efforts by the government to subvert party clientele, associations, and issue areas were a more direct and pernicious attempt to loosen the hold of the PRD on Dominican society. The term "subversion" of the PRD is used here because the strategy utilized by the Balaguer government can best be described as middle range in that it was not employed with as much subtlety or finesse as the depoliticization efforts, but nonetheless was short of the violence and intimidation also used against the Party. Although this strategy of subversion falls midway between depoliticization and repression, it must be emphasized that the Balaguer forces saw the subversive activities as central to their overall plan for emasculating the PRD opposition.

Subversion was used to create disorder and dissension in the Party by enticing activists away from their allegiance with lucrative government positions, by creating competing social and political associations, and by introducing programs and policy positions that had long been the ideological "baggage" of the PRD.

Probably the most direct form that government subversion of the PRD took was a constant effort by the Balaguer forces to lure high party officials away from the organization. The practice of enticing opposition party activists over to the side of the government is not an uncommon occurrence in Latin America.[11] But in the Dominican Republic the desire of the administration to "co-opt" the highly disciplined PRD leadership posed a severe challenge to the cohesiveness of the Party.

The subversive strategy of buying off PRD officials started with the initiatives of the President after the 1966 elections. Using the play of a unity government, Balaguer hoped to break up the PRD leadership by incorporating a number of key activists in his administration. In some respects he was successful as the aforementioned Martínez Francisco, Brea Peña, Molina Ureña and others assumed positions of some importance.

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[11]See Bo Anderson and James Cockroft, "Control and Cooptation in Mexican Politics," Journal of Comparative Sociology (March 1966): 11-28.

The reasons behind the shift in allegiance of so-called PRD stalwarts is quite varied, but there are a few common strains of motivation that link them together. First of all these men had grown tired of the political conflicts that rendered their country virtually helpless since the death of Trujillo. Because of their deep-seated patriotism, men like Molina Ureña felt it necessary to place partisan politics aside and serve the country in an administrative or consultative capacity. Secondly, it is safe to state that these "co-opted" PRD officials realized at an early date the increasing popularity and power that President Balaguer was accumulating. Although he did not have the charismatic qualities of Juan Bosch, Balaguer did have the support of the key groups in Dominican society, and of course the United States. In effect, those men who switched allegiance early in the first Balaguer administration wanted to follow a winner and were not willing to become frequent targets of government repression. Lastly, these former PRD activists, from a simple economic point of view, saw the benefits of joining the Balaguer team. To reject the government's job offers meant that they would no longer be at the center of decision-making in their country, and would have to return to private life and face years of political

ostracism, financial ruin and probable police intimidation.[12]

Although Balaguer was reasonably successful early in his administration in bringing key PRD leaders into the governmental fold, his overall effort to create a unity government and neutralize the PRD failed. The PRD organization held firm in its refusal to connect itself with Balaguer and disciplined those Party members who accepted cabinet level positions. The cohesiveness of the PRD organization, though, did not stop the government from continuing to approach Party officials about the possibility of joining the Balaguer administration. In certain isolated cases the government was successful in convincing a Party organizer in the campo to switch allegiances. Nevertheless, these incidents of allegiance switching were few and far between and, more importantly, these switchers were individuals described by PRD leaders as having questionable credentials as Party activists. In fact one PRD official told me that the Party did not view these switchers with great alarm, but rather saw their moving out of the Party as an effortless

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[12]It is interesting to note that the three PRD party members who first set foot on Dominican soil after some thirty years in exile have all broken from the Party and assumed various positions within the Balaguer regime. Angel Miolan is now Minister of Tourism, Ramon Castillos and Ramon Silfa both occupied important positions in the Balaguer cabinet and in the consular corps. See El Caribe, July 6, 1972.

means of rooting out undesirable and uncooperative functionaries.[13]

Despite Party claims that "co-optation" efforts were not effecting the proper functioning of the PRD, Juan Bosch did feel it was necessary to make a radio speech directed at the government's moves to buy off Party leaders and conduct politics based on economic gain. Bosch castigated Balaguer for his efforts to strengthen his popularity through patronage jobs and lucrative contracts. Bosch further emphasized that the PRD never felt it proper to create political support by luring Dominican leaders with the promise of financial and personal security. The PRD leader did admit, however, that although Balaguer was able to buy off "three or four" Party leaders in the post-1970 election period, he did state that the small number of switchers was proof of the Party's discipline and its high regard for honesty and integrity in government.[14]

In recent years the Balaguer government has seen fit to supplement its use of patronage and paternalism as means of subverting PRD clientele by entering into competition with the Party for the support of various associational groups. Balaguer seems unwilling in his second term

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[13]Interview with Emmanuel Espínal, Santo Domingo, July 9, 1972.

[14]Speech by Juan Bosch, El Nacional, July 6, 1972.

to rely on his office or his Partido Reformista or his close ties with the military as the channels for societal control. What is happening presently is that numerous peasant, labor and middle class groups are forming with government sanction and considerable financial aid. The express goal of these groups is to expand the base of Balaguer's support, challenge the PRD in its traditional sanctuaries of power, and continue the campaign to loosen the hold of the Boschistas in Dominican politics.

Probably the most visible of these new organizations is Accion Constitutional (AC). AC is predominantly a peasant association with a number of sub-groups that have been organizing and propagandizing since 1971 in the rich Cibão Valley regions. An agronomist, Luis Estrella, surfaced early as the spokesman of the AC and hit hard at the unfulfilled promises of the Bosch administration as opposed to the steady progress achieved during the Balaguer years. Reports from sources in the Cibão region show that the AC movement is quite active with pro-government agricultural experts working diligently and most effectively to sway peasant support toward the Balaguer administration. The work of the AC has definitely angered and worried the PRD. The Party leadership has recently come out against the organizing campaign of AC and has sent numerous Party representatives to the

area in hopes of revitalizing waning PRD support.[15]

In the labor field the government seems content to stay out of the business of forming rival associations and instead has encouraged independent business concerns, especially American owned firms, to form so-called "company unions" in place of exclusively PRD controlled labor groups. Balaguer has wisely recognized the intensity of support that many urban and rural workers have for the PRD, and has thus placed the government squarely behind company actions to break strikes, fire labor organizers, and, wherever possible, crush the burgeoning movement to create a national labor confederation.

The "company union" technique has been put to extensive use in the La Romano sugar central owned by a subsidiary of Gulf and Western Company, and in the Falconbridge mining concern in Bonao owned by a Toronto based group. In each instance the company has sought to destroy the strong PRD labor ties of the workers through lockouts, firings, intimidation and murder. In order to appear as kindly

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[15]See the Santiago daily El Sol of June 20, 1972 for a report on the denunciations of the AC movement by the local PRD organization. See also El Nacional for July 12, 1972 in which Luis Estrella states that the new agrarian reform law and the organization of the campesino by the AC will render the PRD and Juan Bosch powerless. In my conversation with Ruben Suro he strongly stated that Balaguer's connections with the Catholic Church and the military in the campo greatly aid his increasingly popularity as the Church and the armed forces are the two major socializers and controllers of the population.

"patrons," the companies have built modern towns complete with social, economic and health centers. To create this new union atmosphere, however, the companies have had to fight the PRD all the way.

In La Romana, especially, Gulf and Western, in unison with the local police and military units, has worked methodically and brutally to loosen the hold of the PRD on the sugar workers. Party leaders tell many frightening stories of workers who supported the PRD being taken from their homes at night and killed. The most publicized act of terror against union activity in La Romana was the disappearance of journalist Guido Gil in 1967. Gil worked openly and vigorously for the PRD workers and incurred the wrath of the central owners and the National Police head Lt. Col. Tadeo Guerrero. Gil disappeared one night and was never seen alive again, a reminder to the workers and the PRD that independent labor organizing is risky business.[16]

Presently the PRD in La Romana and Bonao still commands broad support from the workers. Yet Gulf and Western and Falconbridge have spent huge amounts of money to sway the political opinions of the workers and have succeeded in achieving a level of disinterest in labor organizing and anti-company activities. Thus despite the appearance of

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[16] Ahora presented an excellent article on the labor problems in La Romana in its February 5, 1968 edition.

governmental concern for the working class, it was made quite obvious to the workers which side the government was favoring. The position of the Balaguer regime was solidly behind the private companies, thus adding one more reason for the workers to put aside the thought of establishing an independent labor force.

Supplementing the "company union" technique employed by the major industrial concerns, the government has also supported all efforts to destroy in its infancy the Central General de Trabajo (CGT). The CGT is a relatively recent attempt by labor, in conjunction with PRD and Christian Democratic leaders, to create a general confederation to better challenge the Balaguer administration.[17] Both Felix Alburquerque and Juan Antonio Luna, high PRD leaders, are working vigorously to convince independent labor unions to join the confederation. At this stage the CGT is still groping for its identity and some semblance of national unity. Numerous organizational meetings have been held, but as yet the CGT cannot claim to be a strong and vital

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[17]See a two-page advertisement in the April 25, 1972 edition of El Nacional which lists the demands of the new central and the labor unions which have joined the movement.

opposition force within the labor field.[18]

The primary reasons for the slow and agonizing growth of the CGT is that Balaguer has pledged his support to industrial concerns in their battle to break up the confederation movement. The PRD in its monthly bulletin has acknowledged the difficulty of organizing a confederation like the CGT in the face of governmental opposition and intimidation.[19] Nevertheless, the labor organizers have pledged to fight the government's efforts to curtail the confederation movement. As for Balaguer, he recognizes that if the CGT ever becomes a reality, it could severely hamper the Dominican economy and the political position of his regime. By effective use of labor slowdowns, general strikes, and sizeable demands at the bargaining table, the government could one day face a serious challenge to its dominance. As a result of this fear of the potential power that the CGT can accumulate, Balaguer has acted quickly and forcefully to curb the confederation movement.

As to the middle class and the creation of rival groups, President Balaguer has achieved perhaps his greatest

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[18]An article in El Nacional of July 8, 1972 points to the difficulties of getting the movement off the ground and the decision by the CGT leadership to propose a "minimum program."

[19]The PRD Boletin Informativo cites the difficulties of organizing the CGT at a textile mill in Las Minas. See the Boletin Informative #1, p. 11.

success. With the steady economic growth of the Dominican Republic since 1966, Balaguer has had no real trouble in attracting middle class voters to his regime. The middle class in the Dominican Republic has always sought to achieve some semblance of security and stability in an otherwise chaotic internal situation. With Balaguer the middle class has attained its goals and has introduced a new degree of conservatism to Dominican society.

But Balaguer being the deft politician that he is has not been content to have this support languish and remain unorganized. What the Dominican president has done is to foster a series of political parties or, perhaps more correctly, political clubs which seek to attract middle class and professional support for the continuation of the Balaguer regime. Dominican politics since 1970 has seen the rise of groups like the Movimiento Nacional Juventud (MNJ) led by Foreign Minister Gomes Berges, the Frente de Apoyo Re-electionista, the Movimiento Nacional de Pueblo and others.[20]

Groups like the MNJ envision their role as solidifying Balaguer's hold on a traditionally weak and vacillating middle class, and thereby give the president a cushion against future disruptions from the peasant and

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[20]Bosch talks about these various middle class organizations in a speech printed in El Nacional, July 10, 1972.

labor sectors. On occasion there have been rifts between the regulars in the Partido Reformista and these new "clubs" like the MNJ over territory and influence. Balaguer, however, has been able to assert his dominance over the groups and use them as effective vehicles of social organization.[21] With the 1974 presidential elections nearing and opposition forces binding together to unseat Balaguer, these "clubs" will be a vital force in reminding the middle class of their responsibilities to maintain stability and conservative economic growth.

