

7. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cuba

Washington, January 3, 1961, 9:05 p.m.

1347. Following is text of note delivered 8:30 p.m. January 3 to Cuban Chargé:

"Sir:

I have the honor to refer to a note dated January 2, 1961¹ from the Government of Cuba to the Chargé d'Affaires of the United States Embassy in Habana stating that the Government of Cuba has decided that personnel of the Embassy and Consulate of the United States in the City of Habana, regardless of nationality, shall not exceed eleven persons.

This unwarranted action by the Government of Cuba places crippling limitations on the ability of the United States Mission to carry on its normal diplomatic and consular functions. It would consequently appear that it is designed to achieve an effective termination of diplomatic and consular relations between the Government of Cuba and the Government of the United States. Accordingly, the Government of the United States hereby formally notifies the Government of Cuba of the termination of such relations.

The Government of the United States intends to comply with the requirement of the Government of Cuba concerning the withdrawal of all but eleven persons within the period of 48 hours from 1:20 a.m. on January 3, the time of the delivery of the note under reference. In addition, the Government of the United States will withdraw its remaining diplomatic and consular personnel in Cuba as soon as possible thereafter.

The Government of Cuba is requested to withdraw from the United States as soon as possible all Cuban nationals employed in the Cuban Embassy in Washington and in all Cuban Consular establishments in the United States.

The Government of the United States is requesting the Government of Switzerland to assume diplomatic and consular representation in Cuba on behalf of the Government of the United States.²

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.37/1-361. Unclassified; Niact; Verbatim Text. Drafted by Hurwitch and approved by Vallon. The text of the note is also printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, January 23, 1961, pp. 103-104.

¹ See Document 1.

² A copy of the note addressed to the Swiss Government of January 4, requesting Switzerland to assume diplomatic and consular representation in Cuba on behalf of the United States, is in the Eisenhower Library, Project Clean Up, Cuba.

I take this opportunity to reiterate to you the assurances of my reciprocity of your considerations."³

Herter

³ The Cuban Government acknowledged the "rupture" of relations in a note addressed to the U.S. Embassy in Havana on January 4. The note indicated that the Government of Czechoslovakia had been requested to assume responsibility for the diplomatic and consular interests of Cuba in the United States. (Despatch 1506 from Havana, January 4; Department of State, Central Files, 611.37/1-461)

8. Editorial Note

In conjunction with the delivery on January 3, 1961, of the note notifying the Cuban Embassy of the U.S. decision to terminate relations between the two countries (see Document 7), the White House released a statement by President Eisenhower. Eisenhower made reference to the note received earlier in the day from the Cuban Government, which he stated "can have no other purpose than to render impossible the conduct of normal diplomatic relations with that Government." It was, he added, a "calculated action on the part of the Castro government" and "the latest of a long series of harassments, baseless accusations, and vilification." Accordingly, he had instructed Secretary Herter to return a note stating that the United States "is hereby formally terminating diplomatic and consular relations with the Government of Cuba." He stressed that this move did not affect U.S. friendship and concern for the people of Cuba who were, he said, "suffering under the yoke of a dictator." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960-61*, page 891)

On January 4 White House Press Secretary James C. Hagerty issued a supplementary statement concerning the Guantanamo naval base: "The termination of our diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba has no effect on the status of our naval station at Guantanamo. The treaty rights under which we maintain the naval station may not be abrogated without the consent of the United States." (*Department of State Bulletin*, January 23, 1961, page 104)