

Routine Checkup

Last May, 25,000 US troops and 25 FBI agents were dispatched to the Dominican Republic. The Marines, the story went, were there to protect citizens caught in the revolt. The FBI was to run security checks on potential members of the provisional government.

Since World War II – but before the Dominican occupation – the FBI worked the home front. The CIA, on the other hand, had the job of compiling foreign intelligence and reporting to the National Security Council. Dispatching the FBI to Santo Domingo suggested either that the President had doubts about the trustworthiness of his intelligence agency, or that the CIA had become so busy with other things that it needed outside help.

Now, according to a report published last week by the *New York Herald Tribune*, the FBI is about to send agents to additional Latin-American posts, to provide an “independent new source of intelligence data.” It was immediately denied that the President had any such plans, but the possibility was not ruled out that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover has plans of his own. Mr. Hoover said reports of “sharply increased” FBI

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activity in Latin America were false. Neither denial confronted head-on the specific allegation that more FBI agents are preparing to leave for Latin America.

Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia and Ecuador all plan national elections within the next year. That could require quite a few FBI security checks.