January 29, 1963

Department of State Telegram 1416 to the American Embassy Rome

Citation:

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Summary:

Responding to Finletter's request, the State Department provides a statement on the Jupiters for the NAC meeting on January 30, 1963. It explained that the U.S. cannot bring up the matter unilaterally until consultations with Italy and Turkey have progressed. Finletter should coordinate delivery of the statement with Italian and Turkish representatives while Reinhard and Hare work with the Italians and Turks in preparing a written statement that can be presented to the NAC at a later stage. While the Italians were willing to join the statement, it is not clear whether Turkey did or whether the statement was made to the NAC on January 30.

Credits:

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Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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"WE HAD HOPED BE IN POSITION CONSULT NAC AT JANUARY 23 MEETING ON SUBJECT OF STATIONING POLARIS SUBMARINES IN MEDITERRANEAN. AS COUNCIL AWARE. WE HAVE BEEN GIVING CONTINUING SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO CUESTION OF STRENGTHENING NUCLEAR DETERRENT CAPABILITY AVAILABLE TO NATO IN MEDITERRANEAN AREA. AS POLARIS MRBM SYSTEM REACHED FULL PRODUCTION WE HAVE TAKEN HARD LOOK AT LIQUID-FUELED JUPITER MISSILES NOW DEPLOYED ITALY AND TURKEY. CONCLUSION WAS THAT JUPITERS RAPIDLY BECOMING OBSOLETE AND HAVE BEEN OVERTAKEN BY ADVANCES IN WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY. THEY REPRESENT FURTHER DISADVANTAGE TO NATO SECURITY IN THAT THEY FORM FIXED, VULNRABLE TARGETS, SOLID-FUELED POLARIS MISSILES EMPLACED IN SUBMARINES WOULD BE MUCH LESS VULNERABLE THAN JUPITERS. POLARIS SYSTEM THUS HAS MUCH GEATER EFFECTIVENESS. DEPLOYED IN MEDITERRANEAN, POLARIS WOULD MORE THAN MATCH THE NATO MILITARY RECUIREMENT ALONG ALLIANCE'S SOUTHERN FLANK NOW COVERED BY JUPITERS.

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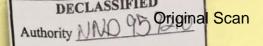
ENTIRE CUESTION HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION WITH ITALIAN AND TURKISH GOVERNMENTS WITH INTENTION THAT, IF EXCHANGE OF POLARIS FOR JUPITERS ACCEPTABLE TO ITALY AND TURKEY WE WOULD JOINTLY PRESENT PROPOSAL TO NAC AND MILITARY COMMITEE FOR NATO ENDORSEMENT. AS OF JANUARY 23, PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH ITALY AND TURKEY HAD NOT REACHED POINT WHERE DISCUSSION IN NAC WAS FEASIBLE. DESPITE PRECAUTIONS PRESS AND PUBLIC SPCULATION DID OCCUR AND IT BECAME NECESSARY FOR GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED TO CONFIRM THAT TALKS UNDERWAY AND THUS PLACE SUBJECT IN PROPER CONTEXT. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR COUNCIL TO REALIZE THAT FORMAL CONSULTATION NOT POSSIBLE UNTIL PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION BY THREE COUNTRIES PRIMARILY AFFECTED HAS REACHED POINT WHERE CONCRETE PROPOSAL CAN BE PLACED BEFORE COUNCIL. WE EXPECT SHORTLY TO MAKE SUCH PROPOSIS IN WRITING TO COUNCIL AND MILITARY COMMITTEE.

"THIS MOVE IS ANOTHER STRONG INDICCATION OF US INTENTION TO INCREASE NATO'S NUCLAR STRENGTH. US GIVES CONTINUING ATTENTION TO NECESSITY TO MODERNIZE WEAPONS SYSTEMS AVAILABLE TO THE ALLIANCE AND TO STRENGTHEN NATO DETERRENT. ANY RUMORS TO THE CONTRARY ARE PATENTLY FALSE; INFERENCE THAT US INTENDS TO WITHDRAW TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM EUROPE IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION. ACTUALLY, NUMBER OF TACTICAL WEAPONS STATIONED IN EUROPE IS INCREASING. OUR INTENTION IS TO INSURE THAT NATO'S NUCLEAR POSTURE IS NOT ONLY MAINTAINED BUT STRENGTHENED BY ADDITION OF MOST MODERN AND LEAST VULNERABLE WEAPONS SYSTEMS".

FYI IN CONVERSATION WITH SEC GEN YOU SHOULDSTRESS POINT THAT THIS COULD NOT BE UNILATERAL MOVE BY US AND CONSECUENTLY CONSULTATION WITH NAC PRIOR TO REACHING BASIC UNDERSTANDING WITH ITALY AND TURKEY WOULD HAVE BEEN UNTIMELY AND INAPPROPRIATE. END FYI.

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AMBASSADORS REINHARDT AND HARE ARE RECUESTED TO CONFIRM TO AMB FINLETTER DEPARTMENTS ASSUMPTION, INDICATED IN AOVE TEXT, THAT GOI AND GOT WOULD BE WILLING IN NEAR FUTURE MAKE JOINT PRESENTATION TO NAC OF WRITTEN PROPOSALS. WOULD HOPE ITALIAN AND TURKISH PERMREPS COULD BE APPROPRIATELY INSTRUCTED PRIOR JAN 30 MEETING.

IF ASSUMPTION NOT CORRECT, FIRST SENTENCE OF SECOND PARAGRAPH PROPOSED TEXT ABOVE SHOULD BE REVISED TO READ ".....WITH INTENTION THAT, IF DISCUSSIONS DISCLOSE POLARIS-JUPITER EXCHANGE ACCEPTABLE, WE WOULD FURTHER SUGGEST TO ITALY AND TURKEY THAT WE MAKE JOINT PRESENTATION TO NAC AND MIL CTEE FOR NATO ENDORSEMENT." LAST SENTENCE SAME PARAGRAPH SHOULD THEN BE REVISED TO READ "IF ITALY AND TURKEY AGREE, WE WOULD HOPE SHORTLY TO MAKE WRITTEN PROPOSAL TO COUNCIL AND MIL CTEE.