

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

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Communicated to the  
Council and Members  
of the League.

Geneva, January 18th, 1936.

REQUEST OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS UNDER ARTICLE 11, PARAGRAPH 2,  
OF THE COVENANT.

Communication from the Government of the Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics.

Moscow, January 13th, 1936.

To the Secretary-General.

Following upon my letter of December 30th last,<sup>1)</sup> I have the honour to enclose copies of the letters from the Government of Uruguay dated December 27th and 28th, 1935, and of the letters addressed to that Government on December 28th and 30th by the Plenipotentiary Representative of the U.S.S.R. at Montevideo.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) M. LITVINOFF,

People's Commissary for Foreign  
Affairs.

Translation from  
the Spanish.

I.

Montevideo, December 27th, 1935.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of this Republic has decided to declare suspended the diplomatic relations which have hitherto existed between Uruguay and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The reasons which have forced the Government of Uruguay to adopt this attitude are fully set out in the Decree which is reproduced below:

"Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ministry of the Interior. Ministry of National Defence. Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. Ministry of Stock Breeding and Agriculture. Ministry of Industry and Labour. Ministry of Finance. Ministry of Health. Ministry of Public Works.

Montevideo, December 27th, 1935.

His Excellency M. Alexander Minkin,  
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary  
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"In view of the statement submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Brazilian Embassy concerning the course of the recent disturbances of public order in its country, which were put down by the public authorities with the help of the loyal forces and by the means authorised by the Constitution; whereas that statement affirms that the insurrection was of a definitely Communist character and was inspired by the ideas put forward at the Seventh Congress of the Third International which met at Moscow in the middle of the present year; whereas it is asserted that the early stages of the movement took place in accordance with the methods recommended by the above-mentioned Congress; whereas it is also formally stated that the Soviet Government instigated and supported the Communist elements in Brazil through the Soviet Legation accredited to our Government, to such an extent that the Brazilian Chancellor, Dr. Macedo Soares, took occasion to state, at a meeting of the Government in the Cattete Palace, that Brazil was faced with a genuine foreign aggression; whereas, when the first intimation of the revolutionary movement in Brazil was received through the Embassy at Rio, and when its nature and scope and its possible ramifications in our country were realised, the Executive informed the Brazilian Government of its desire to co-operate in a friendly manner in ascertaining the facts and of our determination to take the necessary steps for that purpose; whereas the Brazilian nation, to which we are bound by ties of close neighbourhood and traditional friendship, proposes to undertake a drastic campaign against revolutionary Communism, and appeals for our co-operation and that of the whole of America, the foundations of whose social, political, and international structure are threatened by violence; whereas the Brazilian Government's solemn affirmations are corroborated by our own information, which may be summarised as follows:

"1. According to the documentary material in the possession of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all the speakers at the above-mentioned Moscow Congress advocated the adoption of new offensive tactics, in accordance with which international Communism was to ally itself with all advanced parties, even if they were not Communist, forming a united front with the idea of achieving by stages the ultimate objective of full revolutionary Communism. They therefore said that an alliance could be formed with any advanced Government, even if it were supported by parties which were not specifically Communist. It could therefore be conjectured that Communism would form an alliance, as has occurred in Brazil, with the party known as the "National Alliance of Freedom", the leader of which is Luis Carlos Prestes. Prestes was the leader of the suppressed revolution, and mobilised on its behalf all the elements under his influence, so justifying the name of 'The Knight of Hope', which was given to him amidst applause, at the Moscow Congress, by the delegate Van Mine, Rapporteur on questions relating to South America.

"2. According to the information supplied by the Brazilian Embassy and that obtained by our own Government, the Soviet Legation at Montevideo has issued bearer cheques for large sums for purposes which cannot be ascertained, although there

is strong reason to believe that they were used on the lines of the statement attributed in this connection by the Brazilian Government to the above-mentioned member of the Moscow Congress, Van Mine.

