

75  
INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Control: 17128  
Rec'd: October 23, 1962  
9:36 a.m.

FROM: Brussels  
TO: Secretary of State  
NO: 636, October 23, 1 p.m.

*WE/Beaudry*  
*File RMB 10/23/62*  
*BRUSSELS-636*

ACTION DEPARTMENT 636 INFORMATION PARIS PRIORITY 274 LONDON 416  
BONN 78 ROME 59 THE HAGUE 64 LUXEMBOURG 45

PARIS FOR USRO

CUBA

As instructed, last night we informed Lefevre and Spaak orally (through Rothschild) of substance President's speech on Cuba, and I am seeing Spaak this afternoon at 3:30 to discuss it with him.

On personal basis and in confidence Rothschild gave me his estimate of initial reaction Spaak and GOB along following lines:

Following Finletter's presentation to NAC last evening, De Staercke (Belgian NAC representative) telephoned Spaak urgently, informing him of steps we were taking and evidence we had of construction offensive missile sites in Cuba. While Spaak and Rothschild were both impressed by evidence we presented re aggressive Soviet missile build-up, news of our maritime quarantine of Cuba and other steps came as distinct shock to GOB, which has not as yet had opportunity to evaluate fully their implications and effect in terms of cold war and maintenance of peace.

I gather Spaak has strong feelings that given gravity of these

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measures and their implications in terms of war and peace, we should have consulted with our NATO allies in advance rather than just informing them after the fact, and I believe Spaak will make this pitch strongly to me this afternoon. Rothschild himself concluded by saying that "what is done is done" and he believes we can count on sympathetic understanding of our problem by GOB.

Spaak is attending Ministerial meeting this morning of Six Common Market countries and Rothschild informs me Cuba is first item on agenda. Given Spaak's very considerable influence with other European countries and in light of presence in Brussels of Ministerial representatives of the "Six", any additional appropriate information which Department can send me before 3:30 this afternoon Brussels time could be most helpful not only in terms of my meeting with Spaak, but in consideration of his position and influence with other European leaders. In particular, any appropriate comments on why we felt unable to consult more thoroughly with NATO would be appreciated, although I will, of course, stress that as they know, President has repeatedly and publicly made clear he would take appropriate action if there were evidence Cuba being transformed into base for aggressive and once our intelligence uncovered irrefutable evidence of very rapid Soviet build-up of offensive missile bases, it imperative that we move with utmost swiftness and vigor to quarantine Cuba, etc.

I have also been in touch with Baron Kronacker (one of principle leaders of opposition) who frequently takes initiatives of his own. He had planned ask Spaak this morning to convene and appear before Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament this afternoon to set out Belgian position on our action. Kronacker mentioned highly critical reaction on part of French that we had acted without consultation and, although very friendly and well-disposed to us, seemed to share this criticism. I told him I was seeing Spaak this afternoon, that I

personally-

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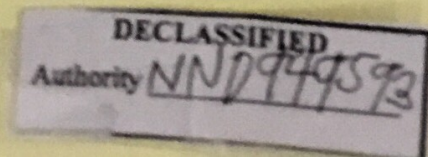
personally believed it premature to convoke the Foreign Affairs Committees today, that if our Western allies gave the appearance of being in disarray and strongly opposed to our action, it could encourage the Soviets to react even more strongly, thus increasing the danger of tragic miscalculation by Soviets. In light these considerations, I asked Kronacker not to ask Spaak to convoke the Parliamentary Committees today but to wait at least until tomorrow. He agreed that it most important West not appear divided and that our allies not turn on us and said he would refrain from asking Spaak to address committees until tomorrow which would give me opportunity to go over situation fully with Spaak.

MACARTHUR

DMB

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59-M  
Action

Control: 17413  
Rec'd: October 23, 1962  
7:22 p.m.

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FROM: Brussels

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 638, October 23, 9 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

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ACTION DEPARTMENT PRIORITY 638, INFORMATION PARIS 248, LONDON 418, BONN 79, ROME 60, THE HAGUE 65, LUXEMBOURG 46

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PARIS FOR USRO

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Cuba.

