

Selden Blasts Fulbright And 'Slanted' Reporting

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U. S. Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett Jr. would have been derelict in his duty not to have requested protection for 5,000 American and other nations in the Dominican Republic last April 8, says Rep. Armistead I. Selden, D-N. C., chairman of House subcommittee on Latin America.

In a speech disputing charges by the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. J. W. Fulbright, D-Ark., who attacked U. S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, Selden charged yesterday that "highly placed foreign policy spokesmen" were echoing "irresponsible and incredibly slanted" reports by some American newsmen.

Without naming Fulbright, Selden clearly had him in mind when he said:

"Especially dangerous is the practice by those in high positions of government of embracing as the basis of their statements the incredibly slanted reports of some journalists."

Hits 'Biased' Reporting

Selden said he wanted "such misrepresentation of our nation's foreign policy to be understood for what it is, not the responsible reports of a free press, but the irresponsible propaganda of some who, under the protective cloak of journalis-

tic rights, have sought to undercut and reshape our national policy to suit their own preconceived views.

"To dissent out of what one interests is an act of courage," he continued, "but to dissent on the basis of grossly biased information undermines our government's extremely difficult task of combatting our nation's enemies."

Selden generated some controversy himself this week with his sponsorship of a resolution, passed by the House with a six-to-one margin, in support of unilateral intervention by any American nation in any other where there is a threat of a Communist takeover.

Selden charged that a chronology of events published by Fulbright's committee "is crammed with grossly biased quotes, overwhelmingly gleaned from the New York Times, the New York Herald Tribune and the Washington Post," creating the impression that all of the press of the nation was critical of the intervention.

Names 3 Reporters

He said the reports were the product of slanted reporting by "emotionally involved" reporters for The Times, Herald Tribune and Post.

Selden criticized by name reporters Tad Szulc of The Times, Bernard Collier of The Herald Tribune and Dan Kurzman of The Post.

He cited the absence from the chronology of the findings of former Ambassador John

Bartlow Martin and of a report by a special five-man committee of the OAS, both of which tended to support President Johnson's decision to intervene. He noted also the absence from the chronology of stories by newsmen whose reports differed from the three Eastern morning papers.

Selden said it would be a breach of confidence to disclose names but noted that he, like the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has access to all the documentation not generally available, and added:

"I can assure you that practically all of the heads of mission (foreign ambassadors in Santo Domingo) have expressed their belief that the intervention was timely and necessary."

"Specious" Argument

On the point of Bennett's advice to Johnson to land the Mariens. Selden said it was "specious" to argue that no protection was needed because no Americans were killed.

"None were killed because of the swift decision to protect them," Selden said.

He labeled as another myth the contention that the danger of Communist takeover was exaggerated. Selden said there were more than 1,000 soldiers on the rebel side but there were 1,500 members of the three Dominican Communist parties among the several thousand civilians taking part in the revolt.

"With the distribution of machine guns and rifles to civilians," Selden said, "what had begun as an essentially military uprising changed to anarchic disorder. The superior organization and training of the Communists shortly found them in key positions among the rebels."

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