

Private Secretary

Mr. Pattison (NO10)

You requested a note
on this. X is the
important point.

J. H. H. H.
29/4

CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OPINION

1. You asked what happened when the UN Secretary-General U Thant intervened in the Cuban missile crisis. In the short time available we have not been able to check the facts to our entire satisfaction. But it looks very much as though U Thant's appeal to the major parties (which Mr Healey is now quoting as a precedent for Mr Perez de Cuellar's press release on Monday) was private.
2. The Security Council met from 23 - 25 October 1962 in response to separate requests by the USA, Cuba and the USSR. On 24 October U Thant informed the Council that, at the request of a large number of delegations, he had sent identically worded appeals to President Kennedy and Chairman Krushchev to suspend voluntarily the armed shipments and quarantine measures for a period of two to three weeks and to enter into immediate negotiations for a peaceful solution.* He had also addressed a separate appeal to Prime Minister Castro.
3. During the course of the Security Council's debate the Secretary-General received favourable replies from President Kennedy and Chairman Krushchev. The Council adjourned on the understanding that future work would be decided in the light of the results of the discussions that were to take place.
4. On 30 - 31 October U Thant talked to the Cubans in Havana. He reported afterwards that he had been reliably informed that the missiles were being dismantled and that 'the United Nations should continue to participate in the peaceful settlement of the problem'.
5. On 7 January 1963 the Secretary-General received a joint letter from the USSR and the United States expressing appreciation of the two Governments for his efforts in helping them to avert the serious threat to the peace.

x
* This appeal was, in fact, issued with the agreement of both the USA and the USSR. Its language had been negotiated with them in advance. Both the major parties were in fact looking to the Secretary-General to provide a ladder which they could climb down.

P. J. Roberts

P J ROBERTS
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