



FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES
1961-1963
Volume XI
Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington

Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath

1. Briefing Paper

Washington, October 1, 1962.

Source: National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 14, Cuba, Cuba Intelligence. Top Secret. Prepared by Colonel John R. Wright, Jr., USA. A note on the source text indicates that it was prepared initially for a briefing given on September 28 and that material from the paper was included in the briefing given the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1.

SUBJECT

Analysis of SAM Sites

1. The intelligence community has now identified and confirmed a total of 15 SA-2 SAM sites. From the location of these sites, a discernible pattern is developing:

a. In the Oriente Province, the identified sites (3) form a triangular pattern around the new military airfield at Holguin. This field is probably not yet operational, but soon could be. At the present time, there are no MIG-type aircraft stationed at this field. The MIGs believed to be assigned to the operational control of the Commander, Eastern Army, are stationed at the airfield at Camaguey, in the Central Army area. When Holguin becomes operational, these aircraft will probably be moved to that location. There are no SA-2 sites identified in the vicinity of Camaguey.

b. In the Central Army area, 4 SA-2 sites form a rectangular pattern around the military airfield near Santa Clara. This airfield has had MIGs for several months and is also the field upon which the first MIG 21 was identified.

c. In the Western Army area, there are 3 and possibly 4 SA-2 sites forming a liner pattern to provide defense for the military airfield at San Antonia de los Banos and coincidentally for the defense of the Havana-Mariel complex. San Antonio de los Banos is the headquarters for the Cuban revolutionary Air Force and the assembly point for all MIGs, except the MIG-21, which have previously been received in Cuba.

2. Further west in the Pinar del Rio Province a triangular pattern of 3 SA-2 sites cannot be connected with any significant military installation. The only known installation within this triangle are 2 underground facilities whose use and purpose are unknown. The only other military installation in this particular area is the military air base at San Julian near the western tip of Cuba. However, 1 of the 3 SA-2 sites is located at or very near this military airfield, a most unlikely spot to place

SA-2s for the defense of this particular air base. Therefore, curiosity is immediately aroused to the purpose of this triangular pattern on the far western tip of Cuba.

3. In the north central portion of the Pinar del Rio Province is a large trapazoid-shaped restricted area controlled by the Soviet military personnel recently introduced into Cuba, measuring 15-20 miles on a side. There are no known military installations in this rough and sparsely populated area. According to reports from refugees arriving in Miami, all Cubans have been evacuated from this restricted area. The purpose of this restricted area is not currently known.

4. Information concerning the deployment of Soviet military personnel and "technicians" recently arriving in Cuba is derived from unevaluated refugee sources, however, an attempt has been made to plot all reported locations to determine whether there is any correlation between the location of Soviet personnel and missiles or missile activity. So far, the pattern indicates that there is a definite correlation, but significantly the greatest concentration of Soviet personnel, activity and camps is in the western end of the Island of Cuba. This would indicate a greater interest on the part of the Soviets in Pinar del Rio than in the other provinces.

5. A single unevaluated report states that the Soviet "SS-4 Shyster" missile may have been delivered to Cuba on or about 11 September. Some confusion is apparent in this report. The SS-4 missile is nicknamed "Sandal," while the "Shyster" carries a designation of SS-3. This confusion was caused by the interrogators of the source using a recognition manual which designated the SS-4 as the Shyster. However, the description of the missiles reportedly observed by the source could have applied equally to either the Shyster or the Sandal. Both missiles have essentially the same outward appearance except that the Sandal is about 5 feet longer. In all other respects, including the missile carrier, the two appear identical. The source of this report stated that on 12 September he had personally seen some 20 such missiles in the vicinity of Campo Libertad, a small airfield on the western edge of Havana. While this report is still unconfirmed and there are no other reports concerning the presence of either SS-3 or SS-4 missiles, it is significant to note that by using the approximate center of the restricted area referred to above as a point of origin and with a radius of 1100 nm, the accepted range of the SS-4 missile, the arc includes the cities of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Oklahoma City, Fort Worth-Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Mexico City, all of the capitals of the Central American nations, the Panama Canal, and the oil fields in Maricaibo, Venezuela. The presence of operational SS-4 missiles in this location would give the Soviets a great military asset.

2. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Ball to President Kennedy

Washington, October 2, 1962.

Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, NSAM 194. Confidential. No drafting information appears on the source text.

SUBJECT

Policy Toward Non-Bloc Ships in Cuban Trade

A. Recommended Action

1. The President should make a public statement dealing with this topic.
2. The President should close all U.S. ports to all ships of any country if any ship under the flag of that country hereafter carries arms to Cuba.

3. The President should direct that no government cargo shall be carried on a foreign flag ship if any ship of the same owners is used hereafter in Bloc-Cuba Trade.

4. The President should direct that no United States flag ship and no United States owned ship shall carry goods to or from Cuba.

5. Alternative I

The President should close all United States ports to any ship on a continuous voyage to or from Cuba.

Alternative II

The President should close all United States ports to any ship that on the same continuous voyage carried or carries to Cuba items on the COCOM list.

Alternative III

The President should close all United States ports to any ship that on the same continuous voyage carried or carries to Cuba items on the positive list under Regulation T-1.

Alternative IV

The President should close all United States ports to any ship that on the same continuous voyage was used or is being used in Bloc-Cuba trade.

6. The President should instruct the Secretary of State to explore every avenue to obtain cooperation from other countries in restricting the use of their ships in Bloc-Cuba trade.

B. Legal Authority

The President has all the necessary legal authority to carry out the above recommendations without new legislation. A small supplemental appropriation for the Department of Agriculture might have to be included in the budget to pay for shipping in U.S. bottoms.

C. Action Not Recommended

The President has adequate legal powers to adopt more restrictive policies than those recommended above. There has been some talk, for example, of closing U.S. ports to the ships of any country which permits its ships to go to Cuba. Others have mentioned the possibility of closing territorial waters of the U.S. to such ships, or denying them use of the Panama Canal.

These proposals are not recommended./1/

/1/Printed from an unsigned copy.

3. National Security Action Memorandum No. 194

Washington, October 2, 1962.

Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, NSAM 194.

Confidential; Sensitive.

TO

The Secretary of State

The Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of the Treasury

The Secretary of Commerce

The Secretary of Labor

The Administrator, Maritime Commission

The Director, Agency for International Development

The Director, Bureau of the Budget

The Director of Central Intelligence

The President, Commodity Credit Corporation

SUBJECT

Policy Toward Non-Bloc Ships in Cuban Trade (State memo of 10/2/62)/1/

/1/Document 2.

The President has approved the memorandum we^{2/} discussed at the meeting this morning,^{3/} including Alternative IV, under point 5. A group will be formed to do what is necessary to put these recommendations into effect.^{4/} Mr. Abram Chayes, Legal Adviser of the State Department, will lead it. Will you arrange for your department to put an appropriate person in touch with Mr. Chayes?

^{2/}In some instances, departmental representatives were present representing their principals.
[Footnote in the source text.]

^{3/}According to the President's Appointment Book, President Kennedy met with George Ball and Carl Kaysen for an off-the-record meeting at 11:12 a.m. The meeting lasted for 15 minutes and no other participants are listed. (Kennedy Library) A memorandum for the record prepared by Captain William D. Houser, USN, based upon a debriefing provided by Gilpatric following the meeting indicates, however, that Gilpatric and several other concerned officials also participated in the meeting. According to Gilpatric, the group recognized that "none of these or any other actions not adopted have any real substantive effect on cutting down Soviet Bloc trade with Cuba." (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD/ISA Files: FRC 65 A 3501, Cuba, 1962, 000.1-092) George Ball discussed the President's decision on the afternoon of October 2 with Stevenson. Ball noted that the measures relating to trade with Cuba were "more for American public opinion" than for any practical effect they were expected to have on the availability of shipping to the Soviet Bloc for trade with Cuba. Nonetheless, he added, "the President felt strongly that we had to do something along this line" and that it would raise the cost to the Soviet Union of shipping arms

and other supplies to Cuba. (Kennedy Library, Ball Papers, Subject Series, Cuba, 1/24/61-12/30/62)
See the Supplement.

/4/Telegram 457 to Paris, October 2, instructed Finletter to inform the other permanent representatives to the North Atlantic Council, at their scheduled meeting on October 3, that the United States proposed to take the steps outlined in NSAM 194 within a week. (Department of State, Central Files, 611.3722/10-262)

Carl Kaysen/5/

/5/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

4. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Taylor)

Washington, October 2, 1962.

Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 66 A 3542, Cuba 1962. Top Secret. The source text is undated, but a copy found *ibid.*, OASD/ISA Files: FRC 65 A 3501, Cuba 1962, 381 Jan-Oct, is dated October 2.

During my meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 1962, the question arose as to the contingencies under which military action against Cuba may be necessary and toward which our military planning should be oriented. The following categories would appear to cover the likely possibilities:

- (a) Soviet action against Western rights in Berlin calling for a Western response including among other actions a blockade of Communist or other shipping en route to Cuba.
- (b) Evidence that the Castro regime has permitted the positioning of bloc offensive weapon systems on Cuban soil or in Cuban harbors.
- (c) An attack against the Guantanamo base, or against U.S. planes or vessels outside Cuban territorial air space or waters.
- (d) A substantial popular uprising in Cuba, the leaders of which request assistance in recovering Cuban independence from the Castro Soviet puppet regime.
- (e) Cuban armed assistance to subversion in other parts of the Western Hemisphere.
- (f) A decision by the President that affairs in Cuba have reached a point inconsistent with continuing U.S. national security.

May I have the views of the Chiefs as to the appropriateness of the above list of contingencies and answers to the following three sets of questions:

- (a) The operational plans considered appropriate for each contingency.
- (b) The preparatory actions which should now and progressively in the future be undertaken to improve U.S. readiness to execute these plans.
- (c) The consequences of the actions on the availability of forces and on our logistics posture to deal

with threats in other areas, i.e. Berlin, Southeast Asia, etc.

We can assume that the political objective in any of these contingencies may be either:

- (a) the removal of the threat to U.S. security of Soviet weapon systems in Cuba, or
- (b) the removal of the Castro regime and the securing in the island of a new regime responsive to Cuban national desires.

Inasmuch as the second objective is the more difficult objective and may be required if the first is to be permanently achieved, attention should be focused upon a capability to assure the second objective.

I have asked ISA to initiate discussion with State as to the political actions which should precede or accompany the various military actions being planned.

Robert S. McNamara

5. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Hilsman) to the Under Secretary of State (Ball)

Washington, October 2, 1962.

Source: Kennedy Library, Hilsman Papers, Cuba, 1962. No classification marking. No drafting information appears on the source text.

SUBJECT

Summary of Recent Soviet Military Assistance to Cuba/1/

/1/According to a February 21, 1963, letter sent by Ball to Congressman George H. Mahon, this memorandum was prepared at Ball's request to prepare him for his testimony on October 3 before the House Select Committee on Export Control. (Department of State, S/S Files: Lot 65 D 438, Hearings Before the Committee on Export Controls) Ball noted in his letter to Mahon that, in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, members of the committee had questioned the accuracy of the statements he had made with respect to the flow of Soviet military equipment and missiles to Cuba. He provided Mahon with a copy of the October 2 memorandum from Hilsman in order to demonstrate that his testimony was based upon the information available to him at the time. A copy of Ball's testimony before the Committee on Export Control is *ibid*.

Since July when the volume of Soviet military shipments to Cuba suddenly increased very substantially, 85 shiploads of various military items, supplies, and personnel have arrived. More ships are en route.

In part the Soviet shipments have consisted of types of weapons previously delivered to the Cuban armed forces including more tanks, self-propelled guns and other ground force equipment. The major tonnage however has been devoted to supplying SA-2 surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) together with all of the related gear and equipment necessary for their installation and operation. To date 15 SAM sites have been established in the island. We estimate the total may eventually reach 25.

In addition 3 (possibly 4) missile sites of a different type have been identified. These sites are similar to known coastal defense missile sites and are believed to accommodate Soviet anti-shipping missiles

with a range of 20-35 miles. We expect that several more such sites will be installed.

Cuba is now estimated to have 60 older type MIG jet aircraft plus at least one advanced jet interceptor (MIG-21) recently received and probably several more in process of assembly. The MIG-21 is usually equipped with infrared air-to-air missiles. We estimate that the total of MIG-21s in Cuba may eventually reach 25-30.

Sixteen "Komar" class guided-missile patrol boats which carry two short range missiles (11-17 miles) were included in the new shipments.

About 4,500 Soviet military specialists have arrived including construction men and technicians.

