

Un-Dominican Activities?

Is the Senate committee which did so much to muddle United States relations with Canada in the Norman case about to do the same with our Latin-American neighbors? Next Tuesday, the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee is set to begin hearings on communism in Latin America. Doubtless any penetration in our back yard is a valid subject for concern, but there would be no excuse for the Subcommittee to equate subversion with a lack of reverence for Gen. Rafael Trujillo, the beribboned despot of the Dominican Republic. The hearings—is it coincidental?—begin on the same day as the trial of John Joseph Frank, who is charged with being an unregistered Dominican agent. Frank was indicted by the grand jury which investigated the sensational Galindez-Murphy case.

What lends credence to the suspicion of pro-Trujillo bias is the incredible report submitted this week to the Subcommittee by one of its members, Sen. Olin Johnston of South Carolina. After gratuitously and inaccurately describing Costa Rica as "the known hotbed and headquarters" of Latin communism, Senator Johnston heaps creamy words of praise on the Dominican Republic. "If the United States has any better friend in the entire Caribbean area," says the Senator, "I am unaware which one it is." Mr. Johnston goes on to praise the "political maturity" of the Dominican Republic and to imply that other countries should follow Trujillo's example.

Much the same case that is made for Trujillo could of course be made for Stalin, who gave "order" and welfare measures to Russia. Further, according to Robert J. Alexander in his recent book, *Communism in Latin America*, Trujillo was not above wooing Communist support a decade ago. Mr. Alexander calls Trujillo's legalization of the Communist Party in 1946 and other friendly steps "perhaps the most blatant example of the Communists' willingness to work with the Latin-American dictators and the dictators' willingness to work with them." By stunting free institutions, by indiscriminate branding of all critics as "Communists" by driving the opposition underground, he writes, Trujillo has created "potentially the most powerful and dangerous Communist Parties in Latin America."

Mr. Johnston and the Senate Subcommittee would be better advised to investigate why so many of General Trujillo's exiled critics wind up in the *zoo*. Were un-Dominican activities or anti-Trujillo activities are no proper concern of the United States Senate.

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