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COMMENTS ON THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Mr. FULBRIGHT. Mr. President, I have followed with interest the comments made by my colleagues, by the press, and by private individuals after my speech of September 15 regarding the Dominican Republic. I have also followed with interest events in the other body that may have been related to my speech.

Much of the discussion, I have noted to my surprise, has been about me rather than about the Dominican Republic and Latin America. Some of these personal comments have been complimentary, and to those who made them I express my thanks. Others have been uncomplimentary, and to those who made them I can only say that our country is still strong enough to survive an occasional dissenting view even though the consensus is virtually unanimous.

There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether it is proper for the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to make a speech critical of an administration of his own party which he generally supports. There is something to be said on both sides of this question and it is certainly one which I considered with care before deciding to make my speech on the Dominican Republic. I concluded, after hearing the testimony of administration witnesses in the Committee on Foreign Relations, that I could do more to encourage carefully considered policies in the future by initiating a public discussion than by acquiescing silently in a policy I believed to be mistaken. It seemed to me, therefore, that, despite any controversy and annoyance to individuals, I was performing a service to the administration by stating my views publicly.

I do not like taking a public position criticizing a Democratic administration which in most respects I strongly support; I do not like it at all. Neither do I like being told, as I have been told, that my statement was "irresponsible" or that it has given aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States. I am quite prepared to examine evidence suggesting that my statement contained errors of fact or judgment; I am not prepared to accept the charge that a statement following upon many hours of listening to testimony in the Foreign Relations Committee and many more hours of examining and evaluating relevant documents was irresponsible. Nor do I take kindly to the charge that I gave aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States. If that accusation is to be pressed—and I should hope it would not be—an interesting discussion could be developed as to whether it is my criticisms of U.S. policy in the Dominican Republic or the policy itself which has given aid and comfort to our enemies.

A Senator has a duty to support his President and his party, but he also has a duty to express his views on major issues. In the case of the Dominican crisis I felt that, however reluctant I might be to criticize the administration—and I was very reluctant—it was nonetheless my responsibility to do so, for two principal reasons.

First, I believe that the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations has a special obligation to offer the best advice he can on matters of foreign policy; it is an obligation I believe which is inherent in the chairmanship, which takes

has nothing to do with whether the chairman's views are solicited or desired by people in the executive branch.

Second, I thought it my responsibility to comment on U.S. policy in the Dominican Republic because the political opposition, whose function it is to criticize, was simply not doing so. It did not because it obviously approved of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic and presumably, had it been in office, would have done the same thing. The result of this peculiar situation was that a highly controversial policy was being carried out without controversy—without debate, without review, without that necessary calling to account which is a vital part of the democratic process. Again and again, in the weeks following the committee hearing I noted the absence of any challenge to statements appearing in the press and elsewhere which clearly contradicted evidence available to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Under these circumstances I am not impressed with suggestions that I had no right to speak as I did on Santo Domingo. The real question, it seems to me, is whether I had the right not to speak.

Insofar as it represents a genuine reconciliation of differences, a consensus is a fine thing; insofar as it represents the concealment of differences, it is a miscarriage of democratic procedure. I think we Americans tend to put too high a value on unanimity—on bipartisanship in foreign policy, on politics stopping at the water's edge, on turning a single face to the world—as if there were something dangerous and illegitimate about honest differences of opinion honestly expressed by honest men. Probably because we have been united about so many things for so long, including the basic values of our free society, we tend to be mistrustful of intellectual dissent, confusing it with personal hostility and political disloyalty.

As the distinguished commentator, Marquis Childs, recently noted, we tend in America toward a tyranny of the majority. More than a century ago, Alexis de Tocqueville took note of that tendency in these words:

I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America. Profound changes have occurred since democracy in America first appeared and yet it may be asked whether recognition of the right of dissent has gained substantially in practice as well as in theory.

Tocqueville was a friend and admirer of the United States but he regarded the tyranny of the majority as the greatest of dangers in a democracy.

The smallest reproach—

He wrote—

irritates its sensibility and the slightest joke that has any foundation in truth renders it indignant; from the forms of its language up to the solid virtues of its character, everything must be made the subject of encomium. No writer, whatever be his eminence, can escape paying this tribute of adulation to his fellow citizens.

A recent Harris survey, showing strong public disapproval of nonconformist opinions, tends to sustain Tocqueville's view of tyranny by the majority. In an article in the Washington Post dated September 27, 1965, Mr. Harris writes:

America has long prided itself as a nation of rugged individualists where the pioneer tradition allows a man to hold his own views. Harris survey reveals widespread misgivings

over present-day examples of social, political or intellectual nonconformity.

The man who stands apart from the crowd—because he does not believe in God, because he pickets against the war in Vietnam, because he demonstrates for civil rights—is regarded as harmful to the American way of life by two out of three of his fellow citizens, a survey of a carefully drawn cross-section of the adult public shows.

Far from being the danger many of us make it out to be, responsible dissent is one of the great strengths of democracy. France, for example, is unquestionably in a stronger position today in her relations with the emerging nations of Asia and Africa because during the years of her colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria a large and articulate minority refused to acquiesce in what was being done and, by speaking out, pointed the way to the enlightened policies of the Fifth Republic. The British Labor Party, to take another example, not only protested the Suez invasion in 1956 but did so while the invasion was being carried out; by so doing, the opposition performed the patriotic service of helping Britain to recover its good name in the wake of a disastrous adventure, starting to repair the damage while the damage was still being done.