Although Balaguer has been thoroughly successful in subverting the PRD hold on certain societal groups through his development or sanction of rival associations and political groups, the Dominican president has yet to break the hold of the PRD and the Left at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD). UASD remains the stronghold of anti-Balaguer (and sometimes anti-Bosch) activity. The PRD through its student affiliate the Frente Universitario Socialista Democratica (FUSD) has traditionally been the most popular student group and has won many of the major

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[21]For a further discussion of the rifts in the Partido Reformista as a result of these other competing reelection organs, see Ahora, May 5, 1969.

elections for student government offices.[22] During 1972, however, PRD support fell off in the university as radical, Leftists groups took hold of the student governing body, the Federacion Estudiantil Dominicano (FED). The PRD leadership at one time during this period even disassociated itself from the FUSD and abstained from supporting student elections.[23] Most recently, the PRD and FUSD have gotten back together and have won the election for the FED, once again placing the Party in a commanding position with Dominican university students. As for Balaguer, his efforts at the UASD have been minimal. There have been attempts to organize students, but these have generally failed. Balaguer has rather relied on the National Police and the stark realities of achieving middle class status in the Dominican Republic as the primary curbs on student radicalism.[24]

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[22]Hatuey de Camps, a distant relative of Juan Bosch, has traditionally been the leader of the FUSD and a member of the Executive Committee until he resigned both posts and went out of the country to study.

[23]The PRD leadership during this period was simply disgusted with the disorganization and the mindless protest shown by the FUSD and the other student groups. Nevertheless the United States Embassy estimates that the PRD controls about 75% of the students at the UASD.

[24]It is important to stress that the economic and social demands of Dominican society necessitate that many students play the game and reject radical politics. The basic reason for this is that the largest employer in the nation is the government. Thus if you want to work, it is important to have a clean record or at least be repentant for your past "transgressions."

One of the primary strengths of the Balaguer administration in its campaign of subversion against the PRD has been a keen grasp of national and international issues and an uncanny ability to exploit those issue areas to its benefit. It has long been recognized that a president's greatest resource when dealing with the opposition is his control over the issue base. Any national leader who commands a great deal of power and respect can choose the issues that the nation will focus its attention on and lead the public in a direction favorable to his position. President Balaguer, from the inception of his administration, has been a master at subverting the PRD's catalogue of issues by either ignoring those areas that the Party thought important or by creating the impression that the government was promoting an issue with even greater intensity than the opposition.

The best example of Balaguer's refusal to recognize a vital issue area was with respect to the sustained level of political violence that has marked his administration. In the area of political violence Balaguer many times took a position of "benign neglect," and professed ignorance of police supported repression against PRD operatives.[25] It

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[25]As an example of this naivete, see El Nacional, May 12, 1971 in which Balaguer professes ignorance of the La Banda activity.

was not until the government received extensive pressure from European leaders and United States newspapers that Balaguer "came to realize" the extent that violence had gripped the Dominican Republic. Although Balaguer did order a crackdown on groups like La Banda and the general reign of terror that they created in 1971, the President continued to take a low profile approach toward the frequent incidents of political intimidation and assassination. In many respects terror against opposition parties like the PRD should be in the forefront of concerns facing the nation, yet Balaguer and the leaders of Dominican government and society refuse to acknowledge the importance of the problem and the serious implications that it holds for the steady governance of the country.

Where President Balaguer showed a marked insensitivity toward the pressing national issue of political repression, he evinced a remarkable ability to capture key issue areas away from the Party and use them to his own benefit. One such issue "coup" was in the area of agrarian reform. In February, 1972 President Balaguer made his annual address to the Dominican legislature in which he promised a massive reform program in the campo that would supposedly break up previously large holdings of the rich and resettle thousands of Dominican peasants into new farms. The speech by Balaguer was a distinct departure from his usually

conservative foot-dragging approach to changing the social and economic environment in the agricultural sector.

The Balaguer speech received wide attention both in the Dominican Republic and the United States as many analysts felt the President had finally broken out of his status quo mold and decided to establish a place for himself in Dominican history as a great reformer.[26] But besides serving as a brilliant public relations effort, the speech by Balaguer was designed to quash PRD criticism of the government's nearly non-existent land reform programs and revitalize the atmosphere of movement that had so effectively handcuffed the opposition in the past.

The agrarian reform speech before the Dominican legislature created a momentary atmosphere of revolutionary change that unfortunately soon died as the Dominican peasantry has had to face the harsh realities of landowning intransigence, bureaucratic inefficiency and governmental favoritism. The Balaguer agrarian reform speech did cause some degree of change within the agricultural sector (an

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[26]See a New York Times article of April 26, 1972 in which the correspondent, Richard Severo, sees the reforms as Balaguer's attempt to secure a place in Dominican history as a reformer. Over 80,000 acres of land was initially seized by the government, but Balaguer made sure that he did not alienate the rich landowners. A week after his speech Balaguer traveled to Santiago to explain the controversial agrarian reform package.

increase in the distribution of land titles and a more vigorous attempt by the government to better utilize previously unused land), but the importance of the speech can be viewed in another light. By speaking out for agrarian reform at a time when the PRD was languishing and losing popular support, Balaguer further secured a place in the minds and hearts of many Dominican peasants as a dedicated reformer and administrator. All the PRD could do was to react to the speech and term it a public relations gimmick. The damage was done, though, as Balaguer again grabbed hold of a controversial issue area and forced the opposition PRD into the background.

The ability of Balaguer to enhance his own popularity at the expense of the PRD can also be found in the ingeneous handling of United States assistance. In the early days of the first Balaguer administration the United States Agency for International Development (AID) was prepared to grant a $5 million loan to the city of Santo Domingo for public works projects. The important concern here is not the loan, but the manner in which Balaguer used the loan to lessen the influence and effectiveness of the PRD in the capital city.

At the time of the loan proposal the municipal government was controlled by the PRD. Although many of the PRD administrators were able and sincerely interested in

the welfare of the city-dwellers, the governing structure was without sufficient funds to tackle the enormous problems of redevelopment after the civil war. The $5 million loan was designed to ease the burden of this redevelopment by creating numerous projects which not only cleaned up the city, but offered a large segment of the unemployed a chance to earn a living wage.

President Balaguer actively encouraged the AID assistance and led United States officials to believe that it would be used to clean up Santo Domingo. When the loan was approved, however, Balaguer shifted the monies to the ministry of Public Works for general use. The shift of the $5 million loan not only deprived the city of Santo Domingo of much needed funds for public works, but more to the point it made the PRD administrators who ran the city look incompetent and uncaring. Without the United States loan and also the cooperation of the Balaguer government, PRD city officials were forced to tell the residents of Santo Domingo that jobs, housing, garbage collection and other services were not attainable in the near future.

President Balaguer's astute handling of the AID loan thus gained for his administration an additional $5 million to be used as he desired and also created an atmosphere of hostility toward the PRD city leaders for not producing the jobs and services desperately needed in war-torn Santo

Domingo. As David Fairchild, AID officer during this period, states:

> He [Balaguer] led them [AID officers] all to believe he was going to allow this [the loan to the municipal government] to happen. The U.S. probed him repeatedly during the course of the project,: "Is this alright with you?" "Oh sure we need public works." But that doesn't say who does it. . . . So they [AID] were outfoxed by Balaguer, and I think this was one of the main reasons the PRD lost in the municipal elections in 1968, because they couldn't win without the national government giving them any support, in fact, quite the contrary with the national government working them over continuously - clean the street, pay their own salaries and even administer their normal operations.[27]

Throughout his tenure in office Balaguer has also shown a marked ability to cope with PRD criticism over his close ties with the United States. Although there is no question about the extent of United States involvement in Dominican politics and economics, Balaguer has not been willing to link himself inextricably to the "colossus of the North." In a number of public speeches Balaguer has pronounced his independence from the United States and frequently made a point of showing his nationalistic sentiment. As Howard Wiarda recalls one such instance:

> At the opening of Santo Domingo's impressive industrial exposition, he (Balaguer) delivered a speech, designed to lure foreign capital and reassure Dominican entrepreneurs, in which he

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[27]David Fairchild, "AID In the Dominican Republic - an Inside View," NACLA Newsletter, November 1970, p. 8.

> said that the United States simply would not permit a second Cuba or another Castro-like revolution in the Caribbean. The point here is not whether this statement is true (it is, of course) but that Balaguer should say such a thing publicly. The statement embarrassed the U.S. Embassy; it also severely shook the PRD, who fear that if this indeed is U.S. policy, the United States will again use the "Communist issue to prevent . . . any fundamental restructuring of this country."[28]

As United States economic involvement in the Dominican Republic increases, Balaguer has come under sharp attack from the PRD, especially over the dominance of Gulf and Western. Yet Balaguer has soft-peddled the foreign business concerns to the Dominican people and reminded them that economic development cannot come without the cooperation of United States financing and technology. Up to the present the disenchantment with foreign involvement in the economy has been minimal. Should criticism increase, sources in Santo Domingo feel that Balaguer is a smart enough politician that he would readily jump on the nationalization bandwagon in order to solidify his position. Based on Balaguer's past performance as a keen opportunist, this prediction seems wholly feasible. If Balaguer feels the necessity of moving with the tide toward nationalization and increased independence from the United States, the PRD would again lose another issue area of opposition.

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[28]From Howard Wiarda's "The Dominican Fuse," The Nation, February 19, 1968, p. 239.

A proper summation of the success that the government's subversion campaign against the PRD has achieved is mixed. The PRD can point to the fact that only a few of its key leaders went over to the other side or that its associational groups are still strong or that its ideological platform retains its revolutionary uniqueness. But what must also be stated is that day by day Balaguer's subversion of the PRD continues and makes visible headway. There is no doubt within many knowledgeable circles in Dominican society that Balaguer is on the offensive in the battle for public support. The strategy of subversion employs an extremely slow and methodical approach to the weakening of the PRD, which is why definitive statements about its success must be guarded. Nevertheless, there is no question that the PRD of June, 1966 is not the same party of 1973. The PRD has certainly been set back by the subversive activities of the Balaguer regime. The only question is how far back?

Repression

The PRD is by no means a stranger to repression. From its early days in exile to the devastatingly cruel civil war period, the Party has seen hundreds, if not thousands, of its leaders and rank and file supporters fall victim to government sponsored military, police and

paramilitary violence. But since the PRD assumed opposition status in June, 1966, the Party has fallen prey to perhaps the most systematic and widespread program of political repression in modern day Latin America. Under the governmental leadership of President Balaguer, the PRD has had to face constant harassment in its attempt to exercise political opposition and frequent bodily injury and murder of its activists.

The problem of governmental repression against the PRD opposition can be approached in a number of ways since the Party has been effected not only in an overt sense by a considerable loss of personnel and property, but in a more subtle manner through a growing umbrella of fear, intimidation and waning spirits. From a purely statistical point of view the evidence on repression is shocking. Although sources differ with respect to the exact number of PRD deaths due to assassination, estimates of the number of murders range from 500 to 1,000 since 1966.[29] The overwhelming majority of these murders have been Dominicans with either direct party or associational ties to the PRD, or they have been outspoken supporters of the Party's ideological position.

