

than a year Castro's steady barrage of abuse and false charges, should not have been able to survive the final couple of weeks. Had they left the eleven-man skeleton of an Embassy here, not doing any incidental work but maintaining the semblance of relations, maintaining a United States presence, then Mr. Kennedy would at least have had the opportunity after January 20 to try whatever efforts he may have had in mind. As it is now, in spite of the almost incredible provocations by the Cubans, the actual onus of having broken relations lies on the United States.

2. On the other hand, Castro's specific statements in his anniversary speech were such that one cannot attach too much blame to the United States. Castro said that eighty percent of the more than 300 people in the United States Embassy were spies, and that they were financing the bombings and sabotage in Havana. There were other equally unfounded charges, but these two would be enough. One Cuban, a lawyer, suggested today that the United States were left with no alternative – had they accepted Castro's order to leave the Embassy with a staff of only eleven this would have taken, in many parts of Latin America, as an admission that the charges were true, and *Prensa Latina* would then have trumpeted to the world that the United States had admitted everything. There is much strength in this view.

3. The press this morning published a UPI report of Mr. Green's expression of regret and offer to help in any way possible.<sup>1</sup> (It is unusual, almost unprecedented, for the controlled press to publish any report from a legitimate wire agency; the usual practice is to twist the story to suit their own line and then attribute it to *Prensa Latina*.)

4. Frankly, we doubt that any such mediation is possible. The feeling of the senior United States officials here is one of undisguised relief at the final lifting of a long-borne and almost intolerable burden. They see no hope, and for a long time have seen no hope of conducting negotiations on any reasonable basis with the Castro Government.

5. On the Cuban side, we are speculating as to the precise reason for this sudden outburst at this time. For the last month, more or less, there has been not exactly peace but at least quiescence, and Castro's last public statement had been along the line "wait and see what Mr. Kennedy will do."

6. Some of us think that the sharp increase in sabotage and bombing, as well as propaganda, by the anti-government groups, drove Castro almost into a frenzy. As you know, he devoted practically the whole of his anniversary speech to bitter attacks on the counter-revolutionaries, and with them he brackets the United States. He appears to find it intolerable that anti-Castro Cubans should find shelter and comfort in the United States, forgetting or conveniently ignoring the fact that this is no new development in United States policy. The most famous of Cuba's rebels, Marti, still revered as "The Apostel," spent years in Brooklyn as a refugee from the Spaniards. That was nearly a century ago, and since then Uncle Sam has taken in "antis" of every kind, anti-Machado, anti-Batista, anti-Grau, anti-Socarras, and again anti-Batista.

7. Castro, clearly, needed some big talking point for his second anniversary, and it may have been hard to find one. He could not very well talk about the "success" of agrarian reform, or urban reform – his audiences would know too much about these matters. His mind was full of the recent bombings and sabotage in Havana, the United States fitted in well, and he had a theme.

8. But why the invasion scare? It came three days before the anniversary speech, and it is still going on. Did he begin with the invasion, first mentioned in the morning papers of December 31, and then become inflamed by the successful burning of one department store and the almost but not quite successful attempt to burn two others on the night of December 31?

<sup>1</sup> Voir/See "Canada Regrets Rift," *New York Times*, January 4, 1961, p. 13.