If the SAM sites are to be operated solely by Cuban personnel six months to a year of training will be required.

There is a considerable amount of other new equipment which has not been precisely identified but it is believed to include a large quantity of electronic gear.

6. Editorial Note

The Foreign Ministers of the Latin American Republics met at the Department of State on October 2 and 3, 1962, at the invitation of Secretary of State Rusk to discuss matters of mutual concern, with a particular emphasis on the problems posed by Cuba. The invitation was extended on September 5 through the Latin American ambassadors in Washington. (*American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, page 375) The Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela attended. The meetings were informal, without agenda or resolutions. Secretary Rusk opened the first session of the Foreign Ministers meeting at 10:30 a.m. on October 2 with a discussion of the threat posed to the Americas by communism; a threat, he stated, which was rapidly expanding with each shipload of modern weaponry that the Soviet Union sent to the base for Communist penetration it had established in Cuba. Rusk outlined the magnitude of the arms build-up taking place in Cuba and repeated the warnings President Kennedy had issued against the development of Cuba as a Soviet military base, or the introduction into Cuba of ground-to-ground ballistic missiles. He noted that there were to date no indications that the Soviet Union intended to violate those guidelines. Nonetheless, he argued that Soviet penetration of the hemisphere, and the aggressive use of Cuba as a focus for subversive activities posed serious problems, which he invited the Foreign Ministers to consider and address. (Memorandum of meeting, Department of State, S/S Files: Lot 65 D 330, Secretary's Memcons) See the Supplement. President Kennedy hosted a luncheon at the White House for the Foreign Ministers following the opening session. (Kennedy Library, President's Appointment Book) The Foreign Ministers met again on the afternoon of October 2 and twice on October 3. The tenor of the remarks by the other Foreign Ministers reflected general agreement with Rusk's emphasis on the need for hemispheric solidarity to face the perceived threat. (Memoranda of these three meetings are in Department of State, S/S Files: Lot 65 D 330, Secretary's Memcons) See the Supplement.

In the final communique issued at the conclusion of the meetings on October 3, the Foreign Ministers reiterated the OAS conclusion that the Soviet Union's intervention in Cuba threatened the unity and democratic institutions of the Americas. They added that it was "desirable to intensify individual and collective surveillance of the delivery of arms and implements of war and all other items of strategic importance to the communist regime of Cuba, in order to prevent the secret accumulation in the island of arms that can be used for offensive purposes against the Hemisphere." (*American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, pages 391-393)

7. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Kennedy

Washington, October 4, 1962.

Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, 10/1-10/14/62.
Top Secret.

SUBJECT

Presidential Interest in SA-2 Missile System and Contingency Planning for Cuba

1. In your memorandum of 21 September 1962,^{/1/} you noted an apparent lack of unanimity between General LeMay and Admiral Anderson with respect to aircraft losses that might occur in attacking an SA-2 site. You further requested assurance as to the currency of contingency planning for Cuba.

^{/1/}See vol. X, Document 434.

2. I have discussed with General LeMay and Admiral Anderson their estimate of aircraft losses in attacking SA-2 missile sites. Admiral Anderson agrees with General LeMay's point that no losses would be suffered from the SA-2 missile since the attacking aircraft would fly below the effective minimum altitude of the SA-2. General LeMay shares Admiral Anderson's estimate that attacking aircraft might suffer some loss to antiaircraft artillery defenses of the SA-2 site. The National Intelligence Estimate^{/2/} credits the SA-2 missile system with a minimum effective altitude of 3000 feet due to inherent radar limitations.

^{/2/}Reference is to SNIE 85-3-62; *ibid.*, Document 433.

3. If antiaircraft artillery is employed in direct support of the missile site, losses may be expected. World War II and Korean experience, updated to reflect current antiaircraft artillery capabilities against modern aircraft, indicates that low level attack forces would incur some combat losses from antiaircraft artillery fire; however, numbers cannot be predicted accurately. There are currently no known antiaircraft artillery defenses of SA-2 sites in Cuba. Attack plans can be amended to take the antiaircraft weapons under fire during the attack if reconnaissance shows such defenses and if analysis shows such fire suppression necessary. Korean experience proved that such fire suppression was unnecessary when surprise could be achieved.

4. In my opinion and that of the Joint Chiefs, it is not necessary to build a model of an SA-2 site for training purposes. However, the aircraft revetment of the type found at Santa Clara and Camaguey is a more difficult target than the SA-2 site. Therefore, the Air Force has found it desirable to reproduce that type aircraft revetment to aid in the selection of weapons, method of delivery and to assist in training crews. The target was completed at Nellis AFB, Nevada, on 30 September 1962, at an approximate cost of \$28,000. Initial tests indicate that the GAM 83, 20 mm cannon, and napalm is the most effective weapons mix against aircraft in such revetments.

5. I have taken steps to insure that our contingency plans for Cuba are kept up to date.

6. The Navy plans to attack SA-2 targets at low level using 4 divisions of A-4D's (4 aircraft per division) armed with 250#, 500#, and 2000# low drag bombs and napalm. All crews are proficient in the delivery techniques planned. Similarly, the Air Force plans primary use of napalm and 20 mm cannon delivered at low level, and crews are proficient. Both have made detailed target studies; target folders are in the hands of crews; and crews are familiar with their assigned targets. As new

missile sites are located, they are picked up in the target and attack plans within a few hours of receipt of photographs./3/

/3/On October 5 General C.V. Clifton, the President's military aide, sent a memorandum to Secretary McNamara in which he indicated that the President had "read with interest" McNamara's October 4 memorandum dealing with the SA-2 missile system in Cuba. Clifton noted: "He commented that he was sure you had had an opportunity to tell General Taylor of the contents of the memorandum." (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, 10/1-10/14/62)

Robert S. McNamara/4/

/4/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

8. Memorandum by Director of Central Intelligence McCone

Washington, October 4, 1962.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Cuban Files, Job 80-B01676R, Box 17, Folder 12. Secret; Eyes Only. A memorandum for the record of this meeting, by Thomas A. Parrott, is *ibid.*, Walter Elder Recop. Also reproduced in *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, pp. 111-113.

MEMORANDUM OF MONGOOSE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1962

Chaired by the Attorney General.

Attended by: Gilpatric, Johnson, General Taylor, General Carter, McCone, Scoville, General Lansdale and Colonel Steakley (part of the time).

The Attorney General reported on discussions with the President on Cuba; dissatisfied with lack of action in the sabotage field, went on to stress that nothing was moving forward, commented that one effort attempted had failed, expressed general concern over developing situation.

General Lansdale reviewed operations, pointing out that no sabotage had been attempted and gave general impression that things were all right.

McCone then stated that phase one was principally intelligence gathering, organizing and training, that no sabotage was authorized, that one operation against a powerhouse had been contemplated but was discouraged by group, that he had called a meeting to review matters this morning and that he had observed a lack of forward motion due principally to "hesitancy" in government circles to engage in any activities which would involve attribution to the United States.

AG took sharp exception stating the Special Group had not withheld approval on any specified actions to his knowledge, but to the contrary had urged and insisted upon action by the Lansdale operating organization.

There followed a sharp exchange which finally was clarifying inasmuch as it resulted in a reaffirmation of a determination to move forward. In effect it seemed to be the consensus that phase two as approved on September 6, was now outmoded, that more dynamic action was indicated, that hesitancy about overflights must be reconsidered (this to be commented on later in this memorandum), that actions which could be attributed to indigenous Cubans would not be important or very effective, and that a very considerable amount of attribution and "noise" must be expected.

As a result, General Lansdale was instructed to give consideration to new and more dynamic approaches, the specific items of sabotage should be brought forward immediately and new ones conceived, that a plan for mining harbors should be developed and presented, and the possibility of capturing Castro forces for interrogation should be studied.

With respect to overflights, the NRO and Colonel Steakley were instructed to prepare and present to the Special Group on next Tuesday/1/ at a special meeting alternate recommendations for overflights. These to include the use of U-2s on complete sweeps (as contrasted with peripheral or limited missions), the use of firefly drones, the use of 101s or other reconnaissance planes on low level, intermediate level, and high level missions, and other possible reconnaissance operations.

/1/October 9; see Document 11.

Consideration was given to stating publicly that we propose to overfly Cuba in the interest of our own security and the security of the Western Hemisphere, and then to proceed even though doing so involved risk.

It was the consensus that we could not accept restrictions which would foreclose gaining all reasonable knowledge of military installations in Cuba.

During the meeting McCone reviewed the earlier meeting with General Lansdale, and pointed out to the group that this meeting clarified General Lansdale's authority over the entire Mongoose operation and that the CIA organization was responsive to his policy and operational guidance, and this was thoroughly understood.

Consideration was given to the existing guidelines and it was the consensus that the August 1st guidelines for phase two/2/ were inadequate and new guidelines must be considered.

/2/Apparent reference to the attachment to Document 362, vol. X.

John A. McCone/3/

/3/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

9. Memorandum of Discussion With the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)

Washington, October 5, 1962, 5:15 p.m.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Memos for the Record. Secret. Drafted by McCone. Also reproduced in *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, pp. 115-117.

1. McCone reviewed details of the Donovan negotiations, discussions with the President, Attorney General, Eisenhower, the decisions not to approach Congressional leadership, the discussion with Senator Javits, and the final report from Donovan. Bundy expressed general agreement.

2. At the October 4th meeting of the Special Group Mongoose/1/ was discussed in some detail as was the meeting with Carter, Lansdale, et al. in DCI's office on that day. McCone stated there was a feeling in CIA and Defense that the "activist policy" which founded the Mongoose operation was gone and that while no specific operational activities had been (refused) the amount of "noise" from

minor incidents such as the sugar, the students firing on the Havana Hotel and other matters and the extreme caution expressed by State had led to this conclusion. More importantly, however, the decisions to restrict U-2 flights had placed the United States Intelligence Community in a position where it could not report with assurance the development of offensive capabilities in Cuba. McCone stated he felt it most probable that Soviet-Castro operations would end up with an established offensive capability in Cuba including MRBMs. McCone stated he thought this a probability rather than a mere possibility. Bundy took issue stating that he felt the Soviets would not go that far, that he was satisfied that no offensive capability would be installed in Cuba because of its world-wide effects and therefore seemed relaxed over the fact that the Intelligence Community cannot produce hard information on this important subject. McCone said that Bundy's viewpoint was reflected by many in the Intelligence Community, perhaps a majority, but he just did not agree and furthermore did not think the United States could afford to take such a risk.

/1/See Document 8.

3. Bundy then philosophized on Cuba stating that he felt that our policy was not clear, our objectives not determined and therefore our efforts were not productive. He discussed both the Mongoose operations and the Rostow "Track Two".^{/2/} Bundy was not critical of either or of the Lansdale operations. It was obvious that he was not in sympathy with a more active role such as those discussed at 5412 on Thursday^{/3/} as he felt none of them would bring Castro down nor would they particularly enhance U.S. position of world leadership. Bundy seemed inclined to support the Track Two idea and also inclined (though he was not specific) to play down the more active Lansdale operation. Bundy had not talked to Lansdale but obviously had received some of the "static" that is being passed around in Washington. (Before) McCone in reporting on the discussions at Thursday's 5412 meeting repeated the views of the President and expressed by the Attorney General it was agreed that the whole Government policy with reference to Cuba must be resolved promptly as basic to further actions on our part. In general, Bundy's views were that we should either make a judgment that we would have to go in militarily (which seemed to him intolerable) or alternatively we would have to learn to live with Castro, and his Cuba and adjust our policies accordingly.

/2/See Document 14.

^{/3/}McCone is apparently referring to the Special Group (the successor of the 5412 Committee) meeting on October 4; see Document 8.

4. McCone then elaborated on his views of the evolution of Soviet-Castro military capability stating he felt defense was just phase one, phase two would be followed by various offensive capabilities and indeed the existing defensive capabilities such as the (MIG) 21s a very definite offensive capability against nearby American cities and installations. McCone stated that he thought that the establishment of a very expensive defensive mechanism could not be the ultimate objective of the Soviets or Castro and therefore the objective was (a) to establish an offensive base or (b) to insert sufficient Soviet specialists and military leaders to take Cuba away from Castro and establish it as a true Soviet controlled satellite. McCone stated that he felt there were only two courses open--one was to take military action at the appropriate time or secondly to pursue an effort to split Castro off from the Communists and for this reason he, McCone, had vigorously supported the Donovan mission as it is the only link that we have to the Castro hierarchy at the present time. Note in this connection it might be well to study the evolution of the Toure experience in Guinea when the Communists moved in and captured all elements of the Government and economy and forced Toure to expel the Ambassador and try to rectify the situation. There may be a parallel here.

