

# HAVANA SWEEPED BY GUN FIRE; STATE OF SIEGE PROCLAIMED, WITH GENERAL CALL TO ARMS

## NIGHT OF TERROR IN CITY

Police and Troops Battle  
Rebels in Darkness as  
Power Is Cut Off.

## SEARCHLIGHTS TURNED ON

Seek Snipers on Rooftops—  
Bombs Echo Through the  
Capital During the Day.

## OPPOSITION CHIEFS SEIZED

Mendieta Regime, Turned Into  
Dictatorship to Combat  
Strike, Fights for Life.

By J. D. PHILLIPS.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

HAVANA, Sunday, March 10.—Heavy firing by troops and police, in response to attacks by rebellious elements, brought terror to Havana during last night.

With forty blocks of the downtown section in utter darkness, after a day in which an unending succession of bomb explosions had echoed in scattered parts of the city, residents huddled indoors while police, soldiers, sailors and marines fought what appeared to be a battle from the housetops.

Although the police would admit only that they were "hunting snipers," firing that began in the early evening grew in volume until it was obvious that the city faced a major disturbance.

Shortly after 11 P. M. the Mendieta Government, which had declared a dictatorship in the early hours of yesterday morning, took official cognizance of the serious turn taken in its fight for existence against the strikers who are seeking to make a general walkout the prelude to a revolution. A state of siege was declared in Havana Province. A general call to arms had also been issued.

### Searchlights Seek Snipers.

The cracking of rifles and the occasional rattle of machine-gun fire continued to increase. With the arrival of midnight searchlights from Las Cabanas Fortress, after having been illumined more than two hours earlier, were sweeping the tall buildings of the downtown section. Observers, following the white beams, could see what appeared to be guards or snipers on rooftops and parapets.

Meanwhile, to the accompaniment of a steady shrieking of the sirens of police cars in the streets, it was reported that a round-up of the anti-government leaders was in progress. These included Salvador Massip, former Ambassador to Mexico under former President Ramon Grau San Martin. The Grau faction is blamed by the government for a large part of its troubles.

Another follower of former President Grau known to be in police hands was Dr. Herminio Portel Vila, Cuban delegate to the last Pan-American Conference.

In addition, the police were continuing their round-up of strikers and their leaders in an effort to break the plan for a general tie-up of commerce and transportation.

The strikers have set tomorrow for the climax of their efforts, begun days ago. The government in its turn adopted strict repressive measures, suspending the Constitution early yesterday except as it applied to treaty and foreign obligations. Lieut. Col. José Pedraza was named military governor of Havana Province.

### Many Bombs Explode.

During Saturday, up to midnight, at least thirteen bombs had exploded in the city. In one explosion the doorway of the Radio Press office, located in the downtown area, was damaged when a bomb was hurled from a speeding automobile. Gustavo Lora, a messenger, was injured.

In another explosion a youth was gravely injured when a bomb exploded in his hands while he was riding in an automobile, according to the police.

No accurate count of casualties was available. As far as was known, nine persons had been injured, including two women and one man wounded by bullets, and four persons wounded when an incendiary bomb was touched off in an omnibus.

Whether there had been many slain

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# HEAVY FIRE RAKES HAVANA IN REVOLT

By J. D. PHILLIPS.

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among the official forces and their attackers could not be immediately determined. A count of the victims was handicapped by the fact that nurses and attendants in all private clinics had walked out at noon yesterday.

In addition, theatre employes announced a strike for today, and other walkouts of similar groups were planned for many parts of the city. Whether these will now take place, in view of the stern repressive measures adopted by the government, could not be ascertained.

What caused the failure of the lighting system in a large part of the city was not known definitely. Some reports were to the effect that sailors had caused the lighting system to be disabled in order that they might see their opponents better as these were picked out by the searchlight from the fortress. What appeared to be a more plausible explanation, however, was that an unidentified group of men, beginning at 9 o'clock last night, started cutting power lines in various parts of the city. The area plunged into darkness ran from Galiano and Belascoain Streets and from Neptuno Street to the Malecon Seadrive.

As the lights failed, inhabitants hurriedly withdrew indoors. At about the same time the firing started, and the cafes of the downtown section began to empty. By 10 P. M. the streets were deserted, save for the combatants.

## Prisons Are Filled.

All prisons were reported filled by the great number of political captives. Principe Fortress, with a normal capacity of 1,500 persons, was crowded with more than 2,500. Included were a number of striking teachers and a group of members of the ABC, the student organization.

