

**January 18, 1963**

**Department of State Telegram 1250 to the American  
Embassy Rome**

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**Summary:**

This message, intended "only" for Ambassador Reinhardt, included information for use in backgrounders for officials and journalists, but only with the Department's consent. It included comparisons of the Jupiter and Polaris missiles, a brief discussion of possible targeting arrangements for Polaris, and the possible timing of the introduction of Polaris and the phase out of Jupiter missiles.&nbsp; One point concerned "Equating of Italy and Turkey with Cuba." U.S. officials were advised to make no comment on the matter, but if raised, officials should observe that when the Soviets equated missiles in Cuba with Jupiters in Italy and Turkey "we absolutely refused accept any such comparison or deal." A version of these points would soon go to Fanfani's foreign policy adviser, Carlo Marchiori.

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**Contents:**

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# TELEGRAM

## Foreign Service of the United States of America

INCOMING

American Embassy ROME

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**SECRET**

Classification

Control: 502

Recd: Jan 18, 1963  
0553

FROM: SECSTATE WASHINGTON

ACTION: ROME PRITY CIRCR 1250, Jan 17, 2PM

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Paris for Bohlen, Finletter and Lemnitzer

London for Bruce and Admiral Smith

You will receive separate instruction regarding use of following material on background basis. In view of sensitivity this subject this telegram should not be distributed within Embassy at this time and subject should not be discussed with local officials or press. Certain speculative articles have already appeared in press referring to Jupiter modernization. Should further articles come to our attention, or should official or press inquiries be received by Embassy, you should advise Department by telegram.

Background material that may be drawn upon on an unclassified basis, when specific authorization is received, is as follows:

Modernization. Rapid progress in technological developments makes desirable accelerate review of existing weapons systems to ensure alliance has available most advanced weapons systems. In Turkey and Italy question has arisen whether, as alternative to existing Jupiter missiles, Polaris missile submarine would better serve needs of alliance.

Vulnerability. Polaris submarine system would have very high probability of survival in event of sudden nuclear attack, much higher than "soft" and stationery Jupiter.

Power. Introduction of modern Polaris weapon system and phasing out of obsolete Jupiter Missiles would create better military posture for NATO Mediterranean in accordance with policy of continuous introduction of more modern weapons into arsenal of alliance. These missiles in addition being better protected are more accurate.

Control and targeting. It is proposed that Polaris submarines in Mediteranean be assigned SACEUR. This force could be under his operational control in peacetime. Such assignment could be considered as an interim arrangement looking toward an eventual NATO multilateral force with participation by those members of NATO

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that wished do so. Polaris missiles would be targeted by SACEUR, with Italian and Turkish participation, among others.

Present discussions and timing. While Polaris missiles can be on station by April 1 introduction of Polaris system and phasing out of obsolete Jupiter missiles is subject of discussions now being held separately with Italian and Turkish governments. Discussion also cover introduction of other additional modern weapons into Italian and Turkish components of NATO in very near future. No specification nature of quantity such other additional weapons can be given.

Observations on obsolescence. In 1957 open decision was made install Jupiter missiles then along with Thor were only strategic ballistic missiles NATO had ready for operation. With rapid advances in technology and accelerated growth of missile forces they have been superseded by more modern weapons which are less vulnerable to attack. As early as April 1961 eventual obsolescence of Jupiter system was first commented on in discussions between Turkish and United States officials. In 1963 number of operational strategic ballistic missiles in alliance will nearly double.

Noteworthy features of Polaris: (a) mobility which greatly reduces vulnerability to enemy attack; (b) solid propellant which means that 16 missiles can be fired in 16 minutes from same submarine whereas liquid-fueled Jupiter requires considerable time lag between decision and firing; (c) accuracy which is much greater than Jupiter.

Equating of Italy and Turkey with Cuba. No comment should be volunteered on this point. If it is raised following observations are pertinent: (a) when Soviets in course of Cuban crisis attempted equate Jupiter in Italy and Turkey with Soviet missiles in Cuba we responded flatly and publicly that we absolutely refused accept any such comparison or deal; our position was and remains just that; (b) obvious objective of this replacement of obsolete Jupiters by modern Polaris systems is to improve nuclear deterrent force of NATO in Mediterranean which is quite opposite of Soviet move of removing its entire nuclear striking force from Cuba; (c) United States first raised question obsolescence April 1961 long before Cuba.

Eventual disposal of Jupiter missiles. Question may be asked whether Jupiters are to be returned to United States when they are phased out. Response should be that we are not yet aware of intention of the Governments of Italy and Turkey in this regard. Information on characteristics of Jupiter and Polaris missiles being pouched.

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