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*Le sous-secrétaire d'État par intérim aux Affaires extérieures
au ministre à Cuba*

*Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Minister in Cuba*

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Ottawa, November 19, 1947

Dear Mr. Vaillancourt,

I enclose a copy of a telegram sent to you today† in connection with your messages of November 3rd† and 12th† concerning the proposal to raise the rank of our Mission in Havana to that of Embassy.

When we first contemplated taking this step and seeking the King's approval for your appointment as Ambassador we had it in mind as an appropriate recognition of your outstanding services and of the desirability of uniformity in our diplomatic representation in the countries of Latin America in so far as rank of Mission is concerned. It seemed to us anomalous that our Mission in Cuba, where our commercial and other interests are very considerable, should have a status lower than that of countries whose relations with us are not as close or as varied.

Events seem to have occasioned the necessity of re-considering the effect which the announcement of your appointment to Yugoslavia,¹⁴ and the almost simultaneous report of your appointment as Ambassador at Havana, would have, not only in those two countries but also in the mind of the public in Canada. The inordinate length of time required in obtaining the Yugoslav agrément, the further time necessary to secure the approval of His Majesty the King and the probable delay in confirmation by the Cuban Congress of the Cuban Foreign Office's anticipated willingness to approve the reciprocal raising of the Legations in Havana and Ottawa to the rank of Embassy, make it unwise, in our opinion, to proceed with arrangements for your appointment as Canadian Ambassador in Cuba. For example, it seems to us that if you were now to proceed with an official request of the Cuban authorities for the raising of the rank of our Mission at Havana it would be necessary for you at the same time to mention that you have been appointed Canadian Minister in Belgrade. This combination of notification would constitute a strange and inexplicable communication to the Cuban authorities. Furthermore they would, we feel, be puzzled by our action in accrediting you as Ambassador and then taking you away at once.

Looking at it from the view point of the Yugoslavs, we feel that they would think it rather strange if, after having pressed them continuously for a reply to our request for your appointment there as Minister, and after having just received their agrément, we were to announce your appointment as Ambassador in Havana, thus, in effect enlarging and confirming your appointment at your present post.

¹⁴La nomination de Vaillancourt en Yougoslavie fut annoncée le 2 janvier 1948.

The appointment of Vaillancourt to Yugoslavia was announced on January 2, 1948.