5. McCone reviewed the Eisenhower discussions. Bundy read the memorandum covering these discussions.^{/4/} Bundy stated that Adenauer did not express the concern of the U.S. policy reflected

by Eisenhower and reported in the memorandum.

/4/Not further identified.

6. Bundy rejected the idea of regular NSC meetings stating that every President has to organize his Government as he desires and that the Eisenhower pattern was not necessarily adaptable to the Kennedy type of administration. McCone stated that if this is the case he intended to request occasional NSC meetings to review specific estimates or other intelligence situations and the next one would be a report and discussion of the estimate of Soviet air defense capabilities. Bundy agreed.

7. Bundy rejected the idea (calling) the several Special Groups 5412, CIA, Mongoose, and North Vietnam together feeling it was better to keep them separated. He also rejected the idea that the visiting commissions such as the Byroade Team and the Draper Team should report back to the Special Group (CI) feeling it was appropriate that they report to the President, (through) the Secretary of State, with consultation with the Special Group (CI). It was agreed that we would have a further discussion over the weekend.

John A. McCone/5/

Director

/5/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.5

10. Memorandum From the Central Intelligence Agency Project Officer for Operation Mongoose (Harvey) to the Chief of Operations, Operation Mongoose (Lansdale)

Washington, October 8, 1962.

Source: Department of State, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 66 D 501, Operation Mongoose. Top Secret; Sensitive.

SUBJECT

Sabotage of Cuban-Owned Ship

1. It is requested that you present the following proposal to the Special Group (Augmented) for policy approval.
2. Policy approval is requested to permit the sabotage of Cuban-owned vessels wherever and whenever secure access to them can be attained, normally this will be in non-Bloc ports. Attacks against the Cuban-owned ships must be considered essentially as attacks against targets of opportunity in the sense that in most cases there will be little advance information prior to the arrival of the ship in a non-Bloc port and the duration of the port call will be limited.

3. The following specific types of action are contemplated:

[13 paragraphs (40 lines of source text) not declassified]

6. It is necessary to submit the request for policy approval in a somewhat more general form than usual to permit us to take advantage of targets of opportunity as they occur. In most cases we will not have sufficient advance notice of the arrival of the ship or have sufficient access to the ship to

permit the preparation and submission of detailed individual approval requests in advance. In every case where time and circumstance permit, specific proposals will be submitted to the Special Group (Augmented) for approval. Any case involving unusual operational or security risks will be submitted in advance for Special Group (Augmented) approval.

7. Later we will submit requests for policy approval of actions against other ships supplying Cuba.

William K. Harvey/1/

/1/Printed from a copy that indicates that Harvey signed the original.

11. Editorial Note

President Kennedy met with the members of the Special Group (Augmented) on October 9, 1962, to consider recommendations for a proposed U-2 reconnaissance flight over Cuba. The purpose of the flight was to obtain hard evidence concerning the development of suspected MRBM sites near recently established SA-2 emplacements, which suggested the development of concomitant ballistic missile sites. The President approved the recommendation for a U-2 flight, to be piloted by a Strategic Air Command pilot, or a military pilot attached to the Central Intelligence Agency. The recommendation for supporting low-level reconnaissance flights was deferred pending a review by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of State, and the United States Intelligence Board concerning the necessity for such flights. The U-2 flight was expected to take only 12 minutes of flying time over Cuba at approximately 74,000 feet. It was noted during the course of the meeting that there were no indications as yet that the SA-2 antiaircraft emplacements had reached operational stage, although it had been nearly 2 months since their first installation. (Notes on a meeting with the President by Roswell L. Gilpatric; Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, RLG's Notes re Cuba)

12. Memorandum by Director of Central Intelligence McCone

Washington, October 11, 1962.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Meetings with the President. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone. Also reproduced in CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962, pp. 123-125.

MEMORANDUM ON DONOVAN PROJECT

Meeting 10 Oct 62

Immediately after my discussion with the Cannon Committee (including Taber, Ford and Mahon), I went to the White House and explained to the President and McGeorge Bundy the positions taken by Ford and Mahon, as covered in separate memorandum prepared by Mr. Warner./1/ The President made the judgment that we should proceed with the negotiations, recognizing there would be some political consequences and criticisms, but he, the President, was willing to accept this as a fact.

/1/Not found. Although the source text indicates the meeting with the President took place on October 10 there is no record of it in the President's Appointment Book. (Kennedy Library)

I then showed the President photographs of the crates which pre-sumably would carry, or were carrying, IL 28s, Soviet medium bombers, and were deck loaded on a ship which had arrived in Havana in the early days of October. The President requested that such information be withheld at

least until after elections as if the information got into the press, a new and more violent Cuban issue would be injected into the campaign and this would seriously affect his independence of action.

McCone stated that these particular photographs could not be restricted as they had been disseminated to the Intelligence Community and several joint and specified commands, such as CINCLANT, SAC, NORAD, and others and would be reported in the CIA Bulletin on Thursday morning. The President then requested that the report be worded to indicate a probability rather than an actuality because in the final analysis we only saw crates, not the bombers themselves. DCI agreed. The President further requested that all future information be suppressed. DCI stated that this was extremely dangerous.

It was then agreed that future information would be disseminated to members of USIB, with appropriate instructions that only those responsible for giving the President advice be given the information. Furthermore, that within CIA circles a minimum number of experts be informed. McCone stated there was no problem in CIA, that it was secure. It was therefore agreed that the USIB members would be instructed to restrict the information to their personal offices and fully and currently inform the Chiefs of Staff, the Chairman, the Service Secretaries and the Secretary of Defense. Similar restrictive action would be taken in State. Therefore all those involved in "giving advice to the President" would be fully informed. However operational divisions and the joint and specified commands would not be informed at this time, except at the direction of the above people who are receiving the information.

At this point the President mentioned that "we'll have to do something drastic about Cuba" and I am anxiously looking forward to the JCS operational plan which is to be presented to me next week.

McCone effected the above instructions by calling Mr. Cline, who was unavailable, and then Mr. Sheldon who agreed to prepare a procedure for review on Thursday morning.

McCone then called the Attorney General and advised him of his talk with the Cannon Committee. The Attorney General had no particular comment.

At six o'clock McCone received a report from Houston that Donovan had gone into a meeting at five o'clock. At eleven o'clock Houston reported the meeting was still in progress. At seven o'clock on Thursday morning Donovan still had no report.

At 11:15 General Eisenhower called McCone stating he was sorry a meeting could not be arranged, he was leaving very early the following morning for Gettysburg. McCone reported that negotiations were in progress and he also reported objections stated by several members of Congress. Eisenhower advised that the negotiations be pursued, indicating his support of it and furthermore stated that if the negotiations were satisfactorily concluded the complaints and objections would, in his words, disappear.

McCone told General Eisenhower there were some defensible evidences of shipments of twin-engined light jet bombers. Eisenhower responded the situation must be watched very carefully. Positive action might be indicated and then he said there had been two instances where action was warranted but had not been taken. Eisenhower did not elaborate; however, I know from previous discussions he feels that when Castro embraced Communism publicly and announced publicly his allegiance to Moscow, we had then a reason to act militarily and if we had chosen to so act, such action would have been defensible.

On Thursday/2/ morning McCone reported by telephone to Mr. Kennedy, reviewing the Eisenhower discussion and stating that he, McCone, was concerned over Donovan's safety in view of the rash of

publicity, most particularly the Herald Tribune article, and that he had instructed that contact be made with Donovan and that if things were not proceeding satisfactorily and a conclusion to the negotiations along the lines agreed in sight, then Donovan should come out. The Attorney General stated that he had no concern over Donovan's personal safety, that "they will not do anything to him". McCone stated he was not so sure and that he therefore concluded to bring Donovan out unless things were going well.

/2/Apparently, Thursday, October 11.

With reference to the political implications, McCone recalled that he had told the President and the AG that he would take all, or his full share of responsibility, that he wished the AG to bear this in mind as the position taken in this respect by Mr. McCone in the first conversation after his return from Europe still stood. AG expressed appreciation for this statement.

John A. McCone/3/

/3/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

13. Memorandum From the Director for Operations of the Joint Staff (Unger) to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Nitze)

S Washington, October 12, 1962.

Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Historical File, Cuba, November 1962. Top Secret.

SUBJECT

Political Actions/Military Actions Concerning Cuba

REFERENCE

SecDef Memo of 2 October 1962/1/

/1/Document 4.

1. In furtherance of our discussion of last evening concerning the project included in the reference, we are having a meeting at 1300 hours today of operational and logistical planners from CINCLANT and CINCSTRIKE for the purpose of developing our responses to the contingencies and other matters requested by the SecDef.

2. Pending completion of the requirement given us by the SecDef, a general picture of each of our military contingency plans for Cuba is tabulated below as a basis for your initial discussions with State. On the other hand, it may be better to delay discussions with State until we have completed our part of the requirement and have submitted it to the SecDef and the JCS on Monday, 15 October.

a. Blockade Plan--employs 24 to 36 destroyers, a carrier task force, etc., which can marshal significant strength to blockade Cuba, both air and maritime.

b. Air Strike Plan--currently being revised, but employs between 450 and 500 aircraft. In the event of any execution of this plan steps would be taken to alert all forces allocated to the other assault

plans.

c. Fast Reaction Assault Plan--employs both air-borne and amphibious assault with about 32,000 troops in initial phase, with balance of assault forces arriving in increments as they become available. Ultimately builds up to about 80,000 troops in Cuba around D+18 days.

d. Full-Scale Deliberate Assault Plan--employs simultaneous airborne and amphibious assault with around 49,000 troops engaged on D-Day, building to about 60,000 by D+5 days, and again to 80,000 by D+16 days.

3. For your consideration, following are some of the political actions which might be undertaken in connection with the implementation of one or more of the foregoing plans: final arrangements for the tactical use of Mayaguana Island in the Bahamas; perhaps a request for token participation by Latin American military forces; in the case of blockade, notification of "neutral" shipping and publication of U.S. intent; in all cases, possibly, the preliminary political arrangements attendant to a state of war; and, of course, coordination with international organizations, such as the OAS and the UN during the execution of military action.

F.T. Unger/2/

Major General, USA

/2/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

14. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Martin) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson)

Washington, October 12, 1962.

Source: Department of State, S/S Files: Lot 65 D 438, Mongoose. Top Secret; Sensitive. Drafted by Hurwitch.

SUBJECT

Track Two

The following is the pertinent portion of Mr. Rostow's paper:/1/

/1/For text, see vol. X, Document 406.

"I believe we should consider the possibility of a Two-Track covert operation.

"Track One would consist of a heightened effort to move along the present Mongoose lines. The minimum objective here would be harassment: the maximum objective would be the triggering of a situation where there might be conflict at the top of the Cuban regime leading, hopefully, to its change or overthrow by some group within Cuba commanding arms.

"Track Two would consist of an effort to engage Cubans more deeply, both within Cuba and abroad, in efforts of their own liberation. This requires an operation with the following characteristics:

"a. Authentic Cuban leadership with a considerable range of freedom to implement ideas and to

assume risk.

"b. Minimal U.S. direct participation: ideally, one truly wise U.S. adviser--available, but laying back; equipped to provide finance, but not monitoring every move; capable of earning their respect rather than commanding it by his control over money or equipment.

"c. Basing outside the United States.

"d. A link-up with the scattered and sporadic groups and operations now going forward of their own momentum in Cuba.

"e. A plan of operation which aims at the overthrow of Castro primarily from within rather than by invasion from without.

"f. A long enough time horizon to build the operation carefully and soundly.

"In suggesting that Track Two be studied--and sharply distinguished from Track One--I am, of course, wholly conscious of our failure of last year. But, as I read that failure in retrospect, its root lay in: U.S. bureaucratic domination; the lack of a Cuban political and organizational base; and a plan of operation that hinged on a type of overt invasion by a fixed date rather than the patient build-up of a true movement of national liberation. I'm sure it would be easy to argue that such a movement could not be generated against a Communist control system; that the Cuban refugees lack the capacity to play their part in such an enterprise with skill and minimal security; etc. And I am in no position to reply with confidence to such argument. On the other hand, Cuba is not located in Eastern Europe; and, presumably, some Cubans have learned something from last year's failure, too.

"On the balance, I am prepared to recommend that Track Two be sympathetically studied and that General Lansdale be asked to formulate a design for it."

The underlying philosophy is one which we have felt for some time merited exploration.

There is attached (Tab A) as you have requested, a paper describing the more important policy considerations bearing on this course of action.