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[29] El Nacional places the death rate of Left-wing activists since 1966 at around 1,000. See El Nacional, September 17, 1971.

Overall since 1966 the murder rate of political activists has averaged one person every four days. But at the height of the repression during certain periods in 1970, one Dominican was assassinated every thirty-four hours; in the summer and fall of 1971 the rate increased to one person every twenty-four hours. Added to these substantial murder figures are the over five hundred political prisoners confined to the infamous La Victoria prison, many times without proper respect for due process of law and basic human rights.

While the toll in human life has been considerable, the PRD has also had to endure a number of attacks on its national headquarters, barrio offices, and affiliated association meeting places.[30] As a result of numerous police invasions of their national headquarters, the PRD main office on Avenida Independencia is a bare skeleton with little or no storage of important files and documents. Most of the paper work of the Party is held by individual leaders in their homes or private offices.

The tiny barrio offices that the PRD runs in each of its twenty-two organizational areas in Santo Domingo have also been under attack. Police units or paramilitary groups sanctioned by the police frequently harass PRD operatives and on occasion break into the office to destory typewriters,

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[30]One example among many is the bombing of the PRD headquarters building on April 25, 1971. See El Nacional for the story on this date.

printing machines and filing cabinets. Because these barrio offices are in many cases in isolated areas of the city, they are often easy targets for intimidation or destruction. PRD field offices in remote parts of the country have also not been spared the attacks of police or paid ruffians.

The spectre of repression is not only directed at the central PRD organization. Two of the Party's staunchest labor allies, the taxi-drivers' union (UNCHOSIN) and the dockworkers' union (POTOSI) have been under constant harassment and attack by government agents and provocateurs. Since the taxi-drivers and the dockworkers are vital to the country's internal and external trade and transportation, their allegiance to the PRD has made them a prime target of the Balaguer regime. Numerous leaders of UNCHOSIN and POTOSI have been subjected to police interrogation and beatings, while the headquarters of both unions have been raided and ransacked. Spokesmen for UNCHOSIN claim that police attacks have destroyed up to eighty percent of their headquarters.[31]

But while the repression has hurt the PRD from a purely physical point of view, perhaps the most devastating effect of the killings, incarcerations, beatings and harassment has been psychological and "spiritual." The seven

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[31]Taken from a working paper entitled "La Banda - An Episode of Terror," Organizing Packet on the Dominican Republic - Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action, Washington, D.C., 1971, p. 2.

years of opposition politics have definitely taken their toll on the PRD leadership. The fear and intimidation that constant police harassment brings is evident in the faces and movements of PRD activists. When a Party leader squirms in his chair at the sound of footsteps in the hall or installs a huge iron gate to supplement his German shepherd dog or has to secretly evade a police search, it becomes immediately obvious that the PRD is being subjected to another more treacherous type of repression which seeks to effect the mind and the spirit.[32]

It must be emphasized that not for one moment is the impression sought that PRD leaders are holed up in their homes constantly fearful of the police. Such a description would be blatantly false. The PRD leaders I saw or heard about are extremely courageous individuals who have met the governmental repression bravely and with honor. But the fact remains that after years of constant terror and harassment, the PRD is slowly but surely showing the effects of the repression. The PRD is more and more becoming the "hunted" party, the "enemy of the State" and no longer commands even the barest minimum of respect from the government.

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[32]By merely walking into the PRD headquarters on Avenida Independencia I was viewed with extreme apprehension and a quite evident uneasiness. It was not until I met Casimiro that I was given a tour of the facilities--a pharmacy, a school (subject--English), a small library, a printing room and small offices.

The source of much of the repression against the PRD organization and its supporters has been in the military, and especially in the National Police. Both institutions are heavily staffed with former Trujillo officers and poorly trained enlistees who view their role more as legitimized pursuers of radical political figures rather than protectors of constitutional guarantees. Using their dominant position in Dominican society, both groups have employed every form of oppression against the PRD.

The primary military and National Police leadership behind this terror is difficult to pinpoint since most officers are violently anti-communist and lifelong enemies of the PRD. The most visible figure that is usually cited by Party leaders is General Enríque Perez y Perez, the former head of the National Police during the most violent era of political repression in 1970 and 1971. General Perez often made no attempt to hide his hatred of Left-wing political leaders and on occasion let it be known that he personally was out "to get" certain PRD leaders.[33]

General Perez expanded his connection with anti-radical, anti-PRD violence by fostering the most brutal

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[33]Casimiro Castro related to me that Perez y Perez made a number of threats on his life in order to quiet down his political activity. The fear that pervades many PRD leaders was brought home to me in my interviews with Casimiro who was definitely on guard for suspicious noises and movements in the hallway of his house or outside. Interview, Santo Domingo, July 17, 1972.

group of political assassins in recent Dominican history. In the summer and fall of 1971 Dominican society witnessed a "reign of terror" against Left-wing groups initiated by a small band of ex-MPD toughs who called themselves the Anti-Communist and Anti-Terrorist Front of Reformist Youth--or simply La Banda. Dominican politics had experienced terror from other youth groups like the so-called "Uncontrollable Forces" and "La Mano," but La Banda was by far the best organized, best supplied and most infamous government sanctioned paramilitary force. The number of youths in La Banda at any one time was no more than 400, but their small numbers did not hinder them from instilling fear with professed anti-Balaguer dissidents.

The La Banda toughs were granted their freedom from jail or police harassment and promised protection and financial gain in return for their services against Left-wing radicals, primarily the PRD. The alternative was La Victoria prison and certain death. With the possibility of obtaining freedom, La Banda, under the leadership of Ramon Perez Martínez, proceeded to move into PRD barrios, local high schools, and selected union headquarters to assault, harass, destroy, and often times kill. Their alleged goal in these vicious attacks was, in the words of the La Banda leadership, "to collaborate with the police authorities in the fight against

communism and against the delinquents who hide in parties professing that doctrine."[34]

La Banda was quite successful in achieving these goals. In a period from April to September 1971 they were personally responsible for some forty-five political murders, countless beatings, and property damage. The police, for their part, seemed unable to contain the La Banda terrorism, despite Perez's statements that the National Police were doing everything possible to bring calm to the nation. As one PRD leader told me, it is incomprehensible why a thirty thousand man military and police force could not stop a band of 400 hundred terrorists, unless they did not want to. The reason why the National Police could not stop La Banda was that Perez's main bodyguard, Lt. Oscar Nuñez, acted as the liaison between the terrorists and the police. On several occasions a police headquarters jeep could be seen surrounded by the La Banda group with Nuñez or his aides coordinating the next terrorist activity.[35]

The turning point for La Banda came when the military head in the city of San Cristobal cracked down on the group and detained some of the youth as menaces to the public safety. With a precedent set and the United States

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[34]"La Banda - An Episode of Terror," p. 2.

[35]Ibid., p. 5.

and foreign press criticizing Balaguer's failure to curtail the violence, it was not long before over 250 of the La Banda group were rounded up and placed in custody. To show his desire to control La Banda Balaguer pushed Perez y Perez out of his position and appointed General Neit Nivar Siejas who promptly brought the violent situation under control and promised to restore calm to the obvious relief of the Dominican populace.[36]

Since the 1971 "reign of terror" political repression of the La Banda type has decreased markedly. There are still periodic reports of Party functionaries being beaten up or detained, but these incidences are not on the scale of 1971. Although Balaguer appeared to be swayed by foreign diplomatic and journalistic pressure concerning anti-PRD and Left-wing repression, this does not mean that the government has curtailed its long-standing goal of emasculating the PRD infrastructure. A case in point is the most recent attacks on the Party by the government over the alleged coordination and participation of the PRD, and especially Juan Bosch, in the Caamaño Deño invasion. The Party's representative in Washington stated that between fourteen hundred and fifteen hundred activists in the PRD had been rounded up and detained

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[36]See Neit Nivar's discussion of his plan to curtail the violence in El Nacional, October 14, 1971.

in Dominican prisons, including two high Party officials.[37]

As to the future of political repression against the PRD, it is hard to predict the course of action that the Balaguer government will take. With the successful defeat of the Caamaño Deño invasion and the PRD finding it increasingly more difficult to function as a unified, effective and popular opposition force, the Balaguer government may feel satisfied that seven years of attacks on the Party have completed the task of weakening PRD influence in Dominican politics. What is important to stress is that President Balaguer has reached a stage in the development of his political power where he appears to be making the decisions on how and when to utilize the repressive machinery of the state, rather than military, National Police or paramilitary forces. As one source states:

> In the early days of his (Balaguer's) post-Trujillo occupation of the presidency, he used to maintain that he could not control the 'wild elements' in the armed forces. But this is now totally unconvincing in the light of his skillful shuffling of senior military posts, and his exploitation of bitter rivalries to his own advantage, demonstrated over the past few years. There is no doubt that Balaguer knows exactly who is using terrorism, and that he could put a stop to it whenver he wished. It may, however, be true that terrorism is an unavoidable part of the neo-trujillista social and political order, at the pinnacle of which stands Balaguer.[38]

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[37]As reported in Facts on File, Vol. 33, March 18-24, 1973, p. 237.

[38]Latin America, April 20, 1973.

On the other hand it seems foolhardy to think that the PRD has reached the stage where it will be impotent to function in the Dominican political arena. What appears to be the most knowledgeable estimate of future possibilities for political repression is that Dominican society will continue to witness its major opposition party struggling to retain a viable position in the political system, while its governmental leaders work diligently to weaken the leadership cadres of the party. The government's efforts seem directed not toward the complete destruction of the PRD, for that would leave Balaguer without one of the major prerequisites of "democracy"--a strong opposition party. Instead the government seems willing to wage this constant war against the PRD and merely emasculate it, so that the regime can lay claim to being a democracy, while actually functioning in a "neo-trujillista" manner.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS; THE FUTURE OF PRD OPPOSITION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The view of the PRD opposition that has been presented in the previous discussion is certainly not a very encouraging one. If any conclusions can be made about the Party's seven-year period in opposition to the Balaguer regime, they would have to be heavily tinged with pessimism. Since Balaguer's electoral victory in June, 1966, the PRD has had to struggle against enormous odds as the government has diligently and effectively curbed meaningful party opposition. As a result of this anti-PRD campaign, the primary, if not only, goal of the Party during this opposition period has been survival. The record shows, and I am sure many PRD leaders would admit, that the "success" of the Party since 1966 can best be measured in terms of retaining organizational unity, introducing new ideological dogma and expanding somewhat its potential for mass education. It is virtually impossible, though, to view the PRD from the standpoint of a smoothly functioning democratic opposition or as a co-partner in the Dominican legislative process or as an effective foil to the power base of President Balaguer. The PRD has simply been

impotent in those areas of public policy formation in which the so-called Western opposition parties have traditionally shown a great deal of involvement and some degree of influence. In defense of PRD opposition, however, one can state that the Party has, by its status in Dominican society, pushed Bàlaguer into making some needed changes or forced him to control his repression.

