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Action  
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Info  
CONTROL: 17725

RECD: JANUARY 22, 1966 9/26AM

FROM: MADRID

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 871

~~SECRET~~ JANUARY 22

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS DOD

REF EMBTELS 867 AND 869; DEPTTEL 834

1. FOLLOWING IS ROUNDUP DEVELOPMENTS RELATED B-52/KC-135 ACCIDENT SINCE LAST REPORTS (EMBTELS 867 AND 869):

A. SHORTLY AFTER NOON JANUARY 21 FONMIN TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR TO CONVEY "EXTREME CONCERN" OF CHIEF STATE UPON READING UPI STORY CABLED BY SPANISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON (TEXT ABOUT SAME AS THAT QUOTED DEPTTEL 834). FONMIN SAID HE SENDING SAGAZ TO DISCUSS QUESTION.

B. SAGAZ ARRIVED DISPLAYING CONSIDERABLE AGITATION. USING SUCH TERMS AS "DEEP CONCERN", "EMERGENCY" AND "CRISIS", HE COMPLAINED PARTICULARLY ABOUT PASSAGES IN UPI STORY CONCERNING ALLEGED ATTITUDE OF "US DIPLOMATS" AND THAT PURPORTING DESCRIBE COMPLAINTS OF SPANISH INHABITANTS OF ACCIDENT AREA AGAINST GOS FOR PERMITTING OVERFLIGHT NUCLEAR-ARMED USAF AIRCRAFT. SAGAZ DID NOT FAIL RING IN POTENTIAL BLOW TO TOURISM OF RADIATION SCARE. HE ENDED PRESENTATION SAYING THESE REVELATIONS HAD EFFECT LIBERATING GOS TO TAKE INDEPENDENT ACTION ON ITS OWN AND MENTIONED POSSIBILITY CONVENING PRESS CONFERENCE FOR FULL DISCLOSURE ALL FACTS AND GOS POSITION. AMBASSADOR REFUTED UPI ATTRIBUTION TO US DIPLOMATS, MENTIONED IMMINENT RETURN CHIEF JUSMG FROM SCENE ACCIDENT WITH UP-TO-DATE ACCOUNT OF CIRCUMSTANCES THERE FOR OUR INFORMATION AND THAT OF GOS, AND REFERRED TO DESIRABILITY REMAINING CALM AND CONTINUING MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS US-SPANISH COLLABORATION IN DEALING WITH DELICATE SITUATION OF

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E.O. 13292, Sec. 3.5

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-2-871, January 22, from: Madrid

EQUAL AND COMMON CONCERN TO BOTH GOVTS. IN THIS MANNER, AMBASSADOR SUCCEEDED IN QUIETING SAGAZ, WHO AT END OF CONVERSATION AGREED AWAIT FURTHER REPORTS FROM SCENE.

C. UPON RETURN FROM ALMERIA, CHIEF JUSMG REPORTED TO AMBASSADOR: FOURTH BOMB STILL MISSING AND PROBABILITY WAS IT DROPPED INTO SEA; USN MINE SWEEPERS ABOUT TO BEGIN SEA SEARCH OPERATIONS WITH HELP TWO LOCAL FISHERMEN WHO REPORTED HAVING SEEN OBJECT WITH PARACHUTE DROP INTO WATER; RECOVERY OF FRAGMENTS WRECKAGE ON LAND CONTINUING AND ALL LEADS AS TO POSSIBLE LOCATION FOURTH BOMB BEING FOLLOWED UP; AREAS OF RADIATION ON LAND HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, ARE SMALL AND NOW CLOSED OFF; WATER TRUCKS BEING BROUGHT UP TO LEACH THESE SPOTS; CROPS AND LIVESTOCK POSSIBLY AFFECTED BEING BOUGHT UP; MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS BEING MADE OF PERSONS IN AREA WHO COULD HAVE BEEN EXPOSED; COMMUNITY LEADERS AND GENERAL PUBLIC BEING ASSURED WITH EFFECT THAT WHILE THERE SOME NATURAL FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY AMONG PEOPLE THERE NO EVIDENCE OF MASS FRIGHT OR PANIC; SPANISH IN AREA, INCLUDING CIVIL AUTHORITIES, GUARDIA CIVIL AND SPANISH NUCLEAR SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL TEAMS, COOPERATING TO FULL IN THESE EFFORTS. GENERAL DONOVAN ALSO MENTIONED THAT NUMEROUS INTERNATIONAL PRESS REPRESENTATIVES ARE IN AREA, INCLUDING UPI, PARIS MATCH, BRITISH PRESS, CBS-TV AND POSSIBLY FRENCH TV CREWS.

D. AMBASSADOR CALLED IN LOCAL UPI BUREAU CHIEF STATHOS, FIRMLY REFUTED ATTITUDE "US DIPLOMATS" AS ATTRIBUTED BY UPI FILE AND CHALLENGED HIM ON SOURCE HIS INFORMATION THIS POINT. STATHOS APPEARED SHAKEN, STATED HE HAD OBTAINED INFORMATION ON THIS POINT "AT THIRD HAND" AND REPEATEDLY APOLOGIZED FOR FILING STORY WITHOUT CHECKING WITH EMBASSY (SEE F BELOW).

E. FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS SUBPARAGRAPHS C AND D ABOVE, AMBASSADOR TELEPHONED FONOFF (ABOUT 1930). GAVE SAGAZ SUMMARY AND OFFERED SEND EMBOFF TO GIVE FULL REPORT, WHICH SAGAZ QUICKLY ACCEPTED. SAGAZ LISTENED INTENTLY AND SHOWED KEENEST INTEREST IN ACCOUNT STATHOS ADMISSION HE HAD NOT RECEIVED INFORMATION RE "US DIPLOMATS" ATTITUDE FROM EMBASSY, BUT FROM OTHER SOURCE. WE ASSURED SAGAZ WE OPEN TO ANY SPANISH SUGGESTIONS ON HOW BEST HANDLE SITUATION BUT REITERATED BELIEF WE SHOULD CONTINUE WORK IN CLOSE CONCERT. SAGAZ INDICATED CONCURRENCE, SAID HE HAD NO SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE FOR TIME BEING AND APPEARED CALM, ALBEIT OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED. EMBOFF HAD IMPRESSION SAGAZ WANTED GET STATHOS INCIDENT PARTICULARLY CLEAR TO REPORT TO SUPERIORS.

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