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Lettre du sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Letter from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], May 23, 1961

Repeat Information to: XL-110 Bogotá, XL-59 Ciudad Trujillo, XL-160 Rio de Janeiro, XL-65 Montevideo, XL-215 Egypt, XL-139 Buenos Aires, XL-66 Port-au-Prince, XL-93 Lima, XL-93 Quito, XL-154 Havana, XL-162 Mexico, XL-136 Caracas, XL-61 San José, XL-538 Washington

EASING OF TENSION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA

You may wish to comment on the ideas put forward by the Canadian Ambassador in Chile in his Despatch No. 165 of May 16 (attached) concerning steps which might be taken to ease the tension between the United States and Cuba.

YVON BEAULNE
 for Under-Secretary of State
 for External Affairs

[PIÈCE JOINTE/ENCLOSURE]

L'ambassadeur au Chili
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Ambassador in Chile
to Secretary of State for External Affairs

DESPATCH NO. 165

Santiago, May 16, 1961

CONFIDENTIAL

EASING OF TENSION BETWEEN THE USA AND
CUBA – TENTATIVE THOUGHTS

In his speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 20th, President Kennedy stated: "If the nations of this hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration – then I want it clearly understood that this country will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligation which is the security of this nation." He qualified his remarks later by saying: "The American people are not complacent about iron-curtain tanks and planes less than 90 miles from our shores. But a nation of Cuba's size is less a threat to our survival than it is a base for subverting the survival of other free nations throughout the Americas. It is not primarily our interest or our security but theirs which is now in even greater peril. It is for their sake that we must show will."

2. Security considerations seem therefore to play some part at the moment in American thinking with regard to the Cuban problem. In seeking a way of easing tensions between the USA and Cuba it might be useful, at least initially, to try to formulate an approach aimed at mitigating this aspect of the apprehensions reflected in the USA attitude. The major advantages of this tactic as we see them is that (a) it offers relatively safe ground from which friends of the USA could launch a coherent and convincing attack against its present reluctance to consider even the possibility of negotiating the Cuban problem and (b) if negotiations were agreed to on this basis, an early confrontation on the more highly contentious and emotionally charged issues which stand between the two countries might be successfully avoided.