When faced with a problem that contradicts its ideological position or directly effects the livelihood of its constituency, the PRD has been able to muster a loud but generally hollow response. Once the PRD has articulated its viewpoint, usually through Juan Bosch, the Party has found it extremely difficult to magnify the problem into a national issue and steer it toward an equitable political solution. The result is a growing sense of frustration and alienation among Party leaders and grass roots sympathizers as the PRD is pushed further and further away from the decision-making or decision-influencing arena.

The avenues of attack and influence that are left for the PRD in this atmosphere of opposition degeneration center primarily on the intensive utilization of propaganda and citizen education. In a real sense that is why Juan Bosch is such an important figure in the PRD and in the nation as a whole. Bosch possesses the one quality that is so necessary for maintaining a viable opposition stance in

the Dominican Republic--a charismatic ability to rally sizeable portions of the electorate around his stinging criticisms of the Balaguer regime. Although Bosch is maligned by many critics for his behavior and tactics, he has provided the PRD and the Dominican political system with the only form of opposition that it can tolerate without serious disruptions. His vitriolic denunciations of Balaguer and the United States on the radio, his unfounded boasts about the political strength of the PRD, and his curious thesis of popular dictatorship all combine to provide Dominican society, and especially those who dislike the present administration, with a faint glimmer of tangible opposition.

There is no question that the statements of the PRD against the government are for the most part ineffective, yet there is little else the Party can do under the circumstances. There are other alternative routes to opposition open to the PRD which will be discussed shortly, but these options require a radical reorienting of current Party ideology. At present, though, the Party feels that reacting through the media to the positions and policies of the Balaguer government is the only positive, offensive posture an opposition party can take in present day Dominican politics. All other channels for opposition have been

blocked off either through deft depoliticization and subversion by Balaguer or brutal repression by the military and National Police.

Faced with such immense obstacles to effective opposition, the PRD has presently settled into a "wait and see" position. Party leaders have decided that it is useless to seek reform in the current Dominican political system, and now seem willing to depend upon forces outside the political arena (i.e., the armed forces) to restructure the rules of the game so that the PRD can once again rise to a position of political dominance in the country. There are of course no guarantees that the armed forces will turn full circle and openly call upon the PRD to lead the nation, in fact most observers feel it is a ridiculous and unsubstantiated assumption. Nevertheless, the PRD leadership takes the position that, at present, time is on their side, and because of the unstable nature of Dominican politics, it is not only wise but practical to wait for the internal situation to change in their favor. Meanwhile, the Party is content to make preparations that bolster citizen participation and enlighten national consciousness.

The decision by the PRD to wait patiently, but actively, for the internal political situation to change in its favor has profound implications for the future of the Party and the nation. The biggest debate within the PRD is

the extent of the Party's participation in Dominican politics. As the situation stands now Juan Bosch still retains considerable support for his policy of abstention from any participation in Dominican government as it is currently structured. Yet this opposition posture is becoming increasingly suspect within many key Party circles. In the face of monumental roadblocks to effective opposition and diminishing possibilities for a restructuring of internal politics, PRD leaders are legitimately asking the question whether some form of involvement in the political process might be more advantageous for the Party than the present position of abstention. After all, these moderate leaders state, the rejection of the Dominican political system by the Party cannot be seen as gaining any real benefits for the Party and its constituency, except perhaps propaganda value. In fact, a good case can be posited that such anti-system behavior has made the PRD more of an outlaw opposition in the minds of governmental leaders and thus subject to increasing oppression.

Of course for the PRD to shift gears now and reenter the Dominican political process, or at least tone down its opposition, would be most difficult and demand a great deal of persuasion on the part of Party moderates. The PRD is a proud party and has spent its lifetime in fighting the policies of dictatorial regimes. Accepting the present rules

of the game and tacitly legitimizing the Balaguer regime is a difficult request to make of die-hard PRD ideologues and veterans of seven years of opposition frustration. Yet the PRD cannot ignore the failures of its past opposition strategies. Opposition from outside the political system has just not produced the results that the Party leaders had hoped it would.

Reentering the political process, though, is fraught with danger for the PRD. If Party leaders decide to participate in future elections, they not only tacitly support the present system of government, but more importantly they once again begin the formation of two enemy camps as in 1965, each desirous to control the destiny of the country. The PRD leaders well realize the importance of the electoral process. If the Party participates in an election, it runs the risk of recharging the hatreds that led to the 1965 civil war. Furthermore, if the PRD should win the election, the crisis situation is expanded tremendously as the Party must once again seek to govern the nation in the face of conservative intransigence. The possibility that PRD leaders fear most about future elections is if they do decide to run and lose by a substantial margin. Most feel that this would be the death knell of the PRD.[1]

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[1]The presidential elections were scheduled to be held on May 16, 1974.

The question thus seems to be what course should the PRD follow in the present political situation? For his part Juan Bosch continuously has counseled his now former party to continue the verbal attack on the Balaguer regime, while bolstering the Party organization so that everything is in readiness when the Balaguer regime falls (probably because of economic stagnation) and a nationalist military junta takes power in conjunction with the Party. Although such talk seems foolhardy, especially in the current boom era of the Dominican economy, Bosch strongly believes that the days of Balaguer and extravagant United States support are shortening. In one interview Bosch asserted in answer to a question on the possibility of a future "liberation" of the Dominican Republic;

> What they (the United States) cannot prevent in a country like ours that is really dependent on the U.S. economy is the effect that a crisis in that economy has on the local oligarchy and its apparatus of power . . . I believe that the crisis has already begun in the United States. I believe that we are two or three years away from a global crisis for the United States which will make itself felt here as the depression of 1929 was felt throughout Latin America.[2]

Because of such thinking, Bosch maintains that, for the moment, the PRD cannot afford participatory or cooperative ventures with the Balaguer regime. The accent is on shaping

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[2]Taken from an interview with Juan Bosch in Carlos Gutierrez' The Dominican Republic: Rebellion and Repression (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), p. 100.

and refining the Party's ideological and organizational base, while relentlessly attacking every decision that the government makes or fails to make. The key to future PRD success, according to Bosch, is the ability to wait for the internal situation to change. As Bosch stated later in the same interview;

> I must tell you that the Dominican Republic today is a country without a political solution in the institutional sense. And also - no matter what the desperate sectors may say - with no possibility of producing an armed movement. A coup d'etat might occur; in Latin America that is always a possibility. But even a coup d'etat is very difficult, given the control exercised by the Pentagon over the military forces of the country. The institution of the dictatorship with popular backing will be determined by the development of the Dominican situation, which at the present . . . is paralyzed. And which, in my judgement, will stay paralyzed for one or two years until the U.S. crisis is reflected in the power centers of this country.
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> But to prophesy now in every detail what is going to happen in two years is ridiculous. It would be establishing a scheme which reality would inevitably break down. When the equilibrium sustained here by the dominant forces collapses, then we will go into action. The problem is to seize power; the route to be followed is not important. The electoral route, of course, is out of the question in the Dominican Republic.[3]

In contrast to this "wait and see" posture, there was, at least through 1973, more discussion of the PRD challenging Balaguer in the 1974 election, but in a formal

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[3]Ibid., pp. 113-114.

opposition coalition, rather than as a single political party. Bosch's frequent statements against participation in such a "united front" not withstanding, the option of an opposition coalition could no longer be ignored by the PRD. The PRD has consistently been opposed to a coalition with the four other major "out" parties simply because of the diversity of ideologies that would have to be incorporated into the front, along with the distinct possibility that PRD leaders could be easily camouflaged amidst the dearth of personalities in the political union. Also the PRD has been reluctant to enter such a coalition because they fear a decision that makes the Party a part of a larger whole will prove the decline of the PRD in Dominican politics and enhance the Balaguer campaign of opposition destruction.

Despite the obvious drawbacks to an opposition coalition, the PRD will eventually be forced to view the union in terms of its goal to defeat the Balaguer regime and begin the task of initiating radical societal change. A so-called "united front" would not only combine a sizeable amount of Dominican voters and organizational machinery, but more so, it would lend the opposition movement a greater sense of confidence as Balaguer would have to face the whole spectrum of dissatisfied Dominican citizenry. In the fall of 1973 the chances for this opposition coalition became brighter as the PRD leadership, for the first time, assented

to begin negotiations for institutionalizing the disparate opposition forces into a "united front." Negotiations continued in an attempt to finalize the agreement, but the PRD still maintained a cautious and aloof position toward the coalition.[4] The Party perhaps realized the necessity of joining in an opposition union, yet was reluctant to make a number of central sacrifices. As a result the "united front" concept remains in doubt. The PRD, in desperation, is attracted to it, but very slow to make the final jump.

There is no doubt that the formation of a "united front" for future presidential elections would be a difficult political structure to organize and develop, and would require the PRD to compromise, for the time being, some of its independence and ideological positions. But it is the opinion of many in and out of the PRD that the formation of such an opposition union is not impossible and is furthermore the only feasible alternative open to those who find themselves at odds with the Balaguer government. Spokesmen for the "united front" in the PRD point out that the Party could use the coalition to its ultimate benefit. The PRD most certainly would be the largest party in the coalition, which automatically gives it certain prerogatives with regard to candidate selection, platform formation and campaign

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[4]See an article on the problems of opposition coalition building in Times of the Americas, October 17, 1973, p. 3.

strategy. Of course with the recent split in the PRD, a decision on the "united front" has been held in abeyance as the Party concerns itself with organizational matters. Nevertheless, the coalition option still remains viable, and with Balaguer desirous to remain in political power, talk of uniting the opposition forces will most certainly continue and intensify.

Although from a practical viewpoint the opposition coalition option might best serve the long run interests of the PRD, there is another option which Juan Bosch and the PRD have consistently avoided throughout their years of opposition. As shown earlier, the PRD has always claimed to be a revolutionary political party, yet it has cautiously avoided linking up the organization with those proponents of massive civil disobedience and violent urban guerrilla warfare. The PRD's reluctance to engage in truly radical opposition has met with extensive criticism from other Left-wing groups and leaders who cannot fathom the Party's insistence on using ideology and a faint hope of future developments as its primary opposition philosophy.[5] For their part, the PRD

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[5]Juan Jiménez Grullón, a onetime advocate of representative democracy now turned Marxist-Leninist, castigates the position of Juan Bosch in an interview also with Gutierrez. Jiménez Grullón states, ". . . the PRD has been declining, especially since Bosch's return, because the policy developed by its leader is opposed to the fundamental

points to the dangers of openly challenging the government with strikes and guerrilla warfare and remind their detractors of 1965.

There is no doubt that the PRD position against mass civil disobedience and urban guerrilla warfare is supported by history. But in these days of increasing repression against the Party and massive convulsions in the leadership cadre, it is becoming distinctly possible that groups in the PRD or in Bosch's newly formed PLD might move closer to a more militant opposition posture. After years of frustrating attempts to curb the Balaguer regime, it is understandable that radicals in the Party might find the "wait and see" and "united front" positions as counterproductive to the revolutionary ends of their movement.

As of yet pressure has not built up in the PRD for massive general strikes as a prelude to open hostility against the government. Some would even question whether the Party has the support of the Dominican masses for such a wide scale economic shutdown, should the Party decide on that course of action. But the PRD does realize that general strikes and urban guerrilla warfare are options untried by the Party, options that have proved effective in other

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aspirations of the masses. The principal aspiration of the people is to end the reign of terror . . . And so far, Bosch has abstained from direct attacks on the government. Instead he has attacked the Left, especially the MPD." See Gutierrez, p. 65.