EMBTEL 636 611.5722

When I saw Spaak this afternoon about Cuba he most understanding of our action and said he fully understood reasons compelling us to take measures announced by President. He had this morning report from Belgian Ambassador Cuba dated October 12 confirming Soviet build-up in Cuba (including missiles) and gave me copy.

Spaak also very understanding about matter of prior consultation. He said he would frankly have preferred us inform NATO allies 24 hours in advance of our action, "particularly since nobody could have valid objection, in view evidence of ground-to-ground missile build-up". However, he knew we were obliged to move swiftly and was not taking issue with us re consultation. (He also made very good statement to Belgian press saying GOB understood why Americans obliged to act and that NATO partners had been informed by US yesterday in accordance with regular procedures, etcetera).

Spaak said Cuba had been principal topic at Ministerial meeting

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NAME OF OFFICER: CR ANDREWS	OFFICE SYMBOL:		

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611.3722/10-23-62

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-2- 638, October 23, 9 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) from Brussels

of Six this morning. All of Six had shown comprehension our action and there had been no sour notes although much speculation as to future and particularly effect on Berlin. He added Couve de Murville had been most forthright in support our action, saying that while US had not consulted its allies, it had informed them in advance and this was all that was necessary. (Couve, he said, had implied that when vital interests of great nations are threatened, they could not be expected consult and negotiate with others as to their action).

As to future Spaak said there were 3 comments he would like make quite informally and would appreciate any comments we might have on them:

1. Unquestionably there would be some juridically-minded people who would challenge our legal right to declare a blockade. He thought we wise to stress we taking only partial measures to prevent missile base for aggression being established and that food and medical shipments would be permitted to pass through quarantine.
2. Cuba outside NATO treaty area and therefore if hostilities break out as result our action, operative articles of NATO treaty, in event of aggression against its members, would not seem to apply.
3. One of most serious preoccupations of European allies is how our action will affect Berlin situation. In Europe people think largely of their own European security problems and Cuba and other important strategic areas seem remote and much less important. Spaak emphasized that since Soviets may well respond to our Cuban initiative by measures against Berlin, it imperative that from here on out there be genuine, very close, and continuing consultation in NAC and bilaterally re Berlin problem. He feels this essential to avoid creating serious

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strains within NATO alliance.

He referred to our taking Cuban issue to UNSC and asked whether we would take it to UNGA when Soviets vetoed in UNSC. I said I believed we intended do so.

On "purely personal basis" Spaak believes that at some time we and Soviets must sit down together to thrash out Berlin and other matters. He thinks our initiatives in keeping dialogue with Soviets going first through Ambassador Thompson in Moscow and now through Dobrynin and Gromyko have been sound but point now seems to have been reached where we and Soviets going round and round. He recognized present moment not propitious but eventually he thought modus vivendi on Berlin and other points of friction would require a US-Soviet bilateral conference.

MCARTHUR

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-3- 638, October 23, 9 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) from Brussels

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FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 638, October 23, 9 P.M. (SECTION II OF II)

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PARIS FOR USRO

He concluded by observing that while initial Soviet reaction had been strong in terms of propaganda language used, actual substance had been surprisingly mild, although obviously Soviets had not yet said their last word. In light of developments and dangers implicit in present situation he planned cancel his trip to Israel (Embassy telegram 593) and remain here in Brussels where he could be in close consultation with US and other NATO allies.

I also had separate meeting with Socialist Party President Collard today explaining in detail why we obliged to act and importance of maintaining unified allied front in face of Soviet threat. Collard also reacted with great understanding. While saying left-wing of Socialist Party would undoubtedly strongly criticize our action, he understood and appreciated our reasons. Significantly he said that in recent months President Kennedy has repeatedly given proof that he is man of good will who desires peaceful solutions and has not acted in bellicose manner but has been moderate and restrained. Therefore no objective observer can justly accuse US of acting in irresponsible or provocative manner. He also said that since Europeans insist we interest ourselves in defense of Europe and understand Europe's security

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-2- 638, October 23, 9 P.M. (SECTION II OF II), from Brussels  
problems, it only fair that Europeans be prepared to recognize  
we have equally strong interest and great problems re defense  
of Western Hemisphere, and that we are much better informed  
on these matters than our European allies.

MACARTHUR

MJA

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