It seems to me a manifestation of the tyranny of the majority that there has been so much talk about when it is proper for a Senator to make a speech and so little about the subject matter involved, which was the Dominican Republic and Latin America. It was my intention on September 15 to start a discussion about these and not about myself. There is a very great deal to be said about U.S. policy in Latin America—about political and economic reform and the Alliance for Progress, about collective security and the Organization of American States, about social revolutions and the interests of the United States. I should like very much to hear the views of my colleagues on these and other matters, including the suggestion tentatively put forth in my statement of September 15 that an inter-American partnership of equals in the long run might be advanced by a loosening of ties in the short run.

I would especially like to hear the views of my colleagues on the proposition put forth by President Johnson in his address of August 17 to the Latin American Ambassadors to the effect that the United States hopes to see Latin Americans achieve the same kinds of reform through the Alliance for Progress that we seek for ourselves through the Great Society. Starting with this premise, there is much to be said about how the United States can aid and support the true friends of social reform in Latin America—men like President Belaunde Terry of Peru and President Frei of Chile, whose programs for social justice are also, and for that reason, antidotes to communism.

A general discussion of the Latin American policies of the United States would be interesting and rewarding, far more so than personal recriminations about tolerance of communism and infatuation with revolutions. I myself am too old to change, but there is still hope for the United States and Latin America.

Mr. President, in the weeks since I made my speech on the Dominican Republic I have received over 1,500 letters commenting on it. Approximately 90 letters expressed concern about the way in which the United

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States intervened in Santo Domingo. This public reaction suggests that a large sector of the American public shares my concern about the Latin American policy of the United States. Many of the letters I received expressed concern about the role of the Department of Defense and the role of the Central Intelligence Agency in the conduct of American foreign policy. Many, I am pleased to note, expressed the conviction that the United States should abide by its obligations of multilateralism and nonintervention under the Charter of the Organization of American States, and a great many expressed the view, in one way or another, that the foreign policy they desired for the United States was one which was true to its own democratic values.

There has been a great deal of press and periodical commentary on my speech of September 15, much of it favorable, much of it unfavorable. I have selected comments, pro and con, which I judge to be representative and which I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Record at this point. For the benefit of those who may not have seen the entire text of my speech, and to provide a point of reference, I ask unanimous consent that the text of my speech be inserted just prior to these insertions in the Record.

There being no objection, the speech and material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

OCT 22 1965

[From the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal,
Sept. 17, 1965]

WISE COUNSEL AND PLAIN TALK AGAIN
FROM SENATOR FULBRIGHT

It is possible that if there were no Senator FULBRIGHT in the Senate he might have to be invented. Time and again he expresses the opinions of moderation—of what he likes to call flexibility—against all the zigs and zags of a foreign policy that seems to him to respond too much to mood and not enough to reason.

Senator FULBRIGHT's observations on our intervention in the Dominican Republic could hardly be expected to bring the open approval of President Johnson. But if the President is willing to listen to counsels of moderation, and recent events indicate this willingness in increasing proportion, he must acknowledge the wisdom and justice of the Senator's criticism.

Mr. FULBRIGHT attributes what he calls the failure of our Dominican intervention to faulty advice given the President. And in particular he warned against the tendency in this country to over-react against any suspicion of communism in Latin American efforts for social change. This attitude, he feels, makes impossible any effective cooperation from this country in the social revolutions so necessary in nations to the south of us.

Mr. FULBRIGHT, as he freely acknowledged, spoke from hindsight. But it was informed hindsight, gathered after 13 hearings of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held in the past two months. If it can help re-chart our policies, not only in Latin America but toward the Western world, the Senator's warning will have great value. What he is trying to tell us, after all, is that the word Communist no longer sums up one monolithic evil to which we must react by instinct. The currents and divergences of Communism are as great in their way as the differences between democracies. All of them are not potentially deadly to us and many of the people who have been labelled Communist in struggling Latin American republics are home-grown revolutionaries struggling to right their own home-grown injustices.

If we are to intervene in every such situation because people the CIA calls Communists are in the forefront of rebel movements, we have already lost touch with the needs and the desperation which are pushing all Latin America toward change.

[From the San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 17, 1965]

A DEVASTATING POLICY BLAST

After having conducted a 2-month inquest into the Dominican Republic affair, Senator J. W. FULBRIGHT has delivered in the Senate a devastating arraignment of the Johnson administration's course of action.

It is a highly effective example of the duty of a Senator to criticize and lay bare the follies of Government policy when he profoundly disagrees with it.

We sent troops into Santo Domingo last April, he said, from "overtimidity and over-reaction." Throughout the episode, which is not yet ended, the administration acted with a "lack of candor."

The intervention arose from a decision that the revolution launched by the Dominican rebel movement "should not be allowed to succeed."

It rested on exaggerated estimates of Communist influence on the rebels and it failed to perceive that if we automatically oppose any reform movement the Communists adhere to, we shall end up opposing every reform movement, "making ourselves the prisoners of reactionaries."

Senator FULBRIGHT let the President down easy by saying he had been given faulty advice which exaggerated the Communist danger. That is true, for the President does have to base decisions on advice, yet it remains a fact—though FULBRIGHT politely refrained from saying so—that basing foreign policy too much on the advice of CIA and FBI agents, as the President did, can be fatal to the proper ends of that policy.

As the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, FULBRIGHT has not only struck a very hard blow at the President's excuses for "forcibly and illegally" invading Santo Domingo, but he has also raised the ultimate question about American policy toward Latin America. His words were:

"The direction of the Alliance for Progress is toward social revolution in Latin America; the direction of our Dominican intervention is toward the suppression of revolutionary movements which are supported by Communists or suspected of being influenced by Communists * * *."

"We simply cannot have it both ways: we must choose between the Alliance for Progress and a foredoomed effort to sustain the status quo in Latin America."

This needed to be said. As Senator FULBRIGHT remarked after dropping his bomb: "I think maybe they'll stop and think a bit before rushing into more military interventions."

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