

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE DOUGLAS DILLON,
ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE,
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
IN SUPPORT OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE SUGAR ACT.
AUGUST 24, 1960

The actions of the Trujillo regime, both inside and outside the Dominican Republic, have been for some time the cause of grave concern to the United States and the other nations of the hemisphere.

On June 3rd of this year, the Inter-American Peace Committee of the Organization of American States issued a report, in which the U.S. concurred, which concluded that the Dominican Republic has contributed to political tensions in the Caribbean area by its flagrant violation of human rights including "the use of intimidation and terror as a political weapon". Seven Latin American countries had already broken diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic before the meeting of Foreign Ministers convened on August 15 in San Jose to discuss the problem which the Trujillo regime presents to the hemisphere.

At this meeting the charges brought against the Dominican Government by Venezuela were considered. The Foreign Ministers voted unanimously to condemn the Dominican acts of aggression and intervention against Venezuela, culminating in the attempt on the life of the President of that country. Under the rules of the OAS, neither Venezuela nor the Dominican Republic participated in the voting. The Ministers resolved (1) to break diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic, and (2) to interrupt partially economic relations with that country beginning with a suspension of trade in arms and implements of war. They also provided that the Council of the Organization of American States shall study the feasibility and desirability of extending this trade suspension to other articles. The United States joined with the other American Republics in approving these measures.

The United States was prepared to go further in attempting to insure that human rights would be respected in the Dominican Republic and that the Dominican people would be permitted to enjoy the benefits of representative democracy. The U.S. had proposed that a committee of the OAS be established to supervise free elections in the country, and that if the Trujillo regime did not accept such a committee, then economic sanctions would be imposed. The final resolution of the Foreign Ministers, however, took the form just outlined in condemning the present Dominican government.

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In the light of these circumstances, it is apparent that the U.S. Government would be in an extremely equivocal position if our Government were now to grant to the Dominican Republic an economic benefit by authorizing the additional purchase of nearly four times as much sugar as the U.S. imported from that country last year, especially when more than one-third of the purchase value would be a windfall resulting from the premium of the U.S. price over the world price.

To reduce the sugar quota of a country with a leftist dictator only to grant a substantial portion of that quota to a dictator whose activities have been formally condemned by all the American States would seriously handicap the conduct of our foreign relations throughout the hemisphere.

In applying the provisions of Section 408 (b) (2) of the Sugar Act, as amended, the Secretary of Agriculture has, pursuant to Proclamation No. 3355 of July 6, 1960, and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, apportioned and authorized the purchase by private importers of the major part of the amount of sugar by which the Cuban quota has been reduced as a result of that proclamation. In making the apportionment pursuant to subparagraph (iii) of Section 408 (b) (2), an apportionment of approximately 322,000 short tons, raw value, was made to the Dominican Republic but was "not authorized for purchase at this time".

The importation of approximately 130,000 tons from the Dominican Republic has already been authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture for calendar year 1960. This figure consists of approximately 81,000 tons which is its regular quota and about 50,000 additional tons accruing by law as a result of increases in estimates of United States domestic consumption. If this authorization should be still further increased by an additional 322,000 tons, as a result of the reduction made by the President in U.S. purchases from Cuba, total imports from the Dominican Republic for calendar year 1960 would be approximately 452,000 tons as compared with total imports from that country of about 84,000 tons in 1959.

These facts and considerations lead us to the conclusion that is clearly desirable--indeed urgent--that the legislation should explicitly provide that amounts which would be purchased in the Dominican Republic pursuant to subsection (iii) of Section 408 (b) (2) need not be purchased or may be purchased from any foreign countries without regard to allocation.

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