



Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-1966

Eric Thomas Chester

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In April 1965, a popular rebellion in the Dominican Republic toppled the remnants of the U.S. backed Trujillo dictatorship setting the stage for the master tinkers of America's Cold War machine. In this groundbreaking study, Eric Thomas Chester carefully reconstructs the events that followed into a thriller of historical sweep, and creates a stunning portrait of how the U.S. government--from President Lyndon Johnson on down--used the Dominican Republic as a tool of its imperial arrogance.

Eric Thomas Chester explains how the U.S. intervention was in the tradition of gunboat diplomacy as well as a consequence of Cold War ideology, and the Cuban Revolution. After the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Haiti in 1934 and the initiation of Roosevelt's so-called "good neighbor policy," the United States had refrained from sending its own troops to intervene in Latin America. The 1965 invasion broke this pattern and reinitiated an era of direct armed intervention in Latin America. The result was that by early May, with more than thirty thousand troops deployed, there was a greater U.S. military presence in the Dominican Republic than in South Vietnam.

In this fascinating account, Chester makes extensive use of recently declassified diplomatic and intelligence documents to offer a nuanced and textured study of the workings of covert as well as diplomatic initiatives and provides a thorough analysis of U.S. Cold War foreign policy in the region.

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