Latin American nations. The key, however, to the successful use of these tactics is timing and public support, two variables that are difficult to gauge in the Dominican Republic, and can cause political disaster if misinterpreted. Because of the gamble involved, the PRD has heretofore refrained from these options. The important point to stress with regard to the so-called violence option is not so much the gamble involved, but the fact that the PRD now has its back to the wall and circumstances may well force the Party to take action which will answer government repression and rally the Dominican people around its standard.

The question thus becomes, what route is the PRD going to take as an opposition party? There seems to be three basic alternatives before the Party: participation either singular or coalitional, civil disobedience with its potential for violence, or a continuation and expansion of the "wait and see" posture. As to which position the PRD should take in the future, it is not my desire to use this discussion as a forum for advising the Party on strategy and tactics. What is important is that the PRD develop a strategy and corallary tactics that fit the reality of Dominican politics. The decision that is made will most certainly effect the future of opposition politics in the country and the status of the PRD as the major dissenting voice in the political system. What will be attempted here

is to lay down four guidelines or standards of political activity that I believe the PRD must remember, presumptuous though that may be, as the Party looks to the future and the decisions that will have to be made in order to challenge the Balaguer government.

(1) The PRD must always remember that it is a political party. Ideology and ideological concerns are one aspect of party behavior, but should not be the totality of party activity. The primary concern of any party must be to engage in politics. Granted that the Dominican political system is closed and repressive, but if the PRD wants to once again establish itself as an influential force in the nation, it will have to seek some sort of accommodation with the Balaguer government that does not strip the Party of its independence and integrity. If anything borders on certainty in the Dominican Republic, it is that the elements of the conservative status quo will maintain their hold on the body politic. This means that the PRD must seriously question its "wait and see" policy and its frequent concern with ideology. The PRD cannot long afford to act as if the Balaguer regime is temporary. After all, the PRD had to wait over thirty years for the last Dominican dictator to fall from power. The Party leaders must now ask themselves whether they are willing to wait perhaps another thirty years for a change in the political system or will take some

positive steps to bolster their position. Accommodation of course is a reprehensible term to many PRD leaders, but the word should not be interpreted as "sell-out." Accommodation in this sense simply means a realization that a political party by nature behaves quite differently than a political movement. A political party must constantly remember that its objective is achieved not through a heavy reliance on ideology but through tough bargaining and adept compromise. A political movement can be a very powerful vehicle for the attainment of national governmental dominance, but in the current Dominican political environment, a movement which relies on a charismatic leader, an esoteric doctrine, and a rejection of accommodation seems woefully out of place.

At present the so-called "united front" option does appear to be the most beneficial manner of accommodation with the present Dominican political system. It places the Party back in politics, attracts a broader base of support, and gives the PRD allies with similar motives. The "united front," however, is definitely fraught with danger and difficulty as this loose union of parties has many barriers to hurdle before it meets the biggest hurdle--the entrenched regime of Joaquín Balaguer.

Besides reexamining its behavior as a political party, the PRD must continue and intensify what it does best--educate and recruit the mass of Dominican society.

The abortive guerrilla landing and the upheavals in the Party have sharply curtailed what in the summer of 1972 was a vigorous, countrywide campaign to extend the base of PRD support. The Party must now regroup and once again show the Balaguer government and the Dominican people that it remains a viable and legitimate force in national politics. The PRD cannot sit idly while the Balaguer regime further builds up its support through effective use of patronage and paternalism.

The opposition battle of the PRD is a long and arduous one with very few victories and many setbacks. But for the PRD to be successful, it must remember that its goal is political power and not just the introduction of dogma. With this in mind the PRD should move forward and choose opposition strategies and tactics that best achieve this goal. Positive results will certainly be elusive, but at least the PRD will be acting in a manner that seeks power rather than talks about power.

(2) The second recommendation relates to the Party's leadership hierarchy. As the PRD is organized presently with Bosch gone (perhaps temporarily) and moderates in charge of the Party, there is a serious problem of credibility that demands a quick solution. The PRD cannot hope to ever regain power in the Dominican Republic, much less the support of the people, if it gives off the appearance

of internal chaos and leaderless administration.

What the PRD must direct its attention to now is a vigorous regrouping effort around the moderates. It is vitally important at this stage in PRD party history that the leaders squelch any potential for personal vendettas or further factional disputes. A continuation of such conflict would surely spell destruction for the remaining PRD organizational structure. At present, the Party can ill afford ideological, strategic, and tactical disputes over elections, the Balaguer regime, and the future success of the Party. Compromise must be the order of the day or else the Party will continue to disband and grow impotent.

It is also important for the PRD at this time to make some overtures to Juan Bosch and his PLD supporters in order to see what common ground lies between the two rival camps. Although such overtures might seem fruitless ventures due to the vast gulf that separates the Bosch radicals and the current moderate leadership, it is important for the future of opposition politics in the Dominican Republic that the PRD and the PLD again become one political party. As most PRD leaders would admit, the primary reason the PRD has remained an ongoing, cohesive political unit, despite countless governmental attacks, is that Bosch still retains a firm grip on a solid portion of the Dominican citizenry.

Juan Bosch is the accepted antithesis to President Balaguer and thus is seen by many as the only figure of national stature that could hold the reins of government. Because Bosch commands such respect in the nation, many Party leaders should be extremely reluctant to steer the PRD along paths that ignore the prominent place in Dominican politics that he still holds. Juan Bosch continues to be the epitome of the PRD and the only recognizable alternative to President Balaguer.

But besides regrouping behind the moderate leadership and attempting to work out the differences with Bosch, the PRD must also come to grips with the problem of balancing personalistic leadership with democratic decision-making. Although some PRD activists would deny it, there has been a gradual but nonetheless steady movement of the Party toward centralized rule. The PRD has traditionally been prominent in Latin American politics as one of the more democratically organized parties. But with the Bosch presidency of 1963, and more particularly since the beginning of its opposition role in 1966, the PRD has slipped away from its original guidelines of open discussion and group decision-making.

It is indeed difficult for Dominican parties and party leaders, set in a political system that looks to personalistic, caudillo-type leadership, to reject the traditional relationships of authority and organization, and move

to a more Anglo-American framework of decision-making and administration. If the PRD is to rise to a level of intra-party unity and cooperation, it must take some measures to insure a wider distribution of power. This is not to suggest that whoever ascends to the leadership of the Party should be stripped of their authority. What does seem necessary at this time is that if the PRD is to survive, it must take steps to remedy the constant struggles that have beset the Party; struggles that were not merely over strategy and tactics, but over the shape and form of decision-making in a democratic opposition.

The PRD has for too long straddled both sides of the fence and hoped that internal power struggles would be secondary to the demands of survival in the "democracy" of Joaquín Balaguer. It is only recently that the Party has seen the dangers of trying to function with structural guidelines of Anglo-American nature, while real power moves to one individual whose view is that the Party must be organized along the lines of a personalistic political movement. In the future then, the PRD must place emphasis on a careful blending of personalistic rule and democratic procedure. It cannot reject its democratic organizational heritage, but it cannot ignore the demands of a unified opposition leadership in a rigid, repressive, and paternalistic atmosphere.

Such blending will help to avoid the often times needless and purely personal expulsions and suspensions that were evident during recent times, while maintaining a leadership structure that is familiar to the Dominican people and powerful enough to continue the opposition against the Balaguer government.

In the end, the solution to this crisis lies with Juan Bosch. He can either return to the Party and attempt to work out a commonly agreed to ideological and operational framework or he can continue to stay in the PLD in the name of revolutionary fervor and cause further hardship to an already degenerating opposition movement. What the PRD can hope for is that Bosch, or whoever leads the Party, will begin to designate new spokesmen as a means of showing the government and the Dominican people the vitality and diversity of its leadership cadre. Some have even suggested that the most amicable solution to the Party's problems with Bosch would be to permit the aging leader to assume the position of "intellectual elder" and leave the major decision-making to younger, more politically adroit activists.[6] But whatever the PRD does about its leadership problems, the Party should

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[6]This process of kicking Bosch upstairs is a mild way of saying to the proud caudillo that his services to the Party may be more negative than positive. Some Party members have also suggested that the PRD might be better off without Bosch in any capacity.

always be guided by the fact that a political organization does not maintain its strength and cohesiveness only through personalized rule as a political movement does. A political party must share power and seek the cooperation of many individuals, even though there may be disagreements over strategy and tactics. To neglect such sharing and cooperation will render a strongly democratic party like the PRD weak and divided.

(3) Although the continued survival of the PRD depends to a large extent on how the Party and its leaders understand the importance of political rather than ideological responses to the current internal situation, the future status of the PRD in Dominican society depends a great deal on the political inclination and personalities in the armed forces. If conservative intransigence is the cardinal rule of Dominican politics, then acute military involvement in the political process is its corollary. The armed forces, because of their pivotal position in Dominican society, recognize that they hold the balance of power and thus view themselves as the guardians of stability. There are enough instances in Dominican history which point to the inability of the military to accept a political or economic situation that was not to their liking or was opposed to their interests. With a military that is powerful, restless, and not afraid to control the political situation, Dominican politics

is always tentative and national leaders expendable.

But beneath this appearance of control, one can never be exactly sure of the extent that President Balaguer actually runs the Dominican political system. It has never been determined precisely what the relationship is between Balaguer and his generals. From first glance it is distinctly possible to think that the mild mannered president is a mere slave of the military, as some have suggested, because of Balaguer's weak approach to the La Banda crisis. But it also must be stressed that every one of the promotions or demotions that the president has engineered have been accepted without question or rumblings from the barracks. The recent demotion of the popular and powerful Neit Nivar Seijas from Chief of the National Police to Secretary to the President caused hardly an uproar, although many believed that Neit actively sought to ease Balaguer out of office.[7]

Probably the fairest statement that can be made with regard to government-military relations is that Balaguer is a popular president and a masterful coordinator of personnel. Balaguer utilizes his strong position in Dominican government to effectively control the behind-the-scenes machinations of

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[7]One PRD source told me that Neit Nivar was developing his own paternalistic system with the Dominican peasants coming to his office in National Police headquarters rather than to Balaguer's.

the armed forces. As one authoritative Dominican weekly stated recently;

> Balaguer can now remove the head of the police, the air force, the army or the navy and nothing will happen in this country - whether we like it or not, this is the most stable government of the past decade.[8]

The increasing power of President Balaguer does not mean that the military has been effectively weakened or even depoliticized as the PRD. The military remains a power in its own right with a huge budget, numerous privileges, and most of all the realization that it can use its position and influence to guide Dominican policy. What this means for President Balaguer is that he has to be extremely skillful in his handling of the military and the public policy that the military has shown an interest in. So far Balaguer has been most successful in playing this dangerous game, probably because of the recent economic boom in the nation. But Balaguer's position remains questionable. A period of economic stagnation or a too vigorous attack on entrenched interests or a poor handling of United States business activity could very well weaken the authority that the President has over his generals. This is of course exactly what the PRD is waiting for and is confident will happen. In defense of the current PRD thinking, such a view of government-military relations is not far-fetched, especially

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[8]See Ahora for the week of January 21, 1973.

in Latin America, and particularly in the Dominican Republic.

