



CUBA

*Background only*

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1. Background: The U.S. severed diplomatic relations with Cuba on January 3, 1961. Since 1962 U.S. policy toward Cuba has been in accordance with resolutions of the Organization of American States which suspended Cuba from OAS participation (1962) and called for its diplomatic and economic isolation until two-thirds of the members determine that it has ceased to be a danger to the peace and security of the hemisphere (1964).
2. U.S. policy: We continue to seek, in cooperation with our neighbors in the hemisphere and in accordance with OAS resolutions, the diplomatic and economic isolation of Cuba as long as Cuba remains a threat to the peace and security of the hemisphere. As President Nixon has repeatedly said, we are not going to change our policy toward Cuba as long as Cuba continues to support subversion in other countries of Latin America and maintain close military ties with the Soviet Union.

We regret the unilateral decisions of some OAS nations to ignore the organization's diplomatic and trade sanctions against Cuba. These sanctions represent a collective policy and a binding obligation on member states, to be lifted only when two-thirds of the members determine that Cuba is no longer a threat to the hemisphere. For our part we have so far seen no evidence of change in Cuban policies sufficient to convince us that the OAS economic and diplomatic measures toward Cuba should be altered. Should Cuba change, the United States would act only after consultation and in concert with the other OAS members.

While the U.S. and Cuba have been able to deal with each other through the Swiss Government on matters of mutual interest (e.g., 1965 Cuban Refugee Airlift agreement; hijacking agreement of February 15, 1973), we believe that under the present circumstances little, if anything, is to be gained by conciliatory U.S. gestures.

3. Cuba's attitude: Cuba has not amended its policies, nor its hostile attitude toward the United States. It has:
  - Persisted in its support of subversion in the hemisphere.
  - Consistently demonstrated its willingness to lend its territory for Soviet strategic military purposes (e.g., the missile crisis of 1962, the attempt in 1970 to establish a nuclear submarine facility). Any disturbance, however slight, of the balance of power with the USSR must remain of concern to the United States.
  - Publicly decried the OAS as a "garbage heap" subservient to U.S. "imperialism."

(over)

4. Issue of closer relationship: It is the U.S. position that:

- There is no inconsistency between our Cuba policy and our policy of improving relations with the USSR and the People's Republic of China. Both are adapted to the situations obtaining at this time; both are pragmatic. The USSR and the PRC indicated an interest in an improved relationship; Cuba has failed to show any similar interest. At a time when the world is putting enmity behind it, Cuba continues to place an antagonistic and interventionist attitude at the center of its policy.
- Virtually no economic gain would be realized from a normalization of relations with Cuba. Cuba is heavily mortgaged economically (more than \$4 billion, excluding military aid) to the USSR, which expends considerable aid sustaining Cuba (some \$500 million in each of the last two years).

Cuba cannot produce the required foreign exchange to enable it to become an important purchaser in the U.S. market. Cuba's annual trade deficit is now about \$500 million, despite the fact that prices for its principal export commodities (sugar and nickel) are at peak levels. Access to the U.S. sugar market would be important from Cuba's standpoint, but it would mean quota reductions for friendly sugar-producing nations in the hemisphere which have come to depend on our purchases. We have no real need for the few other Cuban products which are available.

- In the past five years Cuba has locked itself increasingly into a dependent relationship with the USSR in every sense--economic, political, and military. Given the intensity of this relationship, it is highly doubtful that we could offer Cuba a sufficiently attractive alternative to induce it to break, or even loosen, its dependence on the Soviet Union.

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FURTHER REFERENCES:

- . Statement by Secretary of State William P. Rogers, April 6, 1973 before the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (Department of State Bulletin).
- . Statement by Robert A. Hurwitch, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, March 26, 1973 before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (Department of State Bulletin April 16, 1973).
- . President Nixon's Foreign Policy Report to the Congress of May 3, 1973.