Also attached (Tab B)/2/ is the ARA memorandum, previously forwarded to you, describing some of the political thinking which leads us to the conclusion that we should experiment with this course of action.

/2/Dated September 19; for text, see vol. X, Document 432.

Tab A

TRACK TWO

A program of "giving the Cubans their heads" in an effort to effect the downfall of the Castro regime from within involves embarking upon uncharted waters as far as the U.S. is concerned. Grandiose U.S. plans based upon a substantially unified exile community would be unrealistic. Nearly all Cuban exile leaders, of whatever political persuasion, are convinced that only overt U.S. military action can remove the Castro regime. While we could probably force a semblance of unity based upon the "downfall from within" thesis, despite the sharp political rivalry among the exile leaders, our purposes would not be served. While "accepting" our thesis, most of the waking hours of these exiles would be devoted to devising ways of involving the U.S. militarily, rather than building the

internal base of opposition we seek. We could thereby lose initiative and control over the situation and find ourselves in an untenable position from the international, and, perhaps, domestic, standpoint.

If the above judgment is accepted, two alternatives are available. We could cooperate with all anti-Castro-Batista exile groups which we have reason to believe have following inside Cuba, or we could, on an experimental basis work with one such group. By cooperating with all such groups we run the serious risk of accentuating rivalries among the exile leaders which would be inevitably reflected within Cuba. Rather than achieving a broad base of political opposition within Cuba, we may only be instrumental in fomenting splinter groups. In attempting to administer such a program, the U.S. would probably find itself in the midst of the crossfire of exile politics, very likely satisfying no one inside or outside Cuba.

Working with one group, on an experimental basis, would provide us with experience which could guide our future thinking and at the same time probably prevent problems of unmanageable proportions. Selection of the right group is of paramount importance. Even then, if we saw no progress in Cuba, we could not be certain that the thesis was impractical or the selection of the group erroneous.

Of all the exile groups the only one which has publicly adopted the thesis of "downfall from within" is that known as JURE, formed in September 1962 by Manolo Ray and based in Puerto Rico. (Since Ray has some friends within the U.S. Government and is presently employed by the Puerto Rican Government, it is reasonable to suppose that some of the recent official interest in the "downfall from within" thesis has been generated by him.) Ray was former Minister of Public Works under Castro, broke with Castro and formed an important underground movement which has since been badly smashed by Castro. Ray is a nationalist and left of center. The political program of JURE is one with which the U.S. can live.

The other feasible possibility is the CRC with which we have had a long standing relationship. Apart from Dr. Miro and some of the organizations that form an integral part of the Council, the CRC is not a very effective organization for what we have in mind. Its background is associated with the Bay of Pigs and its outlook is essentially one of military action.

Advantages of working with JURE would appear to be:

1. A new organization which, as such, has no past relationship with the U.S.
2. Commitment to the "downfall from within" thesis.
3. Base outside the U.S.
4. Political ideology which may be attuned to the desires of the Cuban people.
5. Ray is experienced in underground activities and an independent thinker.

Disadvantages of working with JURE are:

1. Little, if any, assets known within Cuba today.
2. Opposed by most of the established exile groups, particularly Dr. Miro.
3. Ray is a complex personality, sometimes difficult to handle.

On balance it is worth trying. Although we would try to maintain security, Dr. Miro may discover our assistance to Ray and resign. The CRC is useful to us, but its disappearance would be bearable.

If we embark upon these unchartered waters, and it is recommended that we do so, we must be prepared for increased noise level and press inquiry. We must be prepared for a comparatively high rate of loss, failures and cries of anguish from JURE for assistance we may not be able to give it. It is essential that we recognize this and not be permitted to be stampeded into regrettable public postures or actions. A further important consideration is that Track Two operations may compromise Track One operations. Coordination would be essential.

Another conflict arises from the President's desire that a Cuban Brigade be formed. While this would not necessarily be a serious conflict with the program envisaged, for there are probably enough exiles for both programs, it should be recognized that a number of young men qualified for infiltration activities will probably join the Brigade.

If we attempt our program on a large scale, or with more than one group, the immediately above-mentioned problems would multiply.

The program we would visualize is one of providing the selected exile group with funds, arms, sabotage equipment, transport and communications equipment for infiltration operations in order to build a political base of opposition inside Cuba. We would provide the best technical advice we could. Our role would essentially be that of advisors and purveyors of material goods--it would be the exile group's show. We would insist that hit and run raids or similar harassing activities that clearly originate from outside Cuba and do not reflect internal activity not be engaged in.

In sum, we should be cautious about grandiose schemes, a "major" U.S. effort, and deep commitments to the exiles. We should experiment in this new venture on a small scale with patience and tolerance for high noise levels and mistakes.

15. Memorandum From the Ambassador at Large (Bowles) to President Kennedy

Washington, October 13, 1962.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 601.6111/10-1562. Secret. Drafted by Bowles on October 14.

REPORT OF CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th, REGARDING CUBA AND OTHER SUBJECTS

A week ago Ambassador Dobrynin called my office to say that he understood I was leaving for Africa and would like to have our "long postponed luncheon" before my departure.

I met him at the U.S.S.R. Embassy on 16th Street at 1 p.m. on October 13th. With the exception of an occasional exchange of courtesies at diplomatic functions, this was the first time I had talked with him.

It was a frank, free-wheeling discussion, lasting more than an hour and a half. Dobrynin's manner was pleasant, with a show of reasonableness and concern about the current drift in Soviet-American relations.

At my first opportunity, I expressed deep disappointment that no more progress had been made in

reducing tensions, and concern over the consequences of a further decline. I said that since I was speaking wholly unofficially, he should not attempt to read anything into my remarks. I would like to be utterly frank with him.

Almost immediately Dobrynin brought up the question of Cuba and expressed worry and surprise at the intensity of U.S. public reaction.

In response to his question as to why we attached such importance to a relatively small island, I outlined the history of U.S.-Cuban relations and drew a parallel to the situation in 1898, the presence of Spanish misrule, and the U.S. public agitation that abetted the outbreak of war.

When he protested that the Soviet presence in Cuba was no greater provocation than the U.S. presence in Turkey, I pointed out that the present Administration had inherited a status quo that had grown up since the war. In some areas the advantage in this status quo had been with us, in others with Moscow; in still others it was a stand-off.

Our presence in Greece and Turkey, for instance, represented our reaction to Stalin's military and political pressures against these two countries following the war. It had become part of a status quo which in all its complexity could safely be changed only by negotiation with reciprocal benefits to each side.

The Kennedy Administration had hoped and expected that we could in fact negotiate a more rational set of relationships, easing the various danger points on a basis of reciprocal action to everyone's benefit.

However, in Cuba the U.S.S.R. had unilaterally altered this status quo by introducing a wholly new element. Our reaction, in these circumstances, should have been foreseeable.

Moreover, many U.S. students of Soviet affairs were soberly convinced that the U.S.S.R. had made this move deliberately to provoke a U.S. military response against Cuba on the theory that this would divert our energies from Berlin, and elsewhere, and enable Soviet spokesmen to charge us with aggression in the UN.

If this kind of thinking had in fact played a part in the Soviet analysis, it was extremely dangerous. If we did move into Cuba in response to some overt act or offensive build-up by the U.S.S.R., a global chain of events might be set in motion which could have catastrophic consequences.

For instance, the Soviets might then be tempted to take what they would term "counter-action" in Berlin and perhaps Turkey; and the United States, by that time in an extremely tense mood, would react with vigor.

The U.S.S.R., in turn, would feel pressed by the Chinese and other extremists to counter our moves, and we would be on our way together down the long slippery slide.

I asked Dobrynin if he had read *The Guns of August*.^{/1/} He said "only a three-page summary."

^{/1/}Barbara Tuchman, *The Guns of August*, New York, 1962.

I urged him to read at least the first few chapters in which he would see a pattern of politico-military action and counter-action that could be repeated in the next six months.

In July 1914, men of intelligence in Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France and England, all

quite conscious of the forces which were feeding the approaching holocaust, found themselves enmeshed in internal pressures, commitments and precedents which left them powerless to avoid the inevitable. It would be the greatest folly in history if we were to repeat this insane process in the nuclear age.

Dobrynin asked me what, in the circumstances, I thought could be done in regard to Cuba. Stressing that I was speaking solely as an individual, I suggested three moves that the U.S.S.R. could sponsor to ease the situation.

1. Dobrynin should remind his government of President Kennedy's sharp distinction between defensive and offensive weapons in his recent statement. I was particularly concerned on this point because current reports indicated that Soviet shipments were in fact beginning to include weapons which had a clearly offensive capacity.

If this continued, it could produce--with the help of some incident perpetrated perhaps by individuals striving to provoke another "Remember the Maine" incident--the very conflict which the Administration is anxious to avoid. President Kennedy had committed himself to act under certain specific circumstances. This was a clear commitment, and the U.S.S.R. should not take it lightly.

2. From many reports, Castro now had ample defensive arms with which to protect himself from casual landings. The U.S.S.R. should tell him that under present circumstances no more arms will be shipped. The U.S.S.R. should then ask Castro himself to make a statement announcing that the defense of Cuba was assured and that no more arms were needed. Moscow could then inform us that no more arms would be shipped.

3. Castro should be asked by Moscow to state that he has no design on his neighbors, that his entire energies would henceforth be devoted to the economic development of Cuba, and that he sought only peaceful competition with other Latin American nations. His decision not to indulge in further subversion, propaganda, and expansion in neighboring Latin American countries would, of course, have to be confirmed by deeds. However, Soviet assurances on this point would serve to reduce some of the current tensions and give us all a breathing spell.

If some progress along these lines were not possible, I had deep forebodings about the weeks ahead.

To all of this Dobrynin appeared to listen intently. I believe he was impressed.

He answered that in spite of our worries, the U.S.S.R. was not shipping offensive weapons and well understood the dangers of doing so. Moreover, it was unreasonable for the U.S., as a major power, to expect a small, weak country such as Cuba to make such public concessions to U.S. public opinion even though both the U.S.S.R. and Cuba might accept all three points in principle.

Why, he asked repeatedly, do we get so excited about so small a nation? Although the U.S.S.R. could not let Cuba down, they had no desire to complicate the situation further. Was it not possible for us to negotiate a modus vivendi with Castro directly?

I commented that Cuba had initiated the current conflict. Indeed, in 1959 most Americans had strongly applauded Castro's revolution. If Dobrynin were misinformed about the types of weapons now arriving in Cuba, it would not be the first time in diplomatic history that this had occurred. As long as Soviet weapons flowed into Cuba and Cuban money was used to subvert Latin American countries which we were striving to assist into the 20th century, the situation would remain dangerously explosive.

I hoped that his government would see the danger and act accordingly to help ease the tensions.

Without directly responding to my remarks, Dobrynin referred to Max Frankel's story in the morning Times which cited agitation by various private agencies, Cuban and American, to provoke a "Maine incident" with the connivance of U.S. official groups. I replied that our government would have no part in such an operation, that we were genuinely worried, and that his government should view the situation with serious concern.

[Here follow 9 pages on other topics. The full text of the memorandum is printed in volume V.]

16. Editorial Note

On the morning of October 14, 1962, a U-2 aircraft, piloted by Air Force Major Richard D. Heyser, flew a reconnaissance mission over the western part of Cuba, flying from south to north. The 928 photographs obtained during the 6-minute flight over the island produced the first verified evidence of the existence of Soviet offensive missile sites in Cuba. Analysis and interpretation of the photographs at the National Photographic Intelligence Center revealed that three medium-range ballistic missile sites were being developed near San Cristobal, in Pinar del Rio province. Photo analysts counted eight large MRBM transporters at the three locations and four erector launchers in tentative firing positions. Two further U-2 missions, flown on October 15 by pilots of the Strategic Air Command, revealed a fourth MRBM site near San Cristobal, and two intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) sites were discovered at Guanajay. Photos also revealed 21 crates for Soviet IL-28 Beagle medium-range bomber aircraft at San Julian airfield. (Chronology of Air Force Actions During the Cuban Crisis, 14 October-30 October 1962; USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, pages 11-12)

At 8:30 p.m. on October 15 CIA Deputy Director Carter reported to McGeorge Bundy the hard evidence of the MRBM's, but the President's Special Assistant decided not to notify the President that evening. In a memorandum to the President, dated March 4, 1963, Bundy explained his reasons for this decision:

"1. This was very big news, and its validity would need to be demonstrated clearly to you and others before action could be taken. The blow-ups and other elements of such a presentation would not be ready before morning. I was satisfied that the word was going out quietly to those with an immediate need to know. The one obvious operational need was for more photography, and that was in hand.

