

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

Bundy
Yugo
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52-W

Action

Control: 3996

Rec'd: December 6, 1963

10:11 a.m.

EUR

FROM: Belgrade

Info

SS

TO: Secretary of State

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SP

NO: 1025, December 6, 3 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

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ACTION DEPARTMENT 1025 INFORMATION MOSCOW 56, ZAGREB UNNUMBERED.

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In 45-minute go-round with President Tito on fifth, following subjects were discussed:

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1. US Presidency. I emphasized to Tito as I have with many other Yugo contacts, President Johnson's assurances re continuity of US policy. I specifically mentioned two Johnson messages, one replying to Tito's letter of condolences and other thanking Yugoslav Government and people for their expressions of sympathy, both of which carry assurances that Kennedy policies will be followed. GOY President accepted this statement without comment, but as will be noted later in conversation some slight uncertainty about President Johnson's policies was implied, on sole basis I would judge, of lack of personal relationship with US President.

Tito appeared particularly taken with identity and motivation of presumed Kennedy assassin, and I pointed out there was absolutely no evidence to confirm what some Yugoslav papers have been asserting, namely that it was right wing plot; on the contrary, we saw it as tragic gesture of a lone psychopath. I expressed appreciation and thanks for Yugoslav decision to name two streets and an institute after late President. In this connection, I stated I had been apprised previously that GOY was considering "associating" OKI plant with President Kennedy. Tito hesitated for fraction of a second, then burst into laughter. He said this was not found feasible because if plant should be indicted or sued at any time it would appear as if President Kennedy himself was being indicted or

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5

State Dept. Guidelines

By *JC*, NARA, Date 7-5-01

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sued and "US would not like that."

2. Reactions to Latin America and US trip.

In a discussion of his recent trip, Tito went on at great length about poverty and turbulence in South American countries visited. Because of their "insecurity" he felt US should be especially cognizant of their needs as far as aid programs were concerned. Much of this discussion was repeat of what Tito himself said to late President. It need only be noted here that Tito emphasized equality as only healthy basis between two countries and advocated aid should be given on government or international basis rather than through private enterprise. He again expressed regret that he was unable to visit Governor Brown in California and said that late President had impressed whole Yugoslav delegation as "powerful" personality. When we were talking about New York, Tito underplayed unhappy incidents in that city, and my general impression is that he found US trip of positive value as whole.

3. Bilateral relations. I brought GOY President up-to-date on MFN. After stating that it was now being discussed by Senate-House conference, I said I personally was fairly optimistic that result would be favorable to both US and Yugoslav national interests. One hopeful sign, I added, was that a senator formerly opposed to MFN recently had suggested it be granted to Yugoslavia for two year trial period until GOY made clear its intentions on current claims negotiations.

Extending the discussion, I asked Tito if he saw other than MFN problems in our bilateral relations. Tito seized on this opportunity to launch into a short disquisition concerning evils of discrimination, economic or otherwise, and ended up with statement that if MFN were resolved

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satisfactorily and normal trade relations resumed between our two countries he saw nothing which would impede development of still closer US-GOY relations.

I indicated that MFN was certainly most important problem at moment in our bilateral relations but that one or two other matters were worthy of mention. In addition to claims problem which I had already referred to, I wondered if he was aware that US and GOY had been negotiating for four years on a Fulbright agreement. Tito looked utterly blank at this point and his Secretary General, Crnobrnja, shook his head to indicate Tito had no knowledge of these negotiations. I summarized general provisions of a Fulbright agreement for Yugoslavia and said this type program seemed to be within context of joint communique issued in Washington at conclusion of his visit which had specified desirability of increasing cultural exchanges. Tito did not disagree with this presentation, nor did he comment on it.

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Action
EUR

Control: 4018
Rec'd: December 6, 1963
10:46 a.m.

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FROM: Belgrade

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1025, December 6, 3 p.m. (SECTION TWO OF TWO)

ACTION DEPARTMENT 1025; INFORMATION MOSCOW 56, ZAGREB UNNUMBERED.

4. World questions. In discussion of international problems, I mentioned that GOY President had several times in past seen himself as mediator between East and West. I knew he had been encouraged by President Kennedy's recent actions culminating in nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Furthermore, Tito had publicly expressed hope that signing of treaty would be followed by other significant steps leading toward relaxation of world tension. In light of Kennedy death, how did he see immediate future?

In reply, Tito emphasized hope of Russia, of Yugo, and indeed of whole world that future negotiations would continue in interest of reaching further agreements between two big powers. He said that if President Johnson followed Kennedy lead, additional progress might be made toward that end. At same time, US should be cautious and not over dramatize "little incidents" such as autobahn episode in Germany which he claimed was surely result of local misunderstanding and did not originate with Khrushchev. I said second autobahn incident suggested that questions of principle and will were clearly involved. He said US need have no fear of Khrushchev; latter was a man of peace whom US would have no difficulty in negotiating. Without disagreeing, I told Tito I had been extremely heartened by his speech at Belgrade airport on his return from America in which for first time he had given public recognition to peaceful intentions of President Kennedy. This had not always been so, especially after Cuba crisis which we had discussed in same room a little over a year ago. GOY President

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smiled and said this was indeed his belief now and repeated his fervent hope that President Johnson would continue policies of predecessor.

Comment: Tito became expansive in only one part of discussion and that pertained to Latin American portion of his trip. Because he had experienced Latin America, he felt on firm ground in discussing it. Otherwise, I got impression of remarkable vagueness as far as factual material was concerned. He was aware, for example, that consideration had been given to associating name of late President Kennedy with Oki Plant but he did not seem aware of intention to name a street in Belgrade and an institute in Skopje after Kennedy. To all appearances, he was quite ignorant of current claims negotiations as well as attempt over the years to negotiate Fulbright agreement. He voiced usual attitudes concerning peaceful coexistence and desire for international cooperation without seeming to be sensitive to more than their superficial implications. Being a dictator, Tito sees international relations in terms of leaders and personalities as well as doctrine. He has little recognition of role of our Congress, as I became aware when I mentioned how new President in address to Congress had stressed desirability of independent and strong legislature in US.

The one hopeful sign that I could detect about his attitude toward America, and a very significant one indeed, is the repeated mention of peace loving qualities of late American President. I accept as sincere his statements to that effect and believe he would like to include President Johnson in same category depending on future events. What stands out in Tito at this moment, therefore, is slight mellowing of a previously rigid and bigoted personality which is just now learning, not without occasional difficulty, to include US within its vision of peace-loving nations.

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