"3. According to reliable information, the Communist Congress of the Third International opened and closed with cheers for the Moscow Government and its supreme head, Stalin. Its spirit may be summed up in the words with which the delegate Van Mine concluded his report on South America: 'We have programmes and an objective for the struggle, universal Socialism; we have strategy and tactics for the world revolution; we also have the fortress of the revolutionary struggle, the U.S.S.R.; we have a single world party, the Communist International; and we have a single and supreme chief, the great Stalin.' (The house rose and applauded). No distinction can be drawn between the Third International of the Moscow Congress and the Soviet Government. In the Soviet Union there is no other lawful party than that which holds the ideology professed by the Government. In that singular democracy the only effective votes are those of the Communist proletariat; non-Communist ideology is forbidden, and its votes disqualified. Accordingly, any government must emanate from the sole existing party, which it must obey on pain of being turned out. Thus, party and Government are inseparable. The party is split up into two entities which differ only in form and in the division of labour, the one being given the name of party for purposes of propaganda at home and abroad, and the other specialising in executive action.

"And whereas the international privileges enjoyed by foreign diplomatic representatives prevent the authorities from gaining possession of certain material evidence which can normally be obtained by ordinary acts of judicial investigation that could be performed in premises not exempt from the national jurisdiction; whereas there is sufficient justification for suppressing one of the causes of unrest which disturb a friendly country, that country being convinced that the Soviet Legation at Montevideo is a centre of the Communist activity which has just been responsible for such bloodshed in that country;

"In accordance with the statements made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Brazilian Foreign Office in its letter of November 26th, after the outbreak of the revolution, and confirmed in its letter of December 14th;

"Whereas we feel called upon, not only as an act of international solidarity, but in order to safeguard internal tranquillity, to put an end to the activities of the Soviet Legation in our territory until the unrest caused in our local situation has disappeared;

"Having regard to the powers conferred on the Executive by Article 158, para.17, of the Constitution,

"The President of the Republic in Council decrees as follows:

Article 1.

"Diplomatic relations between Uruguay and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are hereby suspended. The Minister Plenipotentiary, M. Alexander Minkin, shall be informed that he will be granted the customary facilities for his departure and other steps connected therewith.

Article 2.

"The acting Chargé d'Affaires of Uruguay at Moscow shall be instructed to leave the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics after complying with the proper formalities.

Article 3.

"The present decree shall be communicated, etc.

(Signed) Terra, José Espalter, Augusto César Bado, Alfredo Baldomir, Martin R. Echegoyen, Zoilo Saldías, César G. Gutierrez, César Charlone, Eduardo Blanco Acevedo, Jorge Herran."

It only remains for me to inform you that the Chief of the Protocol has special instructions, when handing you your passports, to facilitate your departure from the territory of the Republic.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

For the Minister:

Julio César Cerdeiras Alonso,

Under-Secretary.

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Translation from  
the Spanish)

Montevideo, December 28th, 1935.

II.

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Note of the 27th instant, informing me of your Government's decision to suspend diplomatic relations between Uruguay and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I cannot but express my astonishment at being unable to find in your Note, which relates to such a grave step as the breaking off of diplomatic relations between two countries whose friendly relations have always pursued a completely normal course and have served as a basis for the establishment of regular commercial relations, a single fact justifying your conclusions.

As you are doubtless aware, my Government has duly stated with the necessary explicitness that there is no connection between the Soviet Government and the Communist International and that my Government is not responsible for the activities of the Communist International.

It is therefore not really pertinent or expedient for me to discuss the very lengthy part of your Note consisting of an extract from a speech stated to have been delivered at the Congress of the Communist International.

You endeavour to base your argument on the connection between my Government and the Communist International and the bond between them and refer to the character of the elections in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a nation which you venture to describe as a "singular democracy"; moreover, you arbitrarily assert that only the "Communist Proletariat" takes part in those elections.

This assertion is categorically refuted by my country's Constitution and its baselessness is obvious in view of the fact that more than 100 million electors took part in the last elections in the U.S.S.R.

Leaving on one side, therefore, your references to the decisions and deliberations of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, which have nothing whatever to do with the problem of diplomatic relations between our two countries, I will now turn to the charge contained in your Note to the effect that the U.S.S.R. legation in Uruguay "instigated and supported the communist elements in a neighbouring State" and that "according to the information supplied by the Embassy of a friendly country and that obtained by our own Government the Soviet legation at Montevideo has issued bearer cheques for large sums for purposes which cannot be ascertained."