"2. It was a hell of a secret, and it must remain one until you had a chance to deal with it. Thus everything should go on as nearly normally as possible, in particular there should be no hastily summoned meeting Monday night. Chip Bohlen and I, for example, should not leave a dinner at my house where there were knowledgeable foreign guests, and others, I knew, were in the same spot.

"3. On the other hand this was not something that could be dealt with on the phone except in the most limited and cryptic terms. What help would it be to you to give you this piece of news and then tell you nothing could be done about it till morning?

"4. Finally, I had heard that you were tired. You had had a strenuous campaign week end, returning from Niagara Falls and New York City at 1:40 Monday morning.

"5. So I decided that a quiet evening and a night of sleep were the best preparation you could have in the light of what would face you in the next days. I would, I think, decide the same again unless you tell me different." (Kennedy Library, Sorensen Papers, Cuba--Subjects Current)

Bundy prints this memorandum in *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years*, pages 684-685.

17. Editorial Note

On October 15, 1962, a major amphibious exercise was initiated in the southeastern United States and the Caribbean. The training exercise, which was code named PHIBRIGLEX-62, was scheduled for October 15-30. On October 15 more than 40 ships involved in the exercise were underway. The objective of the exercise was to conduct an amphibious assault on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico. The stated intent of the assault was to overthrow the imaginary tyrant "Ortsac"--Castro spelled backwards. Approximately 20,000 naval personnel and 4,000 marines were involved in PHIBRIGLEX-62. The exercise was not suspended until October 20. The CINCLANT history of the missile crisis notes that "as early as about 10 October the National Military Command Center began inquiring informally of CINCLANT as to the nature and scope of PHIBRIGLEX-62. Without ever relating the exercise to the Cuban situation, there were indications of high-level interest in it." (CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis--1963, pages 2-3)

18. Transcript of a Meeting at the White House

Washington, October 16, 1962, 11:50 a.m.

Source: Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings, Transcripts. No classification marking. The source text is a 35-page transcript of audiotape 28.1. Identifying footnotes in the source text are not included. For Taylor's draft account of this meeting, October 16, including a list of participants, and Carter's memorandum for the record, dictated on October 17, see the Supplement. Carter's memorandum is also reproduced in *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, pp. 145-147. McGeorge Bundy had informed the President about the U-2 photographs of the missile sites at 8:45 a.m. October 16, and Kennedy immediately called for a meeting of his principal advisers at 11:45.

[Here follows 7-1/2 pages of the transcript, which narrate the analysis of the U-2 photographs.]

JFK: Secretary Rusk?

Rusk: Yes. [Well?],/1/ Mr. President, this is a, of course, a [widely?] serious development. It's one that we, all of us, had not really believed the Soviets could, uh, carry this far. Uh, they, uh, seemed to be denying that they were going to establish bases of their own [in the same?] [words unintelligible] with a Soviet base, thus making it [essential to or essentially?] Cuban point of view. The Cubans couldn't [word unintelligible] with it anyhow, so. . . . Now, um, I do think we have to set in motion a chain of events that will eliminate this base. I don't think we [can?] sit still. The questioning becomes whether we do it by sudden, unannounced strike of some sort, or we, uh, build up the crisis to the point where the other side has to consider very seriously about giving in, or, or even the Cubans themselves, uh, take some, take some action on this. The thing that I'm, of course, very conscious of is that there is no such thing, I think, as unilateral action by the United States. It's so [eminently or heavily?] involved with 42 allies and confrontation in many places, that any action that we take, uh, will greatly increase the risks of direct action involving, uh, our other alliances and our other forces in other parts of the world. Um, so I think we, we have to think very hard about two major, uh, courses of action as alternatives. One is the quick strike. The point where we [make or think?], that is the, uh, overwhelming, overriding necessity to take all the risks that are involved doing that. I don't think this in itself would require an invasion of Cuba. I think that with or without such an invasion, in other words if we make it clear that, uh, what we're doing is eliminating this

particular base or any other such base that is established. We ourselves are not moved to general war, we're simply doing what we said we would do if they took certain action. Uh, or we're going to decide that this is the time to eliminate the Cuban problem by actually eliminating the island.

/1/All brackets except those citing declassification excisions and unrelated material are in the source text.

The other would be, if we have a few days--from the military point of view, if we have the whole time--uh, then I would think that, uh, there would be another course of action, a combination of things that, uh, we might wish to consider. Um, first, uh, that we, uh, stimulate the OAS procedure immediately for prompt action to make it quite clear that the entire hemisphere considers that the Rio Pact has been violated [and actually?] what acts should [we take or be taken?] in, under the terms of the Rio Pact. The OAS could constitute itself an organ of consultation promptly, although maybe, it may take two or three days to get, uh, instructions from governments and things of that sort. The OAS could, I suppose, at any moment, uh, take action to insist to the Cubans that an OAS inspection, uh, team be permitted to come and, itself, look directly at these sites, provide assurance[s?] to the hemisphere. That will undoubtedly be turned down, but it will be another step in building up the, uh, building a position.

I think also that we ought to consider getting some word to Castro, perhaps through the Canadian ambassador in Havana or through, uh, his representative at the U.N. Uh, I think perhaps the Canadian ambassador would be the best, the better channel to get to Castro [apart?] privately and tell him that, uh, this is no longer support for Cuba, that Cuba is being victimized here, and that, uh, the Soviets are preparing Cuba for destruction or betrayal.

You saw the Times story yesterday morning that high Soviet officials were saying, "We'll trade Cuba for Berlin." This ought to be brought to Castro's attention. It ought to be said to Castro that, uh, uh, this kind of a base is intolerable and not acceptable. The time has now come when he must take the interests of the Cuban people, must now break clearly with the Soviet Union, prevent this missile base from becoming operational.

And I think there are certain military, um, uh, actions that we could, we might well want to take straight away. First, to, uh, to call up, uh, highly selective units [no more than?] 150,000. Unless we feel that it's better, more desirable to go to a general national emergency so that we have complete freedom of action. If we announce, at the time that we announce this development--and I think we do have to announce this development some time this week--uh, we announce that, uh, we are conducting a surveillance of Cuba, over Cuba, and we will enforce our right to do so. We reject the mission of secrecy in this hemisphere in any matters of this sort. We, we reinforce our forces in Guantanamo. We reinforce our forces in the southeastern part of the United States--whatever is necessary from the military point of view to be able to give, to deliver an overwhelming strike at any of these installations, including the SAM sites. And, uh, also to take care of any, uh, MIGs or bombers that might make a pass at Miami or at the United States. Build up heavy forces, uh, if those are not already in position.

That, uh, we then would move openly and vigorously into the, into the guerrilla field, and, uh, create maximum confusion on the island. [You know?] won't be too squeemish at this point about the overtness, covert [counter?] [word unintelligible] of what is being done.

We review our attitude on, an alternative Cuban government. We get Miro Cardona and his group in, Manuel Rey and his group, and see if they won't get together on a progressive junta. Uh, that would pretty well combine all principal elements, other than the Batista group, as the leaders of Cuba. And, uh, have them, give them more of a status, whether we proceed to full recognition or

not is something else, but get, get the Cuban elements highly organized on this matter.

I think also that we need a few days, um, to alert our other allies, for consultation with NATO. I'll assume that we can move on this line at the same time to interrupt all air traffic from free world countries going into Cuba, insist to the Mexicans, the Dutch, that they stop their planes from coming in. Tell the British, who, and anyone else who's involved at this point, that, uh, if they're interested in peace, they've got to stop their ships from Cuban trade at this point. Uh, in other words, isolate Cuba completely without at this particular moment a, uh, a forceful blockade.

I think it would be important to use the, uh, consider, uh, calling in General Eisenhower, giving him a full briefing before a public announcement is made as to the situation and the [forcible?] action which you might determine upon.

But I think that, by and large, there are, there are these two broad alternatives: one, the quick strike; the other, to alert our allies and Mr. Khrushchev that there is utterly serious crisis in the making here, and that, uh . . . Mr. Khrushchev may not himself really understand that or believe that at this point. I think we'll be facing a situation that could well lead to general war; that we have an obligation to do what has to be done but do it in a way that gives, uh, everybody a chance to, uh, put the [word unintelligible] down before it gets too hard. Those are my, my reactions of this morning, Mr. President. I naturally need to think about this very hard for the next several hours, uh, what I and what my colleagues at the State Department can do about it.

McNamara: Mr. President, there are a number of unknowns in this situation I want to comment upon, and, in relation to them, I would like to outline very briefly some possible military alternatives and ask General Taylor to expand upon them.

But before commenting on either the unknowns or outlining some military alternatives, there are two propositions I would suggest that we ought to accept as, uh, foundations for our further thinking. My first is that if we are to conduct an air strike against these installations, or against any part of Cuba, we must agree now that we will schedule that prior to the time these missile sites become operational. I'm not prepared to say when that will be, but I think it is extremely important that our talk and our discussion be founded on this premise: that any air strike will be planned to take place prior to the time they become operational. Because, if they become operational before the air strike, I do not believe we can state we can knock them out before they can be launched; and if they're launched there is almost certain to be, uh, chaos in part of the east coast or the area, uh, in a radius of six hundred to a thousand miles from Cuba.

Uh, secondly, I, I would submit the proposition that any air strike must be directed not solely against the missile sites, but against the missile sites plus the airfields plus the aircraft which may not be on the airfields but hidden by that time plus all potential nuclear storage sites. Now, this is a fairly extensive air strike. It is not just a strike against the missile sites; and there would be associated with it potential casualties of Cubans, not of U.S. citizens, but potential casualties of Cubans in, at least in the hundreds, more likely in the low thousands, say two or three thousand. It seems to me these two propositions, uh, should underlie our, our discussion.

Now, what kinds of military action are we capable of carrying out and what may be some of the consequences? Uh, we could carry out an air strike within a matter of days. We would be ready for the start of such an air strike within, within a matter of days. If it were absolutely essential, it could be done almost literally within a matter of hours. I believe the chiefs would prefer that it be deferred for a matter of days, but we are prepared for that quickly. The air strike could continue for a matter of days following the initial day, if necessary. Uh, presumably there would be some political discussions taking place either just before the air strike or both before and during. In any event, we

would be prepared, following the air strike, for an air, invasion, both by air and by sea. Approximately seven days after the start of the air strike, that would be possible if the political environment made it desirable or necessary at that time. [Fine?] Associated with this air strike undoubtedly should be some degree of mobilization. Uh, I would think of the mobilization coming not before the air strike but either concurrently with or somewhat following, say possibly five days afterwards, depending upon the possible invasion requirements. The character of the mobilization would be such that it could be carried out in its first phase at least within the limits of the authority granted by Congress. There might have to be a second phase, and then it would require a declaration of a national emergency.

Now, this is very sketchily the military, uh, capabilities, and I think you may wish to hear General Taylor, uh, outline his choice.

Speaker?: Almost too [words unintelligible] to Cuba.

Speaker?: Yes.

Taylor: Uh, we're impressed, Mr. President, with the great importance of getting a, a strike with all the benefit of surprise, uh, which would mean ideally that we would have all the missiles that are in Cuba above ground where we can take them out. Uh, that, that desire runs counter to the strong point the Secretary made if the other optimum would be to get every missile before it could, becomes operational. Uh, practically, I think the, our knowledge of the timing of the readiness is going to be so, so, uh, difficult that we'll never have the, the exact permanent, uh, the perfect timing. What we'd like to do is to look at this new photography, I think--and take any additional--and try to get the, the layout of the targets in as near an optimum, uh, position as possible, and then take 'em out without any warning whatsoever. That does not preclude, I don't think, Mr. Secretary, some of the things you've been talking about. It's a little hard to say in terms of time how much I'm discussing. But we must do a good job the first time we go in there, uh, pushing a 100 percent just as far, as closely as we can with our, with our strike. I'm having all the responsible planners in this afternoon, Mr. President, at four o'clock, to talk this out with 'em and get their best judgment.

I would also mention among the, the military actions we should take that once we have destroyed as many of these offensive weapons as possible, we should, should prevent any more coming in, which means a naval blockade. So I suppose that all And also a reinforcement of Guantanamo and evacuation of dependents. So, really, the, in point of time, I'm, I'm thinking in terms of three phases.

One, a, an initial pause of some sort while we get completely ready and get, get the right posture on the part of the target, so we can do the best job. Then, virtually concurrently, an air strike against, as the Secretary said, missiles, airfields, uh, unclear sites that we know of. At the same time, naval blockade. At the same time, reinforce Guantanamo and evacuate the dependents. I'd then start this continuous reconnaissance, the list that you had, continue over Cuba.