The declaration of a state of siege in Havana Province has added a measure of control to the situation created by the revolutionary strike, according to national police headquarters. Military proclamations will be posted throughout the province some time this morning, the police say.

The authorities today commanded a fleet of omnibuses abandoned by striking employes for transportation of armed forces on emergency calls.

Street cars and omnibus workers in the city of Santiago walked out last night, leaving the vehicles standing in the streets, as an hour strike was ordered.

The secretary to the Presidency had issued a statement yesterday afternoon affirming that the action of the Mendieta Cabinet early in the morning in creating a dictatorship had achieved excellent results in checking the revolutionary strike. He added that the government departments involved expected to be operating at normal strength by Monday.

The leaders of the strike, however, worked desperately, but secretly, among labor to attain their goal, the complete paralyzation of the island's commerce and industry, by Monday morning.

All omnibus workers in Havana and its suburbs walked out at 6 o'clock in the morning. During the day very limited service was maintained by workers who fell into the hands of the military authorities and were forced to work.

Soldiers searched diligently for all omnibus chauffeurs and some forty were detained and lodged in Principe Fortress. The buses carried soldier and police guards, as did the street cars, a lesser number of which operated than the day before.

In the interior bus lines threaten to stop service because of a scarcity of passengers and the fact that nails, bent barbed wire and tacks have been strewn on the highways.

All public and private fetes, including the weekly carnival, were suspended by the military authorities and no groups were permitted to gather on the streets and in other public places.

Radios in the downtown and shopping districts were silenced by

give out any information concerning the number of persons arrested during the day, it was estimated to reach almost 200. Considerable explosive material, arms and ammunition were seized in raids.

Dr. Miguel Mariano Gomez, former Mayor of Havana and leader of the National Republican party, visited President Mendieta and pledged his support to the government.

The heads of all political factions, with the exception of the Nationalists, to which party President Mendieta belongs, were reported in session for the purpose of discussing the formula drawn up by a commission of neutral university professors now attempting to find a way to conciliate the government and opposing factions in order to end the present tense situation.

This commission proposed a meeting of a board composed of representatives of all political factions to appoint a new President and, if so agreed, establish a parliamentary form of government, to which the board, together with delegates representing labor, commerce, industry and cultural elements, would act as a legislative advisory body.

The proposed formula provides that the provisional government should reduce military jurisdiction to proper limits, take a new census, revise electoral legislation, liquidate all remaining elements of the Machado regime and draw up a new constitution.

However, there is little chance that either President Mendieta or Colonel Fulgencio Batista, the chief of staff, whose armed forces are now controlling the island, will give any consideration to the plan.

the military. Radio broadcasting stations announced at noon that in support of the striking newspapers no further news items would be broadcast.

The statement issued by the Secretary to the Presidency on the strike situation said in part:

"It is being demonstrated that the measures adopted early this morning by the government have given and will continue to give excellent results as is evidenced by the return of a larger number of employes today compared with yesterday, although because of the lack of newspapers and the late hour many were left in ignorance of events.

"A majority of the employes telephoned their respective departments indicating their desire to work but their inability to do so on account of lack of transportation. They affirmed that they would return as soon as means of transportation were available, and it is presumed that administration activities in public offices will be completely normalized by Monday."

All commercial printing shops struck at noon yesterday, and at the same time a strike mandate was issued by the shoemakers', textile and manufacturing, cigarmakers' and tailors' unions, to become effective Monday.

Other important labor sectors, including the railway men, taxi drivers and electric light plant workers, were reported to be conducting votes, but no information was obtainable, because of the secrecy maintained.

It is understood that delegates of the most important labor syndicates left for the interior yesterday in an effort to bring out the unions in interior centres as well as the sugar-mill workers.

Dr. Joaquin del Rio Balmaseda, Secretary of Justice under the administration of former President Ramon Grau San Martin and an important chief of Joven Cuba, the most radical political group in the island, which is headed by Dr. Antonio Guiteras, Secretary of the Interior under Dr. Grau San Martin, was arrested yesterday morning and lodged in Principe Fortress at the disposition of the military authorities.

A checkup revealed that about ten bombs exploded Friday night and in the early morning. Four were hurled into omnibuses, wounding four passengers. Six fire bombs were tossed into street cars, but the damage was negligible.

While the authorities declined to