

December 14, 1962

Cable from Dutch Embassy, Washington (Van Roijen), 14 December 1962

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Summary:

The cable from van Roijen concerns a conversation between him and Director of UN Political Affairs at the U.S. Department of State Joseph Sisco. Sisco informs van Roijen that the Kennedy Administration has decided to let the Cuban issue quietly die, boiling down to the United States and the Soviet Union "agreeing to disagree." The State Department does not think there should be further debate on the issue in the UN Security Council because the U.S. is not willing to make further concessions while there have been no UN inspections. Sisco also reports that the Soviets have made a commitment to withdraw all combat troops from Cuba.

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Concerning C u b a

Director UN political affairs [at the] State [Department], [Joseph] Sisco, while requesting utmost discretion informed me that State is currently proposing to let the Cuban affair quietly come to an end. This would boil down to the US and the SU "agreeing to disagree," which leaves the question whether such could be done while going around the v r [veiligheidsraad; (UN) Security Council].

According to Sisco the SU is very keen on having a final round in the v r [Security Council] both to make propaganda for the fact that Khrushchev has kept all his promises and to pin the US down to a concession that Cuba will not be invaded. Furthermore it can be assumed that the Cubans themselves would like to have the opportunity to come down on America in the v r [Security Council].

State tends toward the view that there should not be a v r [Security Council] debate, among other things because the US of course is not willing to make said concession as long as the conditions for inspection and assurances have not been met. Sisco affirmed again that, although it would have been important to make a communist country accept UN inspections, the current situation is not unwelcome to the US since on the one hand no promise of non-invasion has to be made [I assume that this is not disagreeable to Kennedy from the point of view of domestic politics either] and on the other hand American surveillance can continue quietly.

Sisco also confirmed that a "firm commitment" has been acquired from the Soviets that the Soviet troops will be withdrawn from Cuba. According to Sisco this concerns eight thousand men who primarily had the duty of "servicing" the various installations which have now been removed so that their stay is of no further use. This does deviate from information indicating that this Russian personnel was organized into military units [vide my 971].

Van Roijen 1041 ++