Given the powerful and unpredictable nature of the Dominican military and the somewhat tenuous position that President Balaguer maintains in government, the PRD would be wise to complement its organizational and educational efforts in the country with a concerted drive to develop closer ties with sympathetic elements in the armed forces. It is no secret in the Dominican Republic that the PRD is anathema to a majority of high ranking military officers. Yet the Party cannot afford to write the military off as a permanent enemy, especially when that enemy has the potential for changing the current status quo.

There are a few signs already that the PRD recognizes the importance of making new alignments within the armed forces. Party leaders like Casimiro Castro and Peña Gómez have been known to meet on occasion with high military leaders like Neit Nivar in an effort to determine what common ground lies between the PRD and the armed forces.[9] Most of these meetings, however, have been preliminary in nature and with middle level officers who have expressed some dissatisfaction with the Balaguer regime.

The major issue that the Party hopes will bring the PRD and the military closer together is the question of

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[9]It is interesting to note that in a political system that has repressed the major opposition party both Casimiro Castro and Peña Gómez have been known to meet with Neit Nivar on occasion and seem to have some limited access to his office.

foreign economic involvement and the need for speedy nationalization. The Party is attempting to play upon the traditionally nationalistic tendencies within the military as the first step in convincing fence-straddlers of the need for new leadership. The PRD has so far followed a low key approach with respect to the question of nationalization in the military. But the Party remains hopeful that the problem of foreign economic involvement in the Dominican Republic is the key to pushing the military into action against the Balaguer regime.

The PRD seems to be continuing its contacts with the military on a highly selective basis and many times in secret. Party leaders are very honest about the possibility of success within the ranks of the military. They see the chances for significant influence as minimal. The important concern for the Party, though, is that they add the military to their areas of propaganda and education and not feel that the most powerful interest group in the country is hopelessly opposed to PRD ideology.

From the standpoint of its "wait and see" policy, such talks are crucial for the future resurgence of the PRD. But what the PRD must do is to make the military believe that national development under the Party's auspices will be noticeably better than under Joaquín Balaguer. This is indeed a difficult matter and one that will not be eased

until the Party changes its present image and its stubborn belief in a kind of Marxian determinism in Dominican politics.

(4) The fourth, and in the long run, the most important guideline of PRD resurgence in Dominican politics concerns the Party's posture toward the United States. The fortunes of the PRD have always been closely connected with United States policy, and the current situation is no different. Although the once close relationship between the PRD and the United States is now damaged, if not irreparably broken as a result of the 1965 intervention, the PRD cannot ignore the important role that the United States plays in the development of the Dominican Republic. The future success of the PRD thus hinges on the Party coming to grips with the United States presence in the country and formulating a policy that moves beyond the current stream of invective and idle threats, toward a working relationship with a political and economic force that is not about to relinquish its hold on the Caribbean.

In order to better view what alternatives are available to the PRD with regard to the United States presence in the Dominican Republic, it is first useful to examine briefly how the United States "fits into" the Dominican political and economic system and where there are access points for the PRD to exert some influence. Since the departure of

American troops from the Dominican Republic in September, 1966, United States presence in this country has shifted dramatically from one of political-military intervention to one of financial and economic intervention (some would use the word colonization). Not only are the Marines gone, but the American Embassy Staff has ceased to play a central role in the internal politics of the nation. The United States ambassador during my stay in the country, Francis Melloy, made infrequent visits to President Balaguer, a sharp contrast from his predecessors like John Crimmins, who many Dominicans felt actually ran the Dominican Republic. The political staff at the Embassy has also decreased markedly (one officer in 1972) along with the highly influential Military Assistance Attaches Group (MAAG) which has been trimmed drastically from an all time high of sixty-two in 1966. Along with the lessening of political-military involvement is a quite visible acceptance in dimplomatic circles of a toned-down role for the United States in Dominican affairs. The so-called Nixon Doctrine of non-intervention in the internal political affairs of Third World countries is emphasized constantly in talks with Embassy personnel.[10]

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[10]This conclusion was based on a number of interviews with key Embassy personnel in the period of June 3 to July 17, 1972.

But where the United States attempts to play down its political-military role in Dominican affairs, it is in this country's financial and economic connections with the Dominican Republic that American influence has taken a firm hold. Since the conclusion of World War II to 1970 the United States has given the Dominican Republic $483 million in foreign aid. The key to this figure is that $120 million of the total amount was given to the Balaguer regime between 1966 and 1970. In the period of time from the conclusion of the civil war to the early months of the first Balaguer administration the United States gave the Dominican Republic over $90 million.[11] (See Table 3).

The rate of United States aid and loans to the Dominican Republic has decreased markedly from the early days after the civil war. The emphasis since 1970 has been on loans for community development, health care, and agricultural modernization. As of 1971 the United States had to disburse some $23 million in unused aid and was negotiating only two new projects.[12] Some of the United States aid has

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[11]This data is from a staff memorandum, U.S., Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, December 30, 1971.

[12]As the memorandum states, "Except for technical assistance, the current aid program consists mainly of trying to digest earlier loans . . . This slow rate of disbursement is mainly a result of lack of Dominican absorptive capacity and tougher U.S. standards." The two future loans are for private investment ($4 to $6 million) and for fertilizer and agricultural machinery ($10 million).

TABLE 3

ECONOMIC AID TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Fiscal Years 1961-68
(In millions of U.S. $)

	U.S. Government Grants			U.S. AID Loans			Other Public Loans	
Fiscal Year	Dollar	PL 480	Sugar	Supporting Assistance	Devel-opment Loans	PL 480	Amount	Source
61	0	0		0	0	0	0	
62	3.2	1.6	36.0	24.7	0	5.4	3.5	IADB
63	23.8	10.3	- 5.6*	0	2.1	12.7	3.0	IADB
64	2.5	9.2	3.0	0	0	0	16.0	IADB 6 LMF 10
65	7.5	7.3	25.9	14.3	7.5	5.9	2.1	IADB
66	85.8	6.7	37.4	25.0	14.5	0	7.0	IADB
67	6.6	4.1	42.1	30.0	17.1	0	0	
68	4.7	4.0	48.8	16.4	22.3	0	0	
62-67	129.4	39.2	138.8	94.0	41.2	24.0	24.0	

Source: "United States Economic Assistance to the Dominican Republic," David Fairchild, June 1969 (unpublished paper, University of California, Berkeley).

*World sugar price higher than U.S. quota price.

been for controversial projects like the $3.5 million public safety program which aimed at training the Dominican National Police. The program immediately ran into difficulty as the United States was seen by many barrio dwellers and PRD supporters as the principal initiator of police brutality against critics of the Balaguer regime.[13]

Although official United States financial aid involvement in the Dominican Republic, at the present, is on the decrease, this has not diminished the dependence of the Dominicans on this country. Statistics tabulated in 1970 show that 56% of Dominican imports originated in the United States, while a huge 84% of all the country's exports were destined for the United States. The heavy dependence on United States markets has placed a considerable burden on the Dominican balance of payments. After years of deficits running anywhere from $200 to $400 million, Dominican administrators were able to achieve a $17 million surplus in 1969. Unfortunately, the country has not been able to achieve some level of stability with regard to its balance of payments, as

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[13]Embassy personnel told me that the Public Safety program was perhaps their most controversial. Pat Holt, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee representative, who came to evaluate the program, ran into considerable difficulty in the barrio when he tried to question the people about how they felt toward the newly trained police.

succeeding years have shown both deficits and surpluses.[14]

The central factor in the United States involvement in the Dominican Economy is sugar cane. Sugar holds a dominant place in the export picture of the country as it provided revenues in excess of $176.4 million for fiscal 1972. The key to the sugar cane crop and its effect on the Dominican economy is the quota that the United States government allocates to the country. In recent years the United States has been quite generous in its allocations, shifting portions of the quota from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, with the result that the Dominican export capability has risen to 693,000 tons annually. As far as United States Embassy spokesmen are concerned, this present rate of economic cooperation between the two countries will continue with sugar quotas favorable to the Balaguer regime.[15] PRD leaders differ sharply over this, as they believe firmly that a day will come soon when the United States cuts back on the sugar

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[14]The country ran an $88 million deficit in 1971, which was up from a $53 million deficit in 1970. A surplus of $11.7 million was achieved in 1972. See also Juan Bosch's speech attacking the monetary problems of the Balaguer regime, El Sol, July 13, 1972.

[15]For 1973 the Dominican quota of sugar has increased about 100,000 tons over last year. It is interesting to note that while the Dominican Republic could sell in the world market at a higher price the Balaguer government has seen fit to fill the United States commitment first, thus maintaining its position as a key supplier and friend. See an article in the Times of the Americas, November 28, 1973, p. 4.

quota and seriously disrupts the Dominican economy (55% of Dominican exports are sugar cane and sugar cane products) and weakens the hold of the Balaguer regime.

The relationship of sugar cane to the United States is not merely governmental but corporate as well. The major sugar producing "central" in the Dominican Republic is owned by South Puerto Rico Sugar Company, a subsidiary of the United States conglomerate Gulf and Western. South Puerto Rico Sugar is situated in the eastern town of La Romana where Gulf and Western and its "central" president Theobaldo Rosell have made huge economic strides since entering the Dominican economy in 1967. Annual sales figures for La Romana show a profit of over $50 million.[16]

Gulf and Western has not placed all its economic energy on the development of La Romana. The conglomerate has expanded into the cattle market with 23,000 head of cattle ready for national and foreign markets by 1973. The company has also moved into the citrus fruit industry with an investment of some $5 million pesos to plant over 24,000 acres of land. Added to these ventures is a growing stake in the tourist industry, cement manufacturing, and housing developments. With such diversity, Gulf and Western is

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[16]These figures are taken from an article in the Dominican magazine Renovacion, #196 and #197, April 4 and 18, 1972, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

rapidly becoming the strongest and most active economic force in the country besides the government.

Gulf and Western is not the only United States concern to penetrate the Dominican economy. Spurred on by favorable tax shelters of the Balaguer regime that create tax free industrial zones for twenty years, other corporations such as Falconbridge Nickel,[17] IBM, Alcoa, ITT and banks such as First National City and The Bank of America have made heavy investments in the Dominican Republic. In 1970 foreign investment was $57 million, a 100% increase over the 1969 figure. Future predictions of foreign investment are difficult to make because of the burgeoning increase of corporate interest in the Dominican Republic and the government's wide-scale effort to attract the capitalist entrepreneur. All this private economic activity and current success though can only be interpreted in one manner--Dominican leaders have decided to bank the future development of their country on the financing and technology of foreign owned conglomerates, especially from the United States. Any thought of stifling this activity or controlling it has been pushed into the background by the Balaguer administration.

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[17]Falconbridge has invested some $200 million on its nickel plant in the Dominican town of Bonao. Nickel is destined to become the number two producer of foreign exchange.

