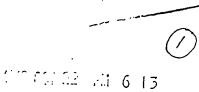
UNCLASSIFIED



CO RUEHCR DE RNEPWW 3D O 2221552 FM THE WHITE HOUSE TO SECSTATE WASHDO EXEC GRNC BT //T O P S E C R E T// CITE CAP5495-62. FOR S/S DULY OFFICER SECRETARIAT, ATTN: MR. LITTLE. FROM SITUATION ROOM. MR. BUNDY INSTRUCTED THAT THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN BE PASSED TO YOU AND ASKED THAT WE POINT OUT THAT PARA. TWO IS FOR ACTION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

TO THE PRIME MINISTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR FRIEND: FIRST LET WE SAY HOW SORRY A AM THAT THE PROPOSED TEXT OF MY STATEMENT WAS BEEN SO SLOW TO GET TO YOU. WE

PAGE TWO RUEPWW 3D MUST USE OUR OWN MACHINE IN SUCH CASES.

I AM INSTRUCTING OUR EXPERTS TO CONFER AT ONCE WITH YOURS TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE LEGAL CASE, WHICH WILL REST IN THE FIRST INSTANCE ON THE RIO TREATY. BUT YOU ARE CERTAINLY RIGHT ABOUT THE WIDER ISSUES WHICH ARISE IN THE NUCLEAR AGE, AND OUR PEOPLE FEEL A STRONG CASE CAN BE BUILT ON THEM.

IT IS THIS WHOLE SERIES OF WIDER ISSUES THAT HAS GOVERNED MY INITIAL DECISION. I FULLY RECOGNIZE THE HAZARDS WHICH YOU RIGHTLY POINT OUT, BUT I HAVE HAD TO TAKE ACCOUNT ALSO OF THE EFFECT OF INACTION IN THE FACE OF SO OBVIOUS AND DEEP A SOVIET CHALLENGE. THIS IS NOT SIMPLY OR MAINLY A MATTER OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION, AND AS FOR LIVING UNDER A MISSILE THREAT; WE TOO HAVE BEEN DOING THAT FOR SOME TIME. BUT THIS IS SO DEEP A BREACH IN THE CONVENTIONS OF THE INTER-NATIONAL STALEMATE THAT IF UNCHALLENGED IT WOULD DEEPLY SHAKE CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF MY REPEATED WARNINGS. IT WOULD PERSUADE KHRUSHCHEV AND OTHERS THAT OUR DETERMINATION IS LOW, THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO MEET OUT COMMITMENTS, AND IT WOULD INVITE FURTHER AND STILL

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PAGE THREE RUEPWY 3D MORE DANGEROUS MOVES.

I RECOGNIZE THE PARTICULAR HAZARD OF A RIPOSTE IN BERLIN, BUT IN THE WIDER SENSE I BELIEVE THAT INACTION WOULD BE STILL MORE DANGEROUS TO CUR POSITION IN THAT OUTPOST.

I ASSURE YOU MOST SOLEMNLY THAT THIS IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF AROUSED PUBLIC OPINION OR OF PRIVATE PASSION AGAINST CUBA. AS I AM SURE YOU KNOW, I HAVE REGULARLY RESISTED PRESSURE FOR UNREASONABLE OR EXCESSIVE ACTION, AND I AM NOT INTERESTED IN A SQUABBLE WITH CASTRO. BUT THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT: THE FIRST STEP IN A MAJOR SHOWDOWN WITH KHRUSCHEV, WHOSE ACTION IN THIS CASE IS SO AT VARIANCE WITH WHAT ALL THE SOVIET EXPERTS HAVE PREDICTED THAT IT IS NECESSARY NO REVISE OUR WHOLE ESTIMATE OF HIS LEVEL OF DESPERATION OR AMBITION, OR BOTH.

THE PARTICULAR POINTS WHICH YOU RAISE ABOUT EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION ARE UNDERSTANDABLE AND HAVE BEEN MUCH IN OUR MINDS. WE HAVE SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT NEETING THEM ABOUT WHICH WE MUST BE IN TOUCH. I ALSO AGREE THAT WE MUST KEEP IN THE CLOSEST TOUCH ABOUT BERLIN AND THAT WE CAN DO THIS BEST WHEN WE HAVE THE FIRST SOVIET REACTION.

PAGE FOUR RUEPWW 3D

OUR NAVAL COMMANDERS ARE INSTRUCTED TO USE THE VERY MINIMUM OF FORCE, BUT I KNOW OF NO SURE ESCAPE FROM THE PROBLEM OF THE FIRST SHOT. OUR BEST BASIC COURSE IS FIRMNESS, NOW. I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR TALK. BT

22/2206Z RUEPWN

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