

Dominican Invasion Helps Balaguer 3d Term Chances

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MEXICO CITY — The recent unsuccessful guerrilla invasion of the Dominican Republic has virtually guaranteed President Joaquin Balaguer's re-election next year to a third term in office.

This was the unexpected outcome of a political crisis that began dramatically and ended by demonstrating the rebels' incompetence and bad judgment and Balaguer's political skill.

In just two weeks, the Guerrilla leaders were dead and the government had turned against its other enemies: It arrested hundreds of well-known leftists, sent several opposition leaders into hiding, closed down a number of radio stations for broadcasting "provocative news" and surrounded the national university with troops to prevent demonstrations.

The wave of repression increased opposition to Balaguer's planned re-election, but it also shattered any organized attempt to stop the president's bid to continue in office.

Balaguer, a 65-year-old bachelor, is an unpopular president who learned the secret of survival from his former mentor, Gen. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, dictator of this Caribbean nation

from 1930 until his assassination in 1961.

Balaguer served in Trujillo's government, and later was exiled until after the 1965 civil war, which ended with the intervention of U.S. Marines. He was elected president in a vote supervised by the Organization of American States in 1966, and re-elected in 1970, although almost half the electorate abstained.

Relative peace has existed in the Dominican Republic since 1966 despite the threats and challenges Balaguer has had to overcome in order to survive.

The main danger came from the army, which had become accustomed to intervening in politics at will. During his first three years in office Balaguer's tactic was simply to buy the loyalty of key military officers with houses, cars, jobs or "loans," but slowly he weeded out the most powerful and least trustworthy officers while building up the prestige of half a dozen younger generals.

Since 1970 these few commanders have become the president's main pillars of support. However, even they have not been fully trusted and are frequently rotated in key post to prevent any buildup of personal power.

On the left, the greatest opposition to the govern-

ment comes from ex-President Juan Bosch and his well-organized Dominican Revolutionary Party. It was an attempt by leftist army officers to reinstate Bosch as president that sparked the four-month civil war in 1965.

Bosch has been living in Santo Domingo since 1970, fervently against the government but discouraging his followers from resorting to violence.

To the left of Bosch's party, there are a number of small Communist factions, several of which emerged during or after the civil war. In 1969 and 1970, these young extremists launched a brief urban guerrilla campaign and succeeded in kidnapping two U.S. diplomats to obtain the release of some imprisoned colleagues, election and arrest hundreds of other enemies.

But in 1971 the tables turned and a semi-official "death squad" called La Banda carried out a campaign against the left, which resulted in the murder of several hundred opponents of the government.

Early this February came the guerrilla landing 70 miles west of Santo Domingo, an event so convenient to the government that President Balaguer was accused of inventing the entire episode.

But the dozen or so guerrillas were pathetically real, and within two weeks their fate was sealed. During that time, Balaguer was able to smash opposition to his re-