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Trujillo's Killers

To the Editor:

The C.I.A.'s alleged involvement in the death of the Dominican dictator Trujillo is old hat in Santo Domingo. When I arrived there in 1964, it was "commonly known" who had passed on to the conspirators the C.I.A.'s "material support," i.e. the murder weapons.

What made me doubt the veracity of this open secret was this: What need did the conspirators have for a few revolvers and machine guns from abroad? Most were retired army officers, and one was the Secretary of State for the Armed Forces.

Another puzzle concerns the reasons which might have prompted the C.I.A. to support Trujillo's elimination. The United States had much less troubles with dictatorial regimes in Latin America than with democracies. Unipersonal dictatorships, as opposed to today's juntas, were generally pro-American and anti-Communist. The C.I.A. intervention in Cuba, Guatemala and Chile had a certain logic. The action against Trujillo did not.

If the C.I.A. indeed "helped" in Trujillo's death, this would be a redeeming feature for the agency. Granted the amorality of political assassination and the inadmissibility of interfering in another country's internal affairs, I consider the case of Trujillo an exception.

Throughout 31 years, the self-styled "Benefactor of the Fatherland" ruled his unhappy country as if it were his private fief. At his death in 1961 he owned half of the land and had \$800-million stacked away in Switzerland. Hundreds were murdered at his whim, and women dimmed their beauty so as not to arouse his appetite. He emasculated a whole generation of Dominicans. Among the many tyrants that Latin America produced, he was the most cruel, ruthless, bloodthirsty, greedy and gifted.

He could only be brought down through assassination. Eighteen of the twenty conspirators and scores of others paid for it with their lives. Whatever "material support" the C.I.A. contributed, the credit for the patriotic tyrannicide belongs exclusively to the Dominican people. BENJAMIN VARON

Brookline, Mass., June 14, 1975

The writer was Israel's Ambassador to the Dominican Republic from 1964 to 1967.