Then, then the decision can be made as we, as we're mobilizing, uh, with the air strike as to whether we invade or not. I think that's the hardest question militarily in the whole business--one which we should look at very closely before we get our feet in that deep mud in Cuba.

Rusk: There are st-, one or two things, Mr. President, uh. Gromyko asked to see you Thursday. Uh, it may be of some interest to know what he says about this, if he says anything. He may be bringing a message on this subject. Uh, but that. . . . I just want to remind you that you are seeing him and that may be relevant to this [topic?]. I might say incidentally, sir, that you delay anything else you have to do at this point.

Secondly, I don't believe, myself, that the critical question is whether you get a particular missile before it goes off because if they shoot those missiles we are in general nuclear war. In other words, the Soviet Union has got quite a different decision to make. If they, if they shoot those missiles, want to shoot 'em off before they get knocked out by aircraft. . . . So, I'm not sure that this is, uh, necessarily the precise [critical?] element, Bob.

McNamara: Well, I would strongly emphasize that I think our time should be based on the assumption it is, Dean. We don't know what kinds of communications the Soviets have with those sites. We don't know what kinds of control they have over the warheads.

Rusk: Yes, [words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: If we saw a warhead on the site and we knew that that launcher was capable of launching that warhead, I would Frankly, I would strongly urge against the air attack, to be quite frank about it, because I think the danger to this country in relation to the gain that would accrue with the excessive [time?]. . . . This is why I suggest that if we're talking about an air attack, I believe we should consider it only on the assumption that we can carry it off before these become operational.

JFK: What is the, uh, advant- Must be some major reason for the Russians to, uh, set this up as a Must be that they're not satisfied with their ICBMs. What'd be the reason that they would, uh

Taylor: What it'd give 'em is primary, it makes the launching base, uh, for short range missiles against the United States to supplement their rather [deceptive?] ICBM system, for example. There's one reason.

JFK: Of course, I don't see how we could prevent further ones from coming in by submarine.

Taylor: Well, I think that that thing is all over . . .

JFK: I mean if we let 'em blockade the thing, they come in by submarine.

McNamara: Well, I think the only way to prevent them coming in, quite frankly, is to say you'll take them out the moment they come in. You'll take them out and you'll carry on open surveillance and you'll have a policy to take them out if they come in. I think it's really rather unrealistic to think that we could carry out an air attack of the kind we're talking about. We're talking about an air attack of several hundred sorties because we don't know where these airplanes are.

Bundy: Are you absolutely clear of your premise that an air strike must go to the whole air complex?

McNamara: Well, we are, Mac . . .

Bundy: . . . air complex? [Appears to be a repeat of the words above.]

McNamara: . . . because we are fearful of these MIG 21s. We don't know where they are. We don't know what they're capable of. If there are nuclear warheads associated with the launchers, you must assume there will be nuclear warheads associated with aircraft. Even if there are not nuclear warheads associated with aircraft, you must assume that those aircraft have high explosive potential. We have a serious air defense problem. We're not prepared to report to you exactly, uh, what the Cuban air force is capable of; but I think we must assume that the Cuban air force is definitely capable of penetrating, in small numbers, our coastal air defense by coming in low over the water.

And I would think that we would not dare go in against the missile sites, knock those out leaving intact Castro's air force, and run the risk that he would use part or all of that air force against our coastal areas--either with or without nuclear weapons. It would be a, a very heavy price to pay in U.S. lives for the, the damage we did to Cuba.

Rusk: Still, about why the Soviets are doing this, um, Mr. McCone suggested some weeks ago that one thing Mr. Khrushchev may have in mind is that, uh, uh, he knows that we have a substantial nuclear superiority, but he also knows that we don't really live under fear of his nuclear weapons to the extent that, uh, he has to live under fear of ours. Also we have nuclear weapons nearby, in Turkey and places like that. Um. . . .

JFK: How many weapons do we have in Turkey?

Taylor?: We have Jupiter missiles . . .

Bundy?: Yeah. We have how many?

McNamara?: About fifteen, I believe it is.

Bundy?: I think that's right. I think that's right.

Speaker?: [Words unintelligible]

Rusk: But then there are also delivery vehicles that are, could easily . . .

McNamara: Aircraft.

Rusk: . . . be moved through the air, aircraft and so forth.

Speaker?: Route 'em through Turkey.

Rusk: Um, and that Mr. McCone expresses the view that Khrushchev may feel that it's important for us to learn about living under medium-range missiles, and he's doing that to sort of balance that, uh, that political, psychological [plank?]. I think also that, uh, Berlin is, uh, very much involved in this. Um, for the first time, I'm beginning really to wonder whether maybe Mr. Khrushchev is entirely rational about Berlin. We've [hardly?] talked about his obsession with it. And I think we have to, uh, keep our eye on that element. But, uh, they may be thinking that they can either bargain Berlin and Cuba against each other, or that they could provoke us into a kind of action in Cuba which would give an umbrella for them to take action with respect to Berlin. In other words like the Suez-Hungary combination. If they could provoke us into taking the first overt action, then the world would be confused and they would have, uh, what they would consider to be justification for making a move somewhere else. But, uh, I must say I don't really see the rationality of, uh, the Soviets pushing it this far unless they grossly misunderstand the importance of Cuba to this country.

Bundy: It's important, I think, to recognize that they did make this decision, as far as our estimates now go, in early summer, and, this has been happening since August. Their TASS statement of September 12, which the experts, I think, attribute very strongly to Khrushchev himself, is all mixed up on this point. It has a rather explicit statement, "The harmless military equipment sent to Cuba designed exclusively for defense, defensive purposes. The President of the United States and the American military, the military of any country know what means of defense are. How can these means threaten United States?"

Now there, it's very hard to reconcile that with what has happened. The rest, as the Secretary says, has many comparisons between Cuba and Italy, Turkey and Japan. We have other evidence that Khrushchev is, honestly believes, or, or at least affects to believe that we have nuclear weapons in, in Japan, that combination, [word unintelligible] . . .

Rusk: Gromyko stated that in his press conference the other day, too.

Bundy: Yeah. They may mean Okinawa.

Speaker?: Right.

McNamara: It's not likely, but it's conceivable the nuclear warheads for these launchers are not yet on Cuban soil.

Bundy: Now that seems to me that's It's perfectly possible that this, that they are in that sense a bluff. That doesn't make them any less offensive to us . . .

McNamara: No.

Bundy: . . . because we can't have proof about it.

McNamara: No, but it does possibly indicate a different course of action . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . and therefore, while I'm not suggesting how we should handle this, I think this is one of the most important actions we should take: to ascertain the location of the nuclear warheads for these missiles. Later in the discussion we can revert back to this. There are several alternative ways of approaching it.

JFK: Doug, do you have any

Dillon: No. The only thing I'd, would say is that, uh, this alternative course of, of warning, getting, uh, public opinion, uh, OAS action and telling people in NATO and everything like that, would appear to me to have the danger of, uh, getting us wide out in the open and forcing the Russians to, uh, Soviets to take a, a position that if anything was done, uh, they would, uh, have to retaliate. Whereas, uh, a, a quick action, uh, with a statement at the same time saying this is all there is to it, might give them a chance to, uh, back off and not do anything. Meanwhile, I think that the chance of getting through this thing without a Russian reaction is greater under a quick, uh, strike than, uh, building the whole thing up to a, a climax then going through. . . . [It will be a lot of debate on it?]

Rusk: That is, of course, a possibility, but, uh. . . .

Bundy: The difficulties--I, I share the Secretary of the Treasury's feeling a little bit--the difficulties of organizing the OAS and NATO; the amount of noise we would get from our allies saying that, uh, they can live with Soviet MRBMs, why can't we; uh, the division in the alliance; the certainty that the Germans would feel that we were jeopardizing Berlin because of our concern over Cuba. The prospect of that pattern is not an appetizing one . . .

Rusk: Yes, but you see . . .

Bundy: . . . [Words unintelligible]

Rusk: . . . uh, uh, everything turns crucially on what happens.

Bundy: I agree, Mr. Secretary.

Rusk: And if we go with the quick strike, then, in fact, they do back it up, then you've exposed all of your allies [word unintelligible], ourselves to all these great dangers without . . .

Bundy: You get all these noises again.

Rusk: . . . without, uh, the slightest consultation or, or warning or preparation.

JFK: But, of course, warning them, uh, it seems to me, is warning everybody. And I, I, obviously you can't sort of announce that in four days from now you're going to take them out. They may announce within three days they're going to have warheads on 'em; if we come and attack, they're going to fire them. Then what'll, what'll we do? Then we don't take 'em out. Of course, we then announce, well, if they do that, then we're going to attack with nuclear weapons.

Dillon: Yes, sir, that's the question that nobody, I didn't understand, nobody had mentioned, is whether this s-, uh, "take-out," this mission, uh, was [word unintelligible] to deal with . . .

Speaker?: I don't know.

Dillon: . . . high explosives?

Speaker?: High explosives, yes.

JFK: How effective can the take-out be, do they think?

Taylor?: It'll never be a 100 percent, Mr. President, we know. Uh, we hope to take out a vast majority in the first strike, but this is not just one thing, one strike, one day, but continuous air attack for whenever necessary, whenever we di-, discover a target.

Bundy: They're now talking about taking out the air force as well. . . .

Speaker?: I [could tell you that in the staff?].

Speaker?: [Words unintelligible]

Bundy: I do raise again the question whether, uh, whether we [words unintelligible] the problem, military problem, but there is, I would think, a substantial political advantage in limiting the strike in surgical terms to the thing that is in fact the cause of action.

McNamara?: I suggest, Mr. President, that if you're involved in several hundred strikes, this is what you would--and against airfields--this is what you would do, pre-invade. And, uh, it would be very difficult to convince anybody that this was not a pre-invasion strike. I think also once you get this volume of attack that public opinion reaction, uh, to this, as distinct from the reaction to an invasion, uh, there's [word unintelligible] little difference. And, uh, from both standpoints, it would seem to me that if you're talking about a, a general air attack program, you might as well think about whether we can eradicate the whole problem by an invasion just as simply with as little chance of reaction.

Taylor: Well, I would think we would have, should be in a position to invade at any time if we so desired. Hence that, uh, in this preliminary, we should be, uh, it's all bonus if we are indeed taking out weapons [word unintelligible] . . .

JFK: Well, let's say we just take out the missile bases, then, uh, they have some more there. Obviously they can get 'em in by submarine and so on, I don't know whether you, you just can't keep high strikes on.

Taylor: I suspect, Mr. President, we'd have to take out the surface-to-air missiles in order to get in, to get in, take some of them out. Maybe [words unintelligible].

JFK: How long will, do we estimate this will remain secure, this, uh, information, uh, people have it?

Bundy: In terms of the tightness of our intelligence control, Mr. President, I think we are in unusually and fortunately good position. We set up a, uh, new security classification governing precisely the field of offensive capability in Cuba just five days ago, four days ago, under General Carter. That, uh, limits this, uh, to people who have an immediate, operational necessity in intelligence terms to work on the data and the people who have . . .

JFK: How many would that be, about?

Bundy: Oh, that will be a very large number, but that's not generally where leaks come from. Uh, the more [important?] limitation is that only officers with the policy responsibility for advice directly to you'll receive this . . .

JFK: How many would get it over in the Defense Department, General, with your meeting this afternoon?

Taylor: Well, I was going to mention that. We'd have to ask for relaxation of the ground rules, uh, that, that Mac has just enunciated, so that I can, uh, give it to the senior commanders who are involved in the plans.

JFK: Would that be about fifty?

Taylor: By then. . . . No, sir. I would say that, uh, within, at this stage ten more.

McNamara: Well, Mr. President, I, I think, to be realistic, we should assume that this will become fairly widely known, if not in the newspapers, at least by political representatives of both parties within--I would, I'm just picking a figure--I'd say a week.

[Several speakers speak at once and none of the words are intelligible.]

McNamara: And I say that because we have, we have taken action already that is raising questions in people's minds. Normally, when a U-2 comes back, we duplicate the films. The duplicated copies go to a series of commands. A copy goes to SAC. A copy goes to CINCLANT. A copy goes to CIA. And normally, uh, the photo interpreters and the, and the operational officers in these commands are looking forward to these. We have stopped all that, and this, this type of information is going on throughout the department. And I, I doubt very much that we can keep this out of the hands of, uh, of members of Congress, for example, for more than a week.

Rusk: Well, Senator Keating has already, in effect, announced it on the floor of the Senate.

Bundy: Senator Keating said this on the floor of the Senate on the tenth of October . . .

Rusk: [That's correct?]

