

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1977

CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON
BOB DOWNEN

DOLE RESOLUTION ON CUBA TO BE CONSIDERED TODAY AS AMENDMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Senator Bob Dole's resolution, which would establish preconditions Cuba would be required to meet before the United States would consider normalizing diplomatic relations with that country, is expected to be considered today as an amendment to the State Department authorization bill. It will provide the first opportunity the Senate has had to go on record regarding Cuba since President Carter's announcement of an exchange of mid-level diplomats.

Following is the full text of a statement Dole will make during consideration of the measure:

Mr. President, the amendment I am offering would express the sense of Congress that there should be no formal diplomatic recognition of Castro's Cuban government, and no partial or total lifting of the United States trade embargo against Cuba, until the Cuban regime has met certain preconditions. The text of this amendment is virtually identical to that of Senate Resolution 182, which I introduced on June 6 of this year.

Several of my colleagues have already cosponsored that resolution, and have indicated they support this amendment as well. Cosponsors include Senators Helms, Hayakawa, Goldwater, Hansen, Stevens, Young, Scott, Curtis, Thurmond, Schmitt, McClure, Griffin, Bartlett, Domenici, and Wallop.

My amendment would replace a provision in the State Department authorization bill reported by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which allows a partial lifting of the current U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. Castro has stated publicly that he is not interested in a partial lifting of the U.S. embargo, and I am more than happy to defer to his wishes on this particular point. But I want to go a step further and make it clear that this government does not intend to buckle under to his demands for a complete lifting of the 1962 trade embargo until we see some tangible concessions on his own part. Bilateral relations are not a one-way proposition.

Preconditions

Before the embargo is lifted, and before the President extends formal diplomatic recognition to the Communist government of Cuba, the following conditions should be met by the Cuban regime to demonstrate sincere interest in becoming a respectable member of the world community:

- (1) Cuba must provide compensation for U.S. property confiscated when Castro came to power in 1959. I understand that the U.S. Foreign Claims Settlement Commission has established American losses in Cuba at \$1.8 million.
- (2) Cuba must withdraw its military troops and advisers from Africa. If Castro really wants to improve relations with the free world, it is time he stopped trying to export revolution and bloodshed to developing nations.
- (3) Cuba must release from its prisons those citizens of the United States who are being held on political charges of a doubtful nature. In addition, we must see some substantial progress in observance of the human rights of Cuban citizens, especially those thousands who are imprisoned because of their political beliefs.
- (4) Cuba must reverse its stubborn attitude and agree to renew the 1973 anti-hijacking accord with the U.S., which helps to discourage hijackings and to protect the lives of American citizens. On a related note, it is certainly time we are given guarantees on the future security of the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay.

Present Conditions Unacceptable

On June 3, the Carter Administration announced that it would be exchanging middle-level diplomats with the Cuban government. Yet, nothing has changed. Cuba has made no effort to compensate American citizens for property and assets expropriated by the Cuban government following Castro's takeover in 1959. The U.S. Foreign Claims Settlement Commission has certified the value of that loss at \$1.8 billion and has also ruled that American claimants are entitled to interest on their certified claims at the rate of 6 percent per annum from the date of seizure. It was in response to the confiscation of American property that our own government imposed a partial trade embargo against Cuba in October 1960, which was followed by imposition of the total trade embargo in February 1962.

In the context of its professed concern about the observance of human rights by governing institutions, the Carter Administration should insist upon significant progress in this area by the Castro regime. Credible reports indicate that as many as 15,000 to 20,000 Cuban citizens are imprisoned in Cuba because of their opposition to the Communist government. In addition, I understand that at least 18 American citizens remain imprisoned in Cuban jails, and at least seven of these are incarcerated on charges of espionage or similar allegations of a political nature. Others are held on charges relating to drug use or hijacking activity. In line with a perfectly natural sense of concern by the United States about repressive actions against our own citizens, as well as Cuban citizens, we must insist that tangible steps be taken by the Cuban regime to resolve that concern. It is vital that U.S. policymakers apply the same human rights criteria to Cuba which have been applied to other nations with whom we maintain friendlier relations. It is nothing short of ironic that the Carter Administration proposes to improve relations with Cuba at the same time that it suggests that we reduce or eliminate interaction with traditional allies in Latin America and other parts of the globe.

On Tuesday of this week, Secretary of State Vance told representatives to the Organization of American States, meeting in Grenada, that "cooperation in economic development must not be mocked by consistent patterns of gross violations of human rights." I urge the Administration to apply this worthy creed to its Cuban policy, and not just to our relations with traditional allies in the western hemisphere.

