

At the end of June, a group of invaders attempted a landing in the Dominican Republic. The Trujillo government claimed that their ships had sailed from Cuba and were flying the U.S. flag. A Dominican pilot, Capt. Juan Ventura Simó, had been sent by Trujillo to join the rebels. He tricked them into believing he had defected, and then delivered them to the landing place where they were massacred.²

The abortive invasion prompted the Dominican delegates to the OAS to invoke the Rio pact, charging Cuba and Venezuela with aggression. These two countries, after making it clear that they would not permit the OAS to send a mission of inquiry into their countries, countercharged the Trujillo dictatorship with violation of human rights and opposed the service of the OAS in behalf of dictatorial governments. In their stand, Cuba and Venezuela found sympathy with the majority, whereupon the Dominican delegate withdrew his request for invocation of the Rio Treaty.

The crisis deepened when Cuba and Venezuela severed diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic. Cuba accused the Trujillo government before the U.N. of violation of human rights in indiscriminate bombings of the civilian population and brutal murder of citizens. Dominican diplomat Dr. Emilio Cordero resigned his U.N. post in protest against such crimes and requested U.S. asylum. The Dominican Ambassador to Ecuador had previously resigned for similar reasons. In July, Cuba announced that Trujillo was preparing to invade.

An uprising occurred in Honduras in mid-July 1959. This case was not an attempt to oust a dictator; rather, it represented the reaction of rightist forces against democratic, middle-of-the-road President Villeda Morales. The rebellion was led by Colonel Armando Velásquez, former head of the Honduran armed forces. For more than 3 days, heavy fighting took place in Tegucigalpa, as rebels occupied important buildings which were recaptured by the loyal army in a regular battle. Casualties were high, and President Villeda accused the Government of Nicaragua of having backed the uprising. It was rumored that they also had Trujillo's help. While the fighting was going on, the official Dominican radio station accused President Villeda of communism, along with Castro, Betancourt, and even Gov. Muñoz Marín, of Puerto Rico.

On August 10, a strong conspiracy against the Government was discovered in Cuba and thousands of men formerly of Batista's army were arrested all over the island. Important civilians connected with the dictator's regime, as well as cattlemen and big landowners were involved, and many arrested. For several days communications with the Isle of Pines and Las Villas province were cut off by Government orders, while rumors circulated widely about invasion and fighting in the mountains. On the 14th, the Government announced that an arms-laden plane flown from the Dominican Republic had been captured, after landing in Trinidad.

Anti-Castro elements operating from the Dominican Republic had contacted Maj. Gutiérrez Menoyo and William Morgan, of Castro's army and had asked them to lead a movement against the Government. They promptly accepted but informed Castro. The exiles, completely taken in by Gutiérrez and Morgan, sent them a boatload of arms that was seized. Morgan and his men then went to Las Villas Mountains and pretended to be fighting the Government troops. Later he radioed to the Dominican Republic and asked for a plane, which on arrival was captured. In the fight, two of the invaders were killed and the remainder arrested.

Haiti was drawn into the Caribbean turmoil when, on August 13, a small group of 30 men landed in the southwestern part of the island. It was reported that the invaders were led by a follower of Louis Dejoie, political opponent of President Duvalier. The landing party was composed mostly of Cubans. Most of the invaders were killed or captured by the Haitian Army, while a few remained in the mountains. The Haitian Foreign Minister asked the OAS at the Santiago meeting to act on the case. The Cuban delegate acknowledged the fact that the boat had left from Cuba and offered full cooperation in the investigation.

In July, the Council of the OAS had voted unanimously for a meeting of Foreign Ministers to deal with the Caribbean unrest. Later, the original resolution was broadened to include the problems of representative democracy and

² For this Simó was promoted and presented to the members of the diplomatic corps at Ciudad Trujillo. Here U.S. Ambassador Joseph S. Farland was trapped into having his picture taken while shaking hands with Simó, a picture widely publicized by Trujillo's government.