Bundy: . . . "Construction has begun on at least a half-dozen launching sites for intermediate range tactical missiles."

Rusk: Well, that's, that's the way that [words unintelligible]. I think we can count on announcing it not later than Thursday or Friday of this week.

Taylor?: There is a refugee who's a major source of intelligence on this, of course, who has described one of these missiles in terms which we can recognize, who is now in this country.

JFK: Is he the one who's giving Keating his stuff?

Taylor?: We don't know.

Bundy: My question, Mr. President, is whether as a matter of, uh, tactics we ought not to interview Senator Keating and check out his data. Seems to me that that ought to be done in a routine sort of way by an open officer of the intelligence agency.

Speaker?: I think that's [right?].

JFK: You have any thoughts, Mr. Vice President?

Johnson: I agree with Mac that that ought to be done. I think that, uh, we're committed at any time that we feel that there's a build up that in any way endangers to take whatever action we must take to assure our security. I would think the Secretary's evaluation of this thing being around all over the lot is a pretty accurate one, I would think it'd take a week to do it. Maybe a little before then.

I would, uh, like to hear what the responsible commanders have to say this afternoon. I think the question with the base is whether we take it out or whether we talk about it, and, uh, both, either alternative is a very distressing one, but of the two, I would take it out.

JFK: Well, uh, the, uh . . .

Johnson: Assuming these commanders felt that way. I'm fearful if we I spent the weekend with the ambassadors of the Organization of American States. I think this organization is fine, but I don't think, I don't rely on 'em much for any strength in anything like this. And, I, the fact that we're talking about our other allies, uh, I take the position that Mr. Bundy says, We ought to be living all these years with [words unintelligible] get your blood pressure up. But the fact is the country's blood pressure is up and they are fearful, and they're insecure, and we're getting divided, and, uh, I don't think that, uh I take this little State Department Bulletin that you sent out to all the congressmen. One, one of the points you make--that any time the build up endangers or threatens our security in any way, we're going to do whatever must be done immediately to protect our own security. And when you say that, why the, give unanimous support. People are really concerned about this, in my opinion. Uh, I think we have to be prudent and cautious, talk to the commanders and see what they say, what they're [I'm] not much for circularizing it over the Hill or our allies, even though I realize it's a breach of faith. It's the one not to confer with them. We're not going to get much help out of them.

Bundy: There is an intermediate position. There are perhaps two or three of our principal allies or

heads of government we could communicate, at least on a 24-hour notice basis. Certainly ease, ease the . . .

Johnson: [Take a large?] [words unintelligible] [to?] stop the planes, stop the ships, stop the submarines and everything else from [sending?]. Just not going to permit it. And then stop them from coming in.

Speaker?: Yeah.

JFK: Uh, eh, well, this, which What you're really talking about are two or three different, uh, [tense?] operations. One is the strike just on this, these three bases. One, the second is the broader one that Secretary McNamara was talking about, which is on the airfields and on the SAM sites and on anything else connected with, uh, missiles. Third is doing both of those things and also at the same time launching a blockade, which requires really the, uh, the, uh, third and which is a larger step. And then, as I take it, the fourth question is the, uh, degree of consultation. [*1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified*]

Speaker?: Um.

JFK: Just have to [words unintelligible] and do it. Probably ought to tell them, though, the night before.

RFK: Mr. President.

JFK: Yes.

RFK: We have the fifth one, really, which is the invasion. I would say that, uh, you're dropping bombs all over Cuba if you do the second, uh, air, the airports, knocking out their planes, dropping it on all their missiles. You're covering most of Cuba. You're going to kill an awful lot of people, and, uh, we're going to take an awful lot of heat on it . . .

Speaker?: Yeah.

RFK: . . . and, uh, and then, uh, you know, the heat, you're going to announce the reason that you're doing it is because, uh, they're sending in these kind of missiles. Well, I would think it's almost incumbent upon the Russians, then, to say, Well, we're going to send them in again, and if you do it again, we're going to do, we're going to do the same thing to Turkey, or We're going to do the same thing to Iran.

[Here follow 5 pages of discussion of which targets might be attacked.]

JFK: I think we ought to, what we ought to do is, is, uh, after this meeting this afternoon, we ought to meet tonight again at six, consider these various, uh, proposals. In the meanwhile, we'll go ahead with this maximum, whatever is needed from the flights, and, in addition, we will I don't think we got much time on these missiles. They may be So it may be that we just have to, we can't wait two weeks while we're getting ready to, to roll. Maybe just have to just take them out, and continue our other preparations if we decide to do that. That may be where we end up. I think we ought to, beginning right now, be preparing to. . . . Because that's what we're going to do anyway. We're certainly going to do number one; we're going to take out these, uh, missiles. Uh, the questions will be whether, which, what I would describe as number two, which would be a general air strike. That we're not ready to say, but we should be in preparation for it. The third is the, is the, uh, the general invasion. At least we're going to do number one, so it seems to me that we don't

have to wait very long. We, we ought to be making those preparations.

Bundy: You want to be clear, Mr. President, whether we have definitely decided against a political track. I, myself, think we ought . . .

Taylor?: Well, we'll have . . .

Bundy: . . . to work out a contingency on that.

Taylor?: We, we'll develop both tracks.

JFK: [*1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified*] We ought to just decide who we talk to and how long ahead and how many people, really, in the government. There's going to be a difference between those who know that--this will leak out in the next few days--there are these, uh, uh, bases, until we say or the Pentagon or State won't be harsh. We've already said it on the [words unintelligible]. So we, let's say, we've got two or three days.

Bundy: Well, let's play it, shall we play it still harder and, uh, simply say that there's no evidence and that we have to . . .

JFK: We ought to stick the battle till we want to do something.

Bundy: . . . [words unintelligible] the alliance [words unintelligible].

JFK: Otherwise we give ourselves away, so let's . . .

Bundy: May I make one other cover plan suggestion . . .

JFK: Yes.

Bundy: . . . Mr. President? There will be meetings in the White House. I think the best we can do is to keep the people with a specific Latin American business black and describe the rest as "intensive budget review sessions," but I haven't been able to think of any other . . .

JFK: Nobody, it seems to me, in the State Department. I discussed the matter with, uh, Bohlen of the Soviet bloc and told him he could talk to Thompson. So that's those two. It seems to me that there's no one else in the State Department that ought to be talked to about it . . .

Speaker?: [Words unintelligible] in the department.

JFK: . . . in any level at all, and, uh, until we know a little more. And then, as I say, in Defense we've got to keep it as tight as possible . . .

Speaker?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: . . . particularly what we're going to do about it. Maybe a lot of people know about what's there, but what we're going to do about it really ought to be, you know, the tightest of all because otherwise we botch it up.

McNamara: Mr. President, may I suggest that we come back this afternoon prepared to, to answer three questions. First, should we surface our surveillance? I think this is a very important . . .

Speaker?: Very important point.

McNamara: . . . question at the moment. We ought to try to decide today either yes or no.

JFK: By "surface our" . . .

McNamara: I mean should we state publicly . . .

JFK?: Oh.

McNamara: . . . that, that you have stated we will, we'll act to take out any offensive weapons. In order to be certain as to whether there are or are not offensive weapons, we are scheduling U-2 flights or other surveillance . . .

Carter?: What's the [skull number, commissar?]. [Laughs]

McNamara: . . . or reconnaissance flights to, uh, to obtain this information. We'll make the information, uh, public.

JFK: There may not be one. All right, why not?

McNamara: This is one question. A second question is: Should we precede the military action with political action? If so, on what, uh, timing? I would think the answer's almost certainly, yes. And I wouldn't, I would think particularly of the contacts with Khrushchev. And I would think that if these are to be done, they must be scheduled in terms of time very, very carefully in relation to a potential military action. There must be a very, very precise series of, of contacts with him, and indications of what we'll do at certain times following that. And, thirdly, we should be prepared to answer your questions regarding the, the effect of these strikes and the time required to carry them off. I think . . .

JFK: How long would it take to get 'em organized.

McNamara: E-, e-, exactly. We'll be prepared . . .

JFK: In other words, how many days from tomorrow morning would it . . . How many mornings from tomorrow morning would it take to get the, to take out just these missile [sites] . . .

[Here follow the last 6 pages, which include a discussion of who should be informed and when the next meeting should take place.]

19. Memorandum for the Record

Washington, October 16, 1962.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Cuban Files, Job 80-B1676R, Box 17, Walter Elder Recop. Secret; Eyes Only. Prepared by Helms. Another memorandum for the record of this meeting, drafted by Parrott, is *ibid.* Also reproduced in CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962, pp. 153-154.

SUBJECT

Mongoose Meeting with the Attorney General

1. At 2:30 this afternoon, the Attorney General convened in his office a meeting on Operation Mongoose consisting of General Lansdale and Colonel Patchell, General Johnson of the Joint Staff, Robert Hurwitch of State (vice Ed Martin who was unable to attend), Hewson Ryan of USIA, and the undersigned.

2. The Attorney General opened the meeting by expressing the "general dissatisfaction of the President" with Operation Mongoose. He pointed out that the Operation had been under way for a year, that the results were discouraging, that there had been no acts of sabotage, and that even the one which had been attempted had failed twice. He indicated that there had been noticeable improvement during the year in the collection of intelligence but that other actions had failed to influence significantly the course of events in Cuba. He spoke of the weekly meetings of top officials on this problem and again noted the small accomplishments despite the fact that Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, General Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, and he personally had all been charged by the President with finding a solution. He traced the history of General Lansdale's personal appointment by the President a year ago. The Attorney General then stated that in view of this lack of progress, he was going to give Operation Mongoose more personal attention. In order to do this, he will hold a meeting every morning at 0930 with the Mongoose operational representatives from the various agencies (Lansdale, Harvey, Hurwitch, Ryan, and General Johnson).

3. The Attorney General spoke favorably of the sabotage paper which had been presented by General Carter this morning to the meeting of the Special Group (Augmented).^{1/} He obviously did not like the earlier memorandum, since he felt it showed no "push" in getting on with the acts of sabotage.

^{1/}Not printed. (Central Intelligence Agency, Cuban Files, Job 80-B1676R, Box 17, Walter Elder Recop.) See the Supplement.

4. When asked for my comments, I stated that we were prepared to get on with the new action program and that we would execute it aggressively. I pointed out, however, that the objective of Operation Mongoose would have to be determined at some point since the Cubans with whom we have to work were seeking a reason for risking their lives in these operations. I related my conversation with the young Cuban from the DRE who pointed out that they were willing to commit their people only on operations which they regarded as sensible. I defined "sensible" in Cuban terminology these days as meaning an action which would contribute to the liberation of their country, another way of saying that the United States, perhaps in conjunction with other Latin countries, would bail them out militarily. My point was specifically echoed by Hewson Ryan. The Attorney General's rejoinder was a plea for new ideas of things that could be done against Cuba. In passing, he made reference to the change in atmosphere in the United States Government during the last twenty-four hours, and asked some questions about the percentage of Cubans whom we thought would fight for the regime if the country were invaded.

5. The meeting concluded with the reaffirmation by the Attorney General of his desire to hold a meeting each day, beginning tomorrow. He said that these meetings might later be changed to every other day when and if he finds a daily get-together is not necessary. The meetings are to last no more than one-half hour.

RH

Deputy Director (Plans)

20. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State

Moscow, October 16, 1962, 7 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.3722/10-1662. Secret; Priority; Eyes Only.
Received in the Department of State at 2:35 p.m. October 16.

978. Policy. Khrushchev-Kohler--Part III--Cuba./1/

/1/Parts I, II, and IV of Kohler's conversation with Khrushchev on October 15, transmitted in telegrams 973, 974, and 979 from Moscow, October 16, are in volume V; Part V, transmitted in telegram 981 from Moscow, October 16, is in vol. XV, pp. 359-362.

Khrushchev said he wanted to express his disappointment at one thing that adds fuel to fire of the cold war, namely, that US now is trying to stop Soviet airplanes from flying to Cuba. After I interjected confirmation, he said they regard this as unfriendly act. This is not wartime. We should be developing trade and culture between our countries. He could not understand why we were acting this way. Perhaps we were frightened and our leaders' nerves were bad. If we were going to start a war, then he could understand it. US was boycotting trade with Cuba and appealing to all countries to stop their ships from going there. US is great country with population 183 million, while Cuba has only seven million. Could it really be that US was afraid of Cuba? Who would believe that Cuba was a nightmare for US? It was too small; even if it wanted to gobble up US, it couldn't. (There followed some good-natured byplay about census figures.) Khrushchev said that what US was doing complicated life of simple people and did not simplify it. Result was to make Cuban people go hungry. What did US want? To start war? If not, what was happening? "Are you too afraid? Do you want to commit suicide?" When last war started in USSR, on third or fourth day, a certain General came to him, where he was serving as member of military council of front, and said everything was lost, just as in France. General said command must be changed. General went to sleep that night and next morning came into peasant hut in which Khrushchev was staying and shot himself. He was a coward, lost his self-control, and let his nerves dominate his mind. Had US become a coward? Such people end by shooting themselves. Did US want to commit suicide? Is this the state in which American imperialism now finds itself?