Aggression in Africa

It should be made absolutely clear to Castro that there can be no meaningful improvement in American relations until he agrees to terminate his active promotion of Communist aggression in Latin America and Africa. It is an insult to the principle of self-determination that Castro still maintains a force of some 10,000 Cuban troops in Angola, 2 years after their strong-arm activities won that country over to the Communists. In addition, Cuban military advisers are being deployed throughout the African continent--in Ethiopia, Mozambique, and elsewhere--to instigate political turmoil and bloodshed. The Cuban dictator's revolutionary activism has not diminished, despite his earlier promises. It must be halted before we agree to normalize diplomatic relations.

The Cuban government announced in October 1976 that it would end its antihijacking agreement with the United States. Castro has indicated no willingness to formally renew the agreement, and I fear that this removes a major psychological force to discourage the hijacking of American planes to Cuba. The Administration, and Congress, should insist upon a formal renewal of the hijacking accord, along with Cuban guarantees on the future security of the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay. There have been indications that the Cuban leadership refuses to provide these assurances until the U.S. trade embargo is lifted. If these reports are accurate, the Cuban government attempts to "blackmail" the United States into political and economic ties, it should be clearly understood that the United States does not submit to such techniques. Those who insist that the time is at hand for the United States to demonstrate "good faith" by lifting the trade embargo have not, I suspect, fully considered the lack of good faith the Cuban government on these and other issues of importance to the American people.

Cuba - A Poor Trade Partner

Several business groups have recently visited Cuba, and some have come back expressing optimism about potential Cuban markets for American products. Of course, the resumption of exports to Cuba would require the lifting of the 1962 U.S. trade embargo against Cuba.

However, the prospects for significant trade with Cuba in the event that the embargo is lifted are not optimistic. Furthermore, Castro himself belittles Congressional initiatives to partially lift that embargo. In an April interview with the French magazine *Afrique-Asie*, Castro observed that--

At present, certain U.S. Senators propose a lifting of the blockade with regard to food and pharmaceutical products. Yet, that does not solve the problem. A partial lifting is not sufficient. . . for Cuba, the principal issue is the economic blockade. The question is not how to lift it partially.

There is no doubt in my mind that the resumption of normal trade relations with the United States is important to the Communist dictator. It is the precipitous plunge of world sugar prices which has been among the major factors pushing Castro to the point of expressing interest in improved relations with our government. But Castro is obstinate, and is unwilling to budge an inch until we have completely and unilaterally lifted our trade restrictions against his government.

To those American businessmen who contemplate major new markets just 90 miles from our shores, I will pass on some rather sobering trade prospects formulated by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Cuba, because it has essentially a one-crop economy, has a very limited hard currency capability for purchasing products abroad. Commerce Department figures suggest that the maximum hard currency import capability of the Cuban government over the next 2 to 3 years will amount to no more than roughly \$800 million to \$1 billion. The Department anticipates that under the very best conditions, brought about by a complete lifting of the U.S. embargo, Cuba could afford to import no more than \$300 million worth of U.S. products at the most. In relation to our annual trade level of about \$100 billion, the Cuban market prospects are relatively insignificant.

It is my understanding that there has been little interest expressed by Cuban officials in future purchases of U.S. wheat. At present, Cuba has been importing about 750,000 tons of Canadian wheat and flour annually on its Soviet account, and there is no reason to believe that they would abandon that source and turn to the United States for grain supplies.

At present, about 60 percent of Cuban trade is with other Communist countries, and Cuba currently owes the Soviet Union about \$5 billion. This is an addition to a Cuban hard currency debt to non-Communist countries estimated at \$1.3 billion by the Central Intelligence Agency. It is clear the Cuban economy is hard-pressed, and I would have to say that the Castro regime would make a poor trading partner at this time.

A Foreign Policy of Principle

On balance, there is little practical reason, from a political or economic standpoint, for the United States to feel compelled to resume ties with the Cuban government at this point. Indeed, from both a moral and political standpoint, there are many reasons why we should not resume normal relations at this time. As I have said many times before, it is foolish for us to give up what "bargaining chips" we have for encouraging observance of human rights in Cuba, and for promoting the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Africa. If there is to be any principle in American foreign policy, and any rational pattern in our international behavior, than this Administration must draw a line on any further concessions toward Cuba until we have seen some sincere efforts by the Cuban regime toward resolving outstanding issues between our two countries.

I sincerely hope that Congress is able to communicate a message to the White House that will be fully heeded, with respect to future U.S. policy toward Cuba. My resolution intends to convey such a message, and I hope my colleagues in the Senate will support it strongly.

#####