Given this astounding increase in corporate ventures and general trade dependence, what can be said as to the PRD position toward this new and potentially serious encroschment of the United States in Dominican affairs? For its part, the PRD, and in particular Juan Bosch, have met the United States presence and Dominican dependence with frequent and often times venomous attacks. Bosch's statements point in one direction--full and vigorous nationalization of foreign owned businesses as the first step in an effort to make the Dominican Republic economically self-sufficient and strategically independent. The PRD position is that firms like Gulf and Western are making enormous profits which they fail to reinvest in the development of the Dominican economy. The presence of these conglomerates in the Dominican Republic might expand economic output, but at the same time sizeable amounts of corporate profits are being funneled back to the United States. The only answer then, according to the PRD, is for a new leadership to correct the present imbalance of corporation activity and profit making by nationalizing the major foreign holdings. Through nationalization the Dominican people could receive the benefits of expanding industrialization and establish a strong economy free of reliance on United States development schemes, technological cooperation, and strategic protection.

Despite the seriousness of United States corporate involvement in the Dominican economy and its expanding influence in national decision-making and planning,[18] the important concern for the PRD at this time seems to be not whether the United States is slowly colonizing the Dominican Republic, or worse yet making it a "wholly owned subsidiary." The facts speak for themselves, and furthermore, most knowledgeable Dominicans fully recognize the economic control that the United States exerts over their country. They do not need Juan Bosch to tell them something that their president pridefully admits is occurring. What the PRD must do is to decide on an opposition policy toward the United States presence in the Dominican Republic which keeps sight of the fact that the future resurgence of the Party depends a great deal on how the United States government perceives the PRD, its leadership and its ideological positions.

The United States simply will not allow a regime as Bosch proposes to gain a foothold in Dominican politics. Nixon Doctrine notwithstanding, the intervention in 1965 and the constant fear of a "second Cuba" should be evidence enough to the PRD that their image in the White House and

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[18]Juan Bosch in an article in the PRD journal, Politica, suggests that Gulf and Western and ITT have formed a secret alliance which he fears will eventually control the economy of the nation. See "O Ellos O Nostros," Politica (Junio 1972): 1-12.

the State Department is important.[19] This does not mean that the PRD should ignore the question of nationalization or tone down the criticism of United States influence in the Dominican Republic. But what the PRD must realize is that, whether they like it or not, their country and the Caribbean in general are still considered by Washington to be the economic and strategic domain of the United States. It is not necessary to engage in a long historical discussion of United States policy in the Caribbean area to point out the importance of moderation and constructive criticism on the part of any group or movement outside the established political arena. Talk of "Dictatorship with Popular Support," radical change, nationalization, and revolution create only fear and hostility among United States policymakers and lessen the chances of developing a working relationship with the central economic and political force in the region.

Juan Bosch is constantly telling the Dominican people and the PRD that they must prepare themselves for a time in the future when Balaguer will fall and the revolution will once again begin. But where his preparation fails is in a recognition that only a realistic approach to United

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[19]See Slater, Intervention and Negotiation, for the most comprehensive discussion of the "no second Cuba" doctrine of the United States.

States involvement in the Dominican Republic will strengthen his ability to maintain power should that opportunity ever arise. Bosch and the PRD must therefore redirect their anger against the United States. They can no longer present themselves as the unreasonable, revengeful Yankee haters and hope to gain the respect and confidence of United States officials.

The key to a realistic approach to the United States and PRD opposition rests with the nationalization problem. The PRD can continue to push for nationalization but its position cannot be couched in a "get the United States" format. Rather it must be presented as a natural outgrowth of modernization and independence in Latin America and not as a personal vendetta against the United States government. Presently the PRD uses the nationalization issue as a mere starting point for endless attacks on past violations of Dominican society by the United States. Unfortunately most of what the PRD states against this country and its previous record of foreign policy is historically correct. But spurious attacks by Bosch on the United States, which suggest that his future regime would find other friends to support the economic and strategic needs of the country, do nothing to mend an already degenerating relationship.

What is called for then, on the part of the PRD, is a practical and responsible opposition stance toward United

States involvement in the Dominican Republic. If the PRD is serious about returning to power in the near future, it cannot make statements and take policy positions as if the United States were less than important to the overall political configuration of the Dominican Republic. Both Cuba and Chile are two contemporary examples of what uncompromising hostility toward the United States can mean to a revolutionary regime. In Cuba, Castro eventually proved he could achieve independence for his country but only after continued hardships made possible by United States economic and political intervention. In Chile, Allende learned to his dismay that the United States, especially its economic conglomerates, can exert such great economic pressures that the success of a radical revolution would be minimal. In the Dominican Republic, the PRD must recognize that while revolutionary regimes are possible, their longevity and prosperity are directly related to the manner in which such regimes handle the economic and strategic desires of the United States.

With all the discussion of the PRD's problems and suggestions for political success, there still remains a lingering desire to speculate on the future of the Party. Since political speculation is a highly tentative exercise, there are many avenues of approach. But because this is an

examination of the PRD, it is perhaps fitting that we discuss what the Party and its supporters see as the way history will move them into the position of national political power in the Dominican Republic. For the purposes of this paper, it is convenient that an essay by Stanley Plastrik outlines one such historical scenario that depicts what the PRD hopes will happen some time in the near future. The scenario is as follows:

> Mobilization (both of the masses and the opposition) means keeping the present government off-balance by actions that disturb the "public order"; by emphasizing its weakness, ineptitude and undeniable tendency to capitulate to the Right; by exposing its incapacity to achieve any real economic successes through pursuing goals that would lead to savings for further capital investment; by refusing to take part in parliamentary democracy; by not strengthening existing democratic institutions. In a word, such mobilization means making it diffcult for the present government to function.
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> Confrontation - an eventual face-to-face encounter between the mobilized masses, urban and rural, and those sections of the middle class willing to follow the PRD leadership and program, on one side, and the government forces on the other side - is a step between mobilization and revolution itself. In our problematic scenario, this may come about several years from now. It may begin with strike actions and nonviolent acts of disobedience among professionals supporting the Bosch movement, gradually extending to workers' organizations and peasant unions. Most likely, it would take the form of "flash" strikes seriously hampering the normal functions of the government and bringing the country to a standstill. At a certain point, the armed forces would then be brought in and, in the usual brutal fashion, kill some hundreds of strikers and their supporters. But this time the military would be too powerful. At this point the Army, its failure apparent to all, would go to Balaguer to report its

defeat and its unwillingness to go on simply killing people. This would signify the end of the present government; Balaguer would announce his resignation and before going into exile, turn over the government to the military.

Sensing victory, the PRD and Bosch would then feel that their moment has come. Bosch and the military would enter negotiations, with the major thrust toward the so-called progressive junior officers. Bosch has a program for them - nationalization, nationalism, structural economic changes. He has an example to put before their eyes, the Peruvian officers in power. A strong section of the military should respond favorably, with the understanding that the strike movement is called off, that there is a return to "normalization" and work, followed by negotiations based on the promise of a new deal for the country, this time backed by the military. Except for the ultra-left Fidelistas, Maoists, etc. Bosch would be followed. He may, however be obliged to deliver a heavy repressive blow against the ultra Left, and he would not hesitate.

We would see then a political alliance of radical middle class and radicalized officer class, cemented by the PRD's institutions and common sentiments of nationalism. But the story is not yet over. A section of the military - reactionary, Trujillist, and pro-American - may reject this scenario. Striking out to start a civil war, it would attack the Bosch supporters, including its military wing. It cannot "win", but can bring about a state of civil war. Would this be the moment for unleashing a new North American intervention? Would the Marines land once again? Given Washington's capacity for blundering (surely there would be State Department people and Pentagonists urging large scale invastion), one dare not say this could not happen. But I suspect that this time, cooler and subtler heads would prevail ("let them kill one another for a while"), and invasion would not take place - not yet. Let civil war rage a while. Then, after a few weeks or months, the North American <u>gringos</u> would be welcomed by both sides. And as the Americans arrive to restore

> "peace", everyone would know which side they support. And on the ruins of what would remain, the whole tragic cycle would start all over again."[20]

The Plastrik scenario and the current thinking of the PRD might lead one to believe that political power is within grasp in the Dominican Republic. Yet the realities of Dominican politics point to a much different conclusion. As Plastrik says later in his discussion;

> Only two things can prevent the unfolding of this tragic scenario: 1. economic development, including structural changes so that distribution becomes more equitable, and 2. the unambiguous lifting of the threat of American intervention, under any circumstances and no matter what provocation.[21]

In the Dominican Republic Plastrik's two preventive measures are already being implemented. Economic development is spreading at a fantastic rate and thereby substantially diminishing PRD opposition and support. United States intervention, although a written guarantee has not been achieved, has become a secondary alternative to control of Dominican politics as a more subtle form of economic colonization has taken its place. This switch in control has also made it more difficult for the PRD to point to the United States as a brutal interloper in the politics of their country.

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[20]See Plastrik, pp. 526-572.

[21]Ibid., p. 527.

If the scenario has any value, it is in its long range possibilities, rather than its short range probabilities. The forces stacked up against the PRD remain substantial, and the overall mood in the country seems apprehensive, if not fearful, of a PRD takeover and its expected backlash. The conclusion thus seems inescapable--the PRD must fight for survival and continue its vigilant watch of the Dominican political scene. Perhaps the future may usher in an atmosphere of acceptance toward the Party, its leaders, and its ideology. But as matters stand now, the PRD is mired in a powerless opposition role with little hope of political success.

The generally dismal conclusions reached on the opposition role of the PRD in Dominican politics cannot be left without some analysis of why democratic politics, and in particular "out party" politics, failed so miserably. There has been a considerable amount of discussion of the fundamental shortcomings in Dominican society which have caused the failure of democracy and democratic institutions. Some like Juan Bosch stress the weakness of the middle class and their unwillingness to support revolutionary change along with the close ties of the Dominican military to

American defense policy.[22] Others like Howard Wiarda see the problems of democracy more in the flow of history with its legacy of dictatorship and paternalistic rule.[23] More recent thought places a great deal of the blame on the extreme economic dependence of the country on the United States which has stifled an open and competitive political system.[24] Finally, the deficiencies of Anglo-American democratic government have been traced to the chaotic nature of Dominican social groups and their refusal to lend support to the nationalistic and equalitarian forces in Dominican politics.[25]

The failure of democratic institutions in the Dominican Republic can be traced directly to each one of these

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[22]For a discussion of Bosch's theory of the Dominican middle class see his major work, Dictadura con Respaldo Popular, and for a view of Bosch's belief in the connection between the Dominican military and the United States Pentagon, see Pentagonism, A Substitute for Imperialism (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

[23]For an example of this position see Howard Wiarda, "From Fragmentation to Disintegration: The Social and Political Effects of the Dominican Revolution," unpublished paper delivered at the Southern Political Science Association Convention, Gatlinburg, Tennessee, November 10-12, 1966.

[24]A recent essay by a Dominican economist, Dr. Bolivar Batista Del Villar entitled, "Dependencia y Dessarrollo Dominicano Independiente," delivered at a conference entitled Dependencia Externa y Proceso Politico-Economico para el Dessarrollo Dominicano Independiente on May 21, 1970 in Santiago, Dominican Republic best sums up this current wave of thinking in some circles in the country.

