

October 25, 1962

Cable from Dutch Embassy, Washington (Van Roijen), 25 October 1962

Citation:

"Cable from Dutch Embassy, Washington (Van Roijen), 25 October 1962", October 25, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, National Archive, The Hague, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2.05.118, inv. 28913. Obtained for CWIHP by Rimko van der Maar and translated for CWIHP by Bastiaan Bouwman.
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Summary:

Van Roijen relates in this cable the details of a meeting with the US State Department's Bureau of Western European Affairs. With regards to Cuba, the Soviets assured the United States that they would not supply Cuba with offensive military weapons and even detailed the ranges of the missiles shipped. The construction of the bases was done in such haste that no attempt to conceal them was made, indicating the construction was on a time limit. These along with several other factors (the 1961 Berlin crisis, internal pressure within the Soviet Union) had convinced the administration that the Soviets had the fixed determination to confront the US.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Dutch

Contents:

Translation - English

REFERENCE No. 10255

DATE OF DISPATCH: 25 October 1962

DATE OF RECEIPT: 26 October 1962

TO: Min[ister]. o[f]. F[oreign].A[ffairs]

FROM: Washington

Information copy sent to: New York

SECRET

Reference my 907.

During a talk with [Galen L.] Stone, deputy director [of the State Department's Bureau of] Western European Affairs, he gave a more detailed overview of the recent developments.

1. □ Halfway through the summer it had become clear to Washington that Khrushchev was out to realize Russian objectives with regard to Berlin as soon as possible. In the opinion of the Americans Khrushchev had become so involved in the Berlin issue and the internal pressure had become so great that he could not afford to compromise and therefore was aiming at a showdown.

2. □ The Soviets had first confidentially and then also publicly let the US know that they would engage the Berlin issue after the American [mid-term Congressional] elections.

3. □ Concerning Cuba the Soviets had firmly assured the US that they would not supply Cuba with offensive weapons and in this vein had even specified the range of the weapons which were being delivered. For instance TASS had in early October sent out an emphatic statement that the weapons stationed on Cuba could not reach the US. Incidentally the statement by [Soviet foreign minister Andrei] Gromyko on weapons delivered to Cuba referenced by Kennedy in his address on the twenty-second of this month had been read from paper by the former.

4. □ In a departure from what had previously been heard from [the Department of] State Stone stated that Khr[ushchev] during his talk with [US ambassador in Moscow Foy D.] Kohler on the sixteenth of this month had stated that he was "virtually decided" to come to the US during the second half of November.

5. □ The fact that the construction of the bases was carried out with such haste that no effort was made to apply camouflage, indicates that this construction was bound to a certain time limit.

All these facts had convinced the administration that the Soviets had the fixed determination to confront the US during Khr[ushchev]'s visit with the fait accompli of an operative missile base in Cuba and by this startling acute threat [against] the US bring the Berlin issue to the solution they desired.

The administration is convinced that the Western position concerning Berlin has now as a result of the initiative in the Cuban matter - through which the Soviets have lost

a valuable trump card - been strengthened.

Van Roijen 910.□