

October 25, 1962

Political Letter from Ambassador Max Troendle

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Summary:

Ambassador Max Troendle discusses the situation in the Soviet Union after the Cuban Missile Crisis in regards to the public opinion and press attacks now being much calmer. He also mentions Israel's newly arrived ambassador, Joseph Tekoah, who is familiar with the conditions in Latin America from his own experience.

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FYI to: □112 110 108 113 149 152
□□153 154 152 157 217 DZ JD

Original for handling to: 217

Moscow, 25.10.62 1800 cable 165
Political letter (b.12.1 - 133)
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The population of Moscow is calm in the face of the Cuban crisis. [Trans. note: There are] no signs of a panic, but [trans. note: there are] worried faces everywhere. The demonstrations in front of the American Embassy have been insignificant, and the police warned the few hundred demonstrators over loudspeakers not to disturb the traffic. In the big companies, the workers appear to have been asked, given the situation, to stick together and to increase performance, without inflaming the national sentiments by underscoring an imminent threat of war. This allows for the assumption that the Soviet government does not intend to "march."

The attacks on the United States in the daily news are published in a milder form in today's editorial of the Pravda, which is probably due to the positive response that Premier Khrushchev has given U.N. General Secretary [U Thant].

a) Some diplomatic missions in Moscow tend to think that the Soviet government could intend to sell their position in Cuba for Western concessions in Europe and elsewhere or that it [trans. note: the Soviet government] will strike a blow against Berlin or against Turkey.

□b) Israel's newly arrived ambassador, Joseph Tekoah, who is familiar with the conditions in Latin America from his own experience, believes, however, as do other colleagues, that Cuba is too important for the Soviet Union as a foothold for the Central and South American sphere of influence as that it could consider to trade this position for an advantage on a different front, nor for Western concessions in terms of the Berlin question, regarding which time is working against it [trans. note: the Soviet Union] anyway.

□c) For the sake of completeness, I am mentioning the not very convicting version, according to which Moscow consciously provoked the American reaction, because Fidel Castro's regime was near political bankruptcy and because it would have been better, in the interest of conserving the "ideological Castroism," if it were to be brought to fall by an "imperialist" intervention rather than by its own failure.

Since the Soviet government is keeping its ships out of the danger zone to avoid incidents and [trans. note: since] it appears in principle to be willing to settle the dispute in the forum of the United Nations or [trans. note: since it] might tend towards a summit meeting, it is possible that its yielding will be interpreted as weakness by the opposite side and that those will appear to have been correct, who advocate a policy of strength. An aggravation of the situation could result out of this due to Moscow's desire for prestige. My Israeli colleague contrasts this eventuality with the significant advantage that the Soviet Union gets, that it can provide evidence to the neutralistic states with its provisional yielding to the sincerity and the trustworthiness of its policy of peaceful coexistence.

[Max] Troendle

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