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Front Page | Edit. Page | Other Page

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STATINTL

Sen. Fulbright's criticism

THE CRITICISM of United States policy in the Dominican crisis voiced in the Senate yesterday by Sen. J. W. Fulbright points up a sharp division of opinion in the Senate's Foreign Policy Committee. The Arkansas Democrat, chairman of the committee, charged that the massive American intervention in that Latin American country was an "over-action" in panic that the revolution was Communist-dominated, or would certainly become so.

The main point of the senator's criticism, we gather, is that it has not been proved that the revolution in the Dominican Republic was Communist-dominated. He concedes that support for the uprising was given by the Communists. He asserted that such support was to be expected since "virtually all reform movements attract some Communist support."

His presumption is that this nation after rescuing its nationals from the dangers of the violent revolution, should have withdrawn its forces, then sat back and waited until it was clear whether Communist "support" had become "domination" of the revolutionary movement.

There is, unfortunately, no documented answer who is right in the argument. No one can say with any certainty that, without U.S. intervention, the revolution would have ended with Communists in control of the Latin American nation or not.

However, if the example of Cuba has any meaning, non-intervention would have been a gamble. It will be remembered that, when the Castroites were battling to oust the dictator Batista, the administration in Washington regarded the Communist faction as having negligible influence. Former President Eisenhower just recently revealed that he was "provoked" because until the final days of 1958, the Central Intelligence Agency did not give him any suggestion that a Castro victory would not be in the best interests of the United States. It is agreed that Gen. Eisenhower would have reacted more strongly had he known Castro would plunge that country into communism. By the time the full extent of the Communist take-over became clear, Castro was firmly entrenched.

While Sen. Fulbright is on precarious ground in the main thrust of his criticism, there is one point on which there should be agreement. He declares that "economic development and social justice are themselves the primary and most reliable security against Communist subversion." These comprise, however, a long range policy.. Once the shooting starts, it is another matter.