[25]See Lowenthal's, "The Dominican Republic; The Politics of Chaos."

sources as they all have contributed to the malaise that is constantly surfacing in this country's politics. Taken together, though, these sources of conservatism and precarious stability are but symptoms of a much larger malaise which has effected many, if not all, the countries in Latin America and the Third World. Stated simply, the basic problem is an inability to settle, after over one hundred and fifty years of independence, the fundamental issues of political power and the rules for the attainment and maintenance of that power. A quote in an interview in Robert Crassweller's latest book probably best sums up this failure and its unfortunate effect on the Dominican people:

> Yes . . . many people, especially the younger ones, have been shocked at the divisionism, and those who read history and have it fresh in their minds merely look upon the past and say, 'My God, we are still fighting one another and disagreeing with each other just like our grandfather's were.'[26]

The importance of this lack of agreement on the source and structure of political power is not only that it creates ingrained antagonisms between vast segments of the Dominican nation, but that it also causes a frightening cloud of fear among a people who would rather hide conflict than solve it. Fear has taken many forms in Dominican society and has pervaded all regions and social classes.

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[26]Robert Crassweller, The Caribbean Community; Changing Societies and United States Policies (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 84.

There is a fear that democracy, in whatever form, will drastically alter the Dominican life-style and force political leaders into a mold of responsibility they are unwilling to assume. There is a fear that the destruction of paternalistic relationships may deprive some of the special position they have developed in the country. There is the fear that the move for greater distribution of economic benefits may weaken an already shaky class structure. There is fear that a definitive break with the United States may shut off what has become an extremely lucrative symbiotic union.

Fear then is the tragic result of the years of unsettled conflicts that mark Dominican history. Fear can be found in every corner of society from the barrio dweller existing in a crude hut underneath the Duarte Bridge to the nouveaux riche living in their homes along the fashionable Avenida George Washington. The fear that the Dominicans exude is that of movement away from the past and the necessary steps that will have to be taken in order to achieve that movement.

To allay these fears Dominican society continues to stabilize itself in the traditions, institutions, and relationships of the past. This desire to offset the permeating element of fear accounts for the longevity of the Trujillo dictatorship and the developing "continuismo" of President

Balaguer. Hardest hit by this environment of societal fear are the opposition parties like the PRD who are unable to create effective means of registering criticism. For the Dominican people and their leaders to reject these basic fears for change and begin to legitimize a democratic opposition would demand of them a far-ranging commitment to social, political and economic reform. The result then is that the current opposition system, or as Crassweller calls it--the "politics of extermination," is in many ways the key stabilizing element in Dominican society. Open up the opposition system and the Dominican people will come face to face with the fears that they have sought so diligently to suppress. The opposition system, of which the PRD is the primary foundation, has the strongest potential for change, and for that reason it has been maintained in a state of intimidation, brutality and neglect. To modernize and democratize the opposition system by encouraging PRD activities would open up the floodgates of revolutionary change and stir up sources of societal conflict that have gradually been placed in the background over the last seven years.

As a result, it seems highly unlikely that the Dominican Republic will move away from its present opposition system of "dual caudillos" carrying on a war of words, while the opposition activists become the targets of police

harassment and repression. There are some leaders within the PRD who view the future with optimism and point out the numerous possibilities for the Party's success. But as Dominican society is arranged at present, with the dominant proclivity being acceptance of Balaguer's modernization program, the future for the PRD can only be described as dismal. Dominican society has to achieve fundamental reforms in its social, political, and economic systems before the PRD can hope to see some opportunity for effecting the future course of the nation. At present the Balaguer reforms are designed in such a way as to prevent any radical transformation of Dominican society. The PRD is thus left as the target in a vicious circle of politics. The greater the Party pushes for radical change, the greater the Dominican people fear the consequences, the greater the support for the stabilizing influences of the Balaguer administration. As is the fate of those caught in such a predicament, the future is one of constant conflict and gradual degeneration.

With this dismal analysis and prognosis of the PRD in the Dominican political system complete, it is necessary to conclude with some brief comments on democracy, institutional reform and political stability in Latin America. Although the PRD is one party in an admittedly small area of the Latin American region, the problems of the Party

point up well the drastic shift in politics and political development that has occurred in the past few years. Gone are the days of wide-eyed optimism and faith in the ability of democratic regimes to bring peaceful, participatory and stable modernization.[27] Gone are the days of so-called democratic Left reform parties like the PRD that were seen as the catalysts of moderate but progressive reform.[28] Gone are the days of the restrained military corps that pledged allegiance to constitutional procedures and promised cooperation rather than dominance in the development process.[29] Finally, gone are the days of expectation in the ability of the United States to create the necessary conditions for area wide economic renewal without serious restriction or interventions.[30]

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[27]As an example of this thinking, see Susan Bodenheimer, The Ideology of Developmentalism: American Paradigm - Surrogate for Latin American Studies (Berkeley Hill, Cal.: Sage Publications, 1972).

[28]Abraham Lowenthal discusses the fall of the democratic Left parties or Apra-type parties in a "Review of Grant Hilliker's The Politics of Reform in Peru: The Aprista and Other Mass Parties of Latin America," Economic Development and Cultural Change 21 (July 1973).

[29]Only Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela and Costa Rica are presently not controlled or directed by the armed forces. And even in the first three countries there is some question as to what influence the armed forces exerts in the political system.

[30]See Juan de Onis and Jerome Levinson, The Alliance that Lost Its Way: A Critical Report on the Alliance for Progress (New York: Quadrangle Press, 1970).

The problems of the PRD in current Dominican politics, in many ways, mirror present day Latin America where economics has replaced politics. where stability is enforced rather than negotiated, and where alternative routes to national development are stifled in their infancy. Strangely, it is a Latin America that has changed noticeably in the past decade, yet has not changed at all. It is a Latin America that still remains in the grip of those social and economic forces that have controlled this region since the days of independence. What is different is that Latin American leaders now seem determined to achieve the economic development that they know is necessary for survival in an ever-demanding world, even if that development means curbing personal liberties and intimidating the proponents of alternative routes to change. In the face of popular demands for economic and social modernization, there has arisen an equally forceful desire for stability and reform, but not a stability and reform based on politics and political organization. The Latin America that the PRD finds itself in today has given up, at least for the time being, the pursuit of political participation, political opposition, and political reform. Such concerns will just have to wait their turn until internal circumstances necessitate a return to political activity. While history moves toward that "new era of politics," the PRD and many other

opposition parties and movements will have to do what they are most practiced at--patient survival.

In a more general, theoretical manner the difficulties of the PRD in sustaining a high level of party opposition cannot simply be seen as the result of Balaguer's oppressive governmental regime or the current mood of key modernizing elites in the country. Rather it is also important to see the problems of opposition-government conflict in the Dominican Republic in terms of the unique political environment that can be found in many, if not all, Latin American countries. The ever present confrontation between established power holders and oppositions on the fringes of power is not about to be curtailed by democratic institutionalization. A solution to this problem lies much deeper than the introduction of Anglo-American models of politics and governmental organization. The answer it seems lies in a thorough understanding of the Latin American system and the possibilities of managing opposition-government conflict from within that system.

In all of Latin America there is not the long heritage of democratic development which guarantees a legitimate status for parties or groups outside the decision-making apparatus; or for that matter the unique components of political culture which permit the successful transfer of opposition politics into Anglo-American style institutions. Latin

America is an area steeped in a quite different sociopolitical heritage and value system. Instead of seeking to handle fairly the demands of the groups in society, the Latin American experience has been to recognize the demands of only those who are "worthy" of recognition--those whose power in society cannot be ignored. Also instead of conducting politics from within a value system that expects change to be attained through some manner of bargaining and compromise, Latin American politics works from the perspective that visualizes societal transformation as being achieved through the efforts of the paternalistic leader. Politics in Latin America thus, as stated earlier, becomes a zero-sum-adversary system where the object is to be obedient to the winner and show no mercy toward the loser. There is indeed scant evidence in Latin American history that nations in this region have been able to master effectively the Anglo-American democratic model and institutionalize opposition politics by developing strong, hierarchial party organizations and autonomous, professionalized legislatures.[31]

The distinctive qualities of repressive political

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[31]See John Mander's The Unrevolutionary Society, The Power of Latin American Conservatism in a Changing World (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969) for an excellent discussion of Latin America's inability and unwillingness to shed the past and make rapid, revolutionary changes.

systems, strict social stratification, paternalistic leadership, and economic underdevelopment that are dominant in Latin American society must be the starting point for the determination of what can be accomplished with regard to opposition-government conflict. As can be seen from the examination of the PRD and the Balaguer government, the institutionalization of democratic structures and procedures did nothing to curb, manage or even cope with the potentially destructive nature of conflict between those out of power and those in power. In all fairness, the Dominican political system, like others in Latin America, could not be expected to acclimate itself to the demands of a development model that was foreign and sought to create a framework for politics that relied on toleration, cooperation, and participation, rather than on personalism, repression, and depoliticization.

Unfortunately, all the experiment in democracy in the Dominican Republic has been is a test of Balaguer's ability to create and develop an illusion of constitutional structures and procedures. In reality the Dominican leader has continued to rely on the traditional modes of formulating public policy, gaining public support, and controlling opposition dissent. It is as if Balaguer and his supporters knowingly sought to conduct politics along a "two-track" formula. For appearance sake the accoutrements

of democracy--legislatures, parties, election, and oppositions--were allowed to exist and function, but only in a cursory and impotent fashion. Beneath this facade, real political power and decision-making was conducted in a manner which exhibited a propensity to employ centralized rule, elite favoritism, and a special relationship with the dominant forces in Dominican society--the military and the United States. In many respects it is an ingeneous balancing of democratic form with traditional Latin American practice, and like the struggle of the PRD, is the Dominican method of survival in a changing world.

The future of government-opposition relations in the Dominican Republic should not be surprising. We can expect more of the same--depoliticization, subversion, and repression by the government; propaganda efforts, strategic and tactical disputes, and ineffectual attempts to counteract the programs and actions of the Balaguer regime by the opposition. There is little chance that the democratic institutions in the Dominican Republic will be able to remedy the inequalities of opposition politics or curb the increasing potentiality for renewed revolutionary activity and instability.

From an Anglo-American point of view such a prognostication seems dismal and incomprehensible given the ordered nature of many governments who model their political

systems in terms of democratic structures and procedures. But from a Latin American perspective this future view is approached in a quite different manner. True, the continued conflict between opposition and government is indeed bothersome and disruptive of the modernizing process. But many powerful Latin American leaders like Joaquín Balaguer are not terribly disturbed by the failures of democracy in controlling government-opposition conflict. Rather they seem content to conduct politics in the traditional zero-sum-adversary manner while using democratic structures and procedures only to legitimize their rule and, where applicable, to expand and solidify their power. They also seem willing to accept the tentativeness of political power in the Latin American context simply because the social, economic, and political elites, who have dominated this region since its inception, have been able to remain in control, despite numerous attacks from Left-wing reformers and revolutionaries. In short, why bother to change a formula for power and social control that has worked so well for hundreds of years? To expect then the Latin American leaders like Joaquín Balaguer to throw off the heritage of personal rule, elite dominance, and "ordered instability" in favor of an Anglo-American democratic model of open political activity is certainly wishful thinking, if not foolhardy. Modernization, in whatever form, will of

necessity be achieved in the Dominican Republic from within a uniquely Latin American sociopolitical framework. Opposition politics from parties like the PRD will continue to be conducted from a standpoint of "winner take all--loser take survival." This prognostication is indeed a negative one from an American or British point of view, but it is the only view possible given the present status of Dominican politics and the realities of Latin American power relations.

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