

e. 19,695

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

Date: MAR 12 1964

STATINTL

Book Is Eye-Opener:

Latin American General Writes of 'Last Caesar'

CPYRGHT

MEXICO CITY (HTNS)

— "In our countries (Latin America), people like voodoo practitioners and cannibals are as potent in affairs of state as any trained diplomat. They know how to fight and survive in our political jungles. Outsiders — like the Central Intelligence Agency, with all its trained personnel, equipment and lavish budget — do not."

The words are those of a man who fought in Latin America's political jungles: a diplomat, an intelligence agent, an international conspirator, and a top ranking aide of one of the most ruthless dictators ever to tread the Western Hemisphere.

They contain a lesson that could well be learned by Americans who wonder why everything seems to go wrong for the United States in Latin America.

Gen. Arturo Espailat, the man whose words they are, writes them in a book recently published by the Henry Regnery Co. of Chicago — "Trujillo: the Last Caesar."

A MEMBER of the tiny aristocracy of the Dominican Republic and a West Point graduate, Espailat was undersecretary of defense, consul general in New York, and secretary of state security under the late and generally unlamented Rafael Trujillo.

The story he tells from exile is as exciting as a cloak-and-dagger novel and an eye-opener for those unfamiliar with Latin politics. Here are some of the comments this Latin American makes of his fellows:

"Latin's sense a weakening leadership. They are realists in such matters. A faltering leader is abandoned and his former supporters turn on him, eager to be in on the kill. So it is with the animals of the jungle, and Latin politics are best described in this analogy."

"THERE IS a broad element of fakery and charlatanism in the makeup of most Latin leaders. There has to be. Flamboyance is expected of Latin politicians.

For their part, the people respond overwhelmingly to successful politicians and to power itself. Support for the leader becomes passionate adulation. Eventually, the leader begins to take the adulation seriously."

"What is not understood by U. S. officials is that in these explosive countries ... virtually every man above the age of six is a potential or practicing conspirator, espionage agent, terrorist, guerrilla, propagandist and so forth. It is these people who make and break governments and they are constantly reshaping the world."

"In the Caribbean we have to buy, or at least to rent elements of the Haitian Army, police forces, the Cuban armed forces, the Guatemalan secret service and sundry other institutions. That sort of thing is pretty common in Latin America."

ESPAILLAT CHARGES, without naming names; that same State Department officials and members of the United States Senate and House were given fortunes by Trujillo and were entertained in the Dominican Republic by what he calls "semi-senoritas" in order to have them speak well of him and to obtain political favors from the U. S.

He mentions several Congressmen who spoke glowingly of Trujillo but without linking them directly to any accusation of bribe-taking.

He says that if an honest and thorough investigation were made into Trujillo's bribery of Americans, a scandal would result.

According to the author, the State Department took an incriminating file which did name names and sent it from Santo Domingo to Washington after Trujillo was assassinated in 1961. Influential people in Washington, he charges, are covering it up.

THROUGH ESPAILLAT'S

book, the same thread runs. Latin America is a jungle. And the former head of the Dominican Secret Service says the American Central Intelligence Agency does not know how to thrive in that jungle.

Undercover warfare in the Caribbean — the kind that Trujillo indulged in before, and that Fidel Castro indulges in now — is "gutter fighting," he says. "But," he adds, "the United States does not like to get down and root in the gutter. It prefers to deal with government officers, embassies and politicians rather than with union leaders, students or peasants."

Espailat goes on to say that the CIA depends too much on Americans — who stick out like "totem poles" in Latin America — rather than on local agents; few of the U. S. agents who organized the invasion of Cuba in 1961 could even speak passable Spanish; and the CIA pays what local agents it does have too much money, making them greedy enough to trick or betray their American paymasters.