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## Second Thoughts

By Roscoe Drummond

**L**ONDON.—There is new respect, trust and reliance for the United States throughout Western Europe today.

If Western Europe's political leaders and people—except the Communists—were called upon to register a vote today, John F. Kennedy would be the elected head of the free-world alliance.

It would be a clear verdict, a decisive vote of confidence in the President of the United States—not just because the United States has the power to lead, but because of the wise and effective use of that power.



Mr. Drummond

This is the visible fruit of the President's confrontation of Khrushchev over Cuba, which most of Europe feared when it began, but which it now welcomes with huge satisfaction and lift.

The effect of this new attitude, evident wherever I have been traveling—in London, Paris, Bonn, Berlin—is to give Mr. Kennedy larger latitude for initiative and action—if he wants to use it.

### Two Reasons

There are two reasons why leadership opinion and public opinion have a new degree, a very marked new degree, of trust in the President.

He used American power prudently and called into use no more force than was needed.

It was successful.

The Europeans liked it. They respected it. There is now a remarkable increase of confidence in the President.

This wasn't true at the beginning of the Cuban blockade—except in West Germany and in West Berlin, where the almost universal reaction was "at last."

It was particularly not true in Britain, where the government was

cautious and noncommittal immediately after the President's Oct. 22 speech and where the London press, with the single exception of Lord Beaverbrook's "Daily Express," was wringing its hands and crying: "Oh, dear, don't do this to us!"

But the change in British press opinion was almost equally total. It is revealing to note how sharp and complete that change was—once it became clear that America's resolute confrontation was causing a Soviet retreat.

Before Khrushchev capitulated, the "Daily Telegraph" (Conservative) said that the presence of offensive Soviet weapons in Cuba was "not enough" to allow the United States to take the world to the brink. After Khrushchev backed down, it said: "The great thing is that we are now back from the brink and this we owe to the power of the United States and the persistence of its President."

### First Response

The first response of the "Daily Mail" (Conservative) was to call the President's action a "profound mistake," but later, as Khrushchev was stepping back, it concluded that the blockade was "justified and inevitable unless the President was to shirk his responsibilities."

Before Khrushchev recoiled, the "Guardian" of Manchester (Liberal) declared there was "no shred of excuse" for what the United States did to the Soviets in Cuba, but after Khrushchev recoiled it found there was a difference between NATO bases in Turkey and Soviet missiles in Cuba.

For a week the "Tribune" (far-Left Labor) attacked the American action and later candidly and handsomely admitted that it was wrong.

And so it went, with 98 per cent of the British press at the outset bemoaning the risk and then praising its success.

### Out of Touch

But the British press was out of touch with the British people, or, at least, failed in any way to reflect British public opinion. Well before Khrushchev gave in, that is, within two days after the American action became known, the National Opinion Poll found that 58 per cent of the British people endorsed the American action and 66 per cent wanted their government to support the United States.

Today British official and public opinion are united and the British press has come around.

Today the highest officials of the British government, as on the Continent, are high in praise not only of what the United States did, but of the way it did it.