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Castro Gives U.S. 'Pinprick' And Cost Is \$14,000 a Month

Edwin Tetlow, a British correspondent, spent six days at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo after Cuba cut off the water supply. American newsmen since then have been prevented by the Government from going to the base, and Tetlow was flown out Tuesday to Jamaica.

By Edwin Tetlow
London Daily Telegraph

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Feb. 12 (AP)—Premier Fidel Castro only pinpricked the Americans, but dealt himself out of precious United States dollars with his water cutoff of the naval base at Guantanamo Bay in eastern Cuba.

Water facilities at the U.S. base were almost back to normal only seven days after Castro turned off the taps in retaliation for the seizure of Cuban fishermen charged with fishing inside Florida waters.

By improvisation and with abundant help from Jamaica, the Americans now have enough water for everything except washing cars, watering lawns or wasteful uses. Abandoned was the strict rationing that gave them water only three times a day for periods of one hour each in the first days of the crisis.

Castro's action deprived him of \$14,000 a month under a contract for the water. The speed with which he had been cashing this regular American check testified to the pinch caused by the shortage of U.S. currency.

And it appears that the Americans are not going to use Castro's water again even if it should be offered. The plan is to make the base completely self-sufficient with de-

salting equipment and supplies carried in by ship.

Millions of gallons of water had been stored at Guantanamo for just such an emergency. The American community of 10,000 persons, including 2500 women and children, was prepared when Castro cut the pipeline from the Yateras River five miles away.

More than a week's supply was on hand when the water was cut off last week and more water is on the way from Jamaica and the United States.

Mothers reorganized their routines, but said they managed easily. Doctors at the hospital delivered their daily quota of two babies. The beer flowed freely at the officers' and enlisted men's clubs and the patrons did not seem to hanker for Castro's water.

Some of the officers, particularly the younger ones, were privately angry when the news first came of the cutoff. They said they would like to be among the first to burst through the fence dividing the base from Cuban territory and turn the taps on again.

But there is little likelihood of anything like that happening. Most people at the base believe U.S. policy is to refrain from using force with Castro in the expectation that ultimately events may bring a solution of the problem he represents for the United States.

Rear Adm. John D. Bulkeley, the base commander, said after the first 24 hours of the blockade of the water taps, "We can beat this move and aren't worried at all."

Events are bearing him out.