These unproved charges are apparently based on the statement made on its faith and honour by the Brazilian Government and on the conjectures made in regard to the speeches delivered at the Congress of the Communist International. Your Note contains no definite confirmation of any of the charges, which is only

His Excellency  
Monsieur José Espalter,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

natural, since no proof exists nor can exist because the allegations are false.

The Legation of which I am in charge has never assisted directly or indirectly the Communist Party or any other political party in South American countries and has never remitted funds to any country - including Brazil - either by means of cheques or by any other method.

I therefore categorically refute the above-mentioned charge, which I am obliged to describe as a pure fiction.

In your Note you state that your Government is breaking off relations for the purpose of safeguarding "internal tranquillity".

In this case again, the assertion that diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. constitute a threat to public order in Uruguay is not backed up by any evidence.

I formally assert that the U.S.S.R. Legation in Uruguay has at all times performed solely and exclusively and in the strictest possible manner the functions provided for and allowed by the rules of Public International Law, and that this Legation has never had anything to do with the internal affairs of Uruguay and has never intervened in party strife either in this country or in any other American country.

Without prejudice to the attitude which my Government may subsequently adopt, I wish to enter a strong protest against the false charges made against the Soviet Government and the Legation of which I am in charge and to refute them categorically.

I have the honour, etc.

(Signed) A. MINKIN.

Minister of the U.S.S.R.

Translation from  
the Spanish.

III . . . Montevideo, December 28th, 1959

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have taken cognisance of your Note of to-day's date and desire to inform you that I do not consider it proper to discuss the reasons for the suspension of diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. since you are no longer accredited to our Government as diplomatic representative.

Moreover, in view of the unsuitable terms employed by your Excellency, I am obliged to inform you that I cannot keep your Note which I am therefore returning and which I was surprised to see had been published this afternoon.

I have the honour, etc.

JOSE ESPALTER.

His Excellency M. Alexander Minkin,  
Minister Plenipotentiary,  
etc. etc. etc.

IV.

Translation from  
the Spanish.

Montevideo, December 30th, 1935.

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Note dated the 28th instant, with which you have returned my Note of the same date after taking cognisance of its terms.

As you will have inferred from the clear and unequivocal terms of my Note, its chief object was to place on record my protest against the charges made against my Government and its Legation in Uruguay, and categorically to refute the facts on which those charges were based.

In particular, my Note was designed to clear up by means of documentary evidence, the specific charge that this Legation had sent large sums of money to Brazil in the form of bearer cheques; this should not be difficult since even if they are paid in another country, cheques must be returned to the banking establishment on which they were drawn.

I sincerely regret therefore that you should consider that the reasons which induced the Uruguayan Government to suspend diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. cannot be properly discussed; without, however, entering upon a discussion, I consider it only right that I should be informed of the specific acts of which the U.S.S.R. Legation is accused, or at all events of those over which your Government has or may have control and on which its decision has been expressly based.

I accordingly take the liberty of insisting that I be informed of the details - including the date, amount, number and establishment on which they were drawn - of the cheques which it is asserted were issued by the U.S.S.R. Legation and which according to your Note of the 27th instant "there is strong reason to believe" were used by this Legation for the purpose of rendering financial assistance to the Brazilian revolutionaries.

I greatly regret that the publication of my Note regarding the suspension of diplomatic relations between your country and the U.S.S.R. should have surprised you, but this attitude was adopted in the first place by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which published your Note of the 27th instant. I consider the Ministry's attitude, like my own, to have been quite correct and appropriate to the case.

With reference to your statement that it is not proper to discuss with me the reasons for the decision to suspend diplomatic relations between our two countries, I desire to inform you before concluding the present note that in my opinion a diplomatic representative in my position has in every case the right, in accordance with the rules of Public International Law, to act as I have done.

I have the honour, etc.,

A. MINKIN,

Minister of the U.S.S.R.