I said I should of course report his remarks to President. At Vienna, President had spoken very frankly to him about Cuba. Chairman was misinterpreting Castro regime. Not only US, but all Western Hemisphere countries, feel Castro has let Cuban people down. US and other Western Hemisphere states are not going to help Cuba. We are certainly not afraid of them but we don't intend to help them. Of course, we have different views than Chairman about situation. Speaking as frankly as he had, I felt I must add that size of Soviet shipments to Cuba has increased feeling in US on this problem.

Khrushchev said we must be responsible, since our countries are great powers. We cannot demand that other countries live as we like or there would be war. US has bases in countries neighboring USSR, such as Turkey, as well as in Greece, Italy, France, West Germany and Pakistan. But USSR does not attack these countries. If US thinks it has right to do as it likes about Cuba, why hasn't USSR right to do as it likes about these countries? If we acted that way, might would make right. UN Charter would lose its force. That would be policy of banditry. Cuba is small; US is big. "You are so afraid of Cuba, you almost lost your pants." US is located in Western Hemisphere; what is it doing in Eastern Hemisphere? USSR does not recognize right of US to be everywhere in world and to rule everywhere. It was one thing when US was very powerful, but now there is a force as great as yours. We will never agree to your capitalistic way of thinking. Our policy is, let us live in peace. Let us have our socialism and you can have your capitalism. Let's respect internal affairs of other countries and not interfere with life of other countries. Take, for example, Shah of Iran, whom we

don't like. But we have no intention of attacking him. Or take Afghanistan, country with monarchical government. Its King recently visited me here and I entertained him. He is a nice fellow. We have good relations with him and this is the way it should be.

I said I took note of Chairman's remarks. President has made it clear we are not going to interfere in Cuba by force. But we are not going to help Cuba, which does not mean we intend to interfere there.

Khrushchev accepted this, saying he also understood President that way but must still express his disappointment about blockade, which is inimical action. Let the people choose their own system. As a result of blockade, Cuban people are suffering and will become more embittered against US. You should trade with Cuba, as we do with Turkey and other of your allies. Why are you not trading with us? You want to strangle us. But you've lost any real understanding of history.

21. Off the Record Meeting on Cuba

Washington, October 16, 1962, 6:30-7:55 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings, Transcripts. No classification marking. The source text is a 52-page transcript of audiotapes 28.2 and 28A.1. Identifying footnotes in the source text are not included. Following the first meeting at the White House (see Document 18) the JCS and the commanders involved with Cuba planning met at 4:30 p.m. They were joined by McNamara at 5:40 p.m., and agreed that all significant military targets in Cuba and not just the missiles should be attacked. (*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, vol. VIII, Part II, p. 246) At the same time Rusk, Ball, Martin, U. Alexis Johnson, Bohlen, Thompson, and Stevenson met to discuss Cuba. No record of these discussions has been found but they are cited in Rusk's Appointment Book. (Johnson Library) Following the 6:30 p.m. meeting many of the participants went to the Department of State for further discussions, which ended at approximately 11 p.m. (Chronology of the Cuban Crisis, November 14; Washington National Records Center, OASD/ISA Files: FRC 65 A 3501, Cuba, 1962) No other record of these discussions has been found.

JFK: Uh, anything in 'em?

Carter: Nothing on the additional film, sir. We have a much better read-out on what we had initially. There's good evidence of their back-up missiles for each of the four launchers at each of the three sites, so that there would be twice the number for a total of eight which could eventually be erected. This would mean a capability of from sixteen or possibly twenty-four missiles. We feel, on the basis of information that we presently have, that these are solid propellant, inertial guidance missiles with eleven-hundred-mile range rather than the oxygen propellant, uh, radar-controlled. Primarily because we have no indication of any radar or any indication of any oxygen equipment. And it would appear to be logical from an intelligence estimate viewpoint that if they are going to this much trouble that they would go ahead and put in the eleven hundred miles because of the tremendously increased threat coverage. Let me see that [words unintelligible]./1/

/1/All brackets except those citing declassification excisions and unrelated material are in the source text.

JFK: What is this map?

Carter: That's, shows the circular range . . .

JFK: When was this drawn?

Carter: . . . capability.

JFK: Is this drawn in relation to this information?

Carter: Uh, no, sir. It was drawn in, uh, some time ago, I believe, but the ranges there are the nominal ranges of the missiles rather than the maximum.

Speaker ?: The circles [around, or are added?] . . .

Carter: That's a ten hundred and twenty circle, as against eleven hundred.

JFK: Well, I was just wondering, uh, whether, uh, San Diego de los Banos is where these missiles are?

Carter: Uh, yes, sir. Well, the . . .

JFK: Well, I wonder how many of these have been printed out.

Bundy: Yeah, well, the circle is drawn in red ink on the map, Mr. President.

Carter: The circle is . . .

JFK: Oh, I see. It was never printed?

Carter: No, that's on top.

JFK: I see. It isn't printed.

Carter: It would appear that with this type of missile, with the solid propellant and inertial guidance system, that they could well be operational within two weeks as we look at the pictures now. And once operational, uh, they could fire on very little notice. They'll have a refire rate of from four to six hours over each launcher.

JFK: What about the vulnerability of such a missile to a, t-, uh, bullets?

Speaker ?: Highly vulnerable, [Mr. President?].

Carter: Uh, they're vulnerable. They're not nearly as vulnerable as the oxygen propellant, but they are vulnerable to ordinary rifle fire. We have no evidence whatsoever of any nuclear warhead storage near the field launchers. However, ever since last February we have been observing an unusual facility which now has automatic anti-aircraft weapon protection. This is at [Bahu?]. There are some similarities, but also many points of dissim-, similarity between this particular facility and the national storage sites in the Soviet Union. It's the best candidate for a site, and we have that marked for further surveillance. However, there is really totally inadequate evidence to say that there is a nuclear storage capability now. These are field-type launchers. They have mobile support, erection and check-out equipment. And they have a four-in-line deployment pattern in launchers which is identical--complexes about five miles apart--representative of the deployments that we note in the Soviet Union for similar missiles.

JFK: Uh, General, how long would you say we had, uh, before these--at least to the best of your

ability for the ones we now know--will be ready to fire?

Carter: Well, our people estimate that these could be fully operational within two weeks. Uh, this would be the total complex. If they're the oxygen type, uh, we have no. . . . It would be considerably longer since we don't have any indication of, uh, oxygen refueling there nor any radars.

Speaker ?: This wouldn't rule out the possibility that one of them might be operational very much sooner.

Carter: [Well, or No?], one of 'em, uh, one of them could be operational much sooner. Our people feel that this has been, being put in since probably early September. We have had two visits of a Soviet ship that has an eight-foot-hold capacity sideways. And this about, so far, is the only delivery vehicle that we would have any suspicion that they came in on. And that came in late August, and one in early September. [Uh. . . .]

Speaker ?: Why would they have to be sideways [though?]?

Carter: Well, it's just easier to get 'em in, I guess.

Speaker ?: [Well?], this way it sets down on [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: Well, all right.

Speaker ?: Fine.

Rusk: Uh, the, the, the total readout on the, uh, flights yesterday will be ready tonight, you think?

Carter: It should be, uh, finished pretty well by midnight.

JFK: Now what, that was supposed to have covered the whole island, was it, uh?

Carter: Uh, yes, sir.

JFK: Except for . . .

Carter: In two throws. But, uh, part of the central and, in fact, much of the central and part of the eastern was cloud covering. The western half was, uh, in real good shape.

JFK: I see. Now what have we got laying on for tomorrow?

Carter: There are seven, six or seven . . .

McNamara: I just left [word unintelligible] [equipment?]. We're having ready seven U-2 aircraft: two high-altitude U-2s, five lesser-altitude U-2s; six equipped with an old type film, one equipped with a new type, experimental film which hopefully will increase the resolution. We only need two aircraft flying tomorrow if the weather is good. We will put up only two if the weather is good. If the weather is not good, we'll start off with two and we'll have the others ready to go during the day as the weather improves. We have weather aircraft surrounding the periphery of Cuba, and we'll be able to keep track of the weather during the day over all parts of the island. Hopefully, this will give us complete coverage tomorrow. We are planning to do this, or have the capability to do this, every day thereafter for an indefinite period.

Carter: This is a field-type missile, and from collateral evidence, not direct, that we have with the Soviet Union, it's designed to be fielded, placed and fired in six hours. Uh, it would appear that we have caught this in a very early stage of deployment. It would also appear that there does not seem to be the degree of urgency in getting them immediately into position. This could be because they have not been surveyed. Or it could be because it is the shorter-range missile and the radars and the oxygen has not yet arrived.

JFK: There isn't any question in your mind, however, uh, that it is an intermediate-range missile?

Carter: No, there's no question in our minds at all. These are . . .

JFK: Just [word unintelligible] . . .

Carter: . . . all the characteristics that we have seen, [live ones?].

Rusk: You've seen actual missiles themselves and not just the boxes have you?

Carter: No, we've seen. . . . In the picture there is an actual missile.

Rusk: Yeah. Sure there is.

Carter: Yes. There's no question in our mind, sir. And they are genuine. They are not, uh, a camouflage or covert attempt to fool us.

Bundy: How much do we know, uh, [Pat?]? I don't mean to go behind your judgment here, except that there's one thing that would be really catastrophic would be to make a judgment here on, on a bad guess as to whether these things are. We mustn't do that.

Carter: Well . . .

Bundy: How do we really know what these missiles are and what their range is?

Carter: Only that from the read-out that we have now and in the judgment of our analysts and of the guided missile and astronautics committee, which has been convening all afternoon, these signatures are identical with those that we have clearly earmarked in the Soviet Union, and have fully verified.

Bundy: What [made?] the verification? That's really my question. How do we know what a given Soviet missile will do?

Carter: We, uh, know something from the range firings that we have vetted for the past two years. And we know also from comparison with the characteristics of our own missiles as to size and length and diameter. Uh, as to these particular missiles, we have a family of Soviet missiles for which we have all accepted the, uh, specifications.

Bundy: I know that we have accepted them . . .

Carter: This is . . .

Bundy: . . . and I know that we've had these things in charts for years, but I don't know how we know.

Carter: Well, we know from a number of sources, including our Ironbark sources, as well as from

range firings, which we have been vetting for several years, as to the capabilities. But, uh, I would have to get the analysts in here to give you the play-by-play account.

Rusk: Pat, we don't know of any sixty-five-foot Soviet missile that has a range of, say, fifteen miles, do we?

Carter: Fifteen miles? No, we certainly don't.

Rusk: In other words, if they are missiles this size, they are missiles of considerable range, I think.

McNamara: I tried to prove today--I am, I'm satisfied--that these were not MRBMs. And I worked long on it. I got our experts out, and I could not find evidence that would support any conclusion other than that they are MRBMs. Now, whether they're eleven-hundred miles, six-hundred mile, nine-hundred mile is still a guess in my opinion. But that they are MRBMs seems the most probable assumption at the moment.

Speaker ?: I would apparently agree, uh, given the weight of it.

JFK: Is General Taylor coming over?

McNamara: He is, uh, Mr. President.

JFK: Have you finished, General?

Carter: Yes, sir. That, I think that's at, uh, [word unintelligible] . . .

Rusk: [Because?] we've had some further discussion meetings this afternoon and we'll be working on it [presently?] this evening,^{/2/} but, um, I might mention certain points that are, some of us are concerned about. The one is, um, the chance that, uh, this might be the issue on which, uh, Castro would elect to break with Moscow if he knew that he were in deadly jeopardy. Now, this is one chance in a hundred, possibly. But, in any event, um, we, we're very much, uh, interested in the possibility of a direct message to Castro, uh, as well as Khrushchev, might make some sense here before an actual strike is put on. Uh, Mr. Martin will present you with outline, uh, the kind of, uh, message to Castro that, uh, we had in mind.

^{/2/}Presumably a reference to the President's address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 20, 1961; for text, see *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961*, pp. 304-306.

Martin: This would be an oral note, message through a third party. Uh, first, uh, describing just what we know about what exists in th-, the missile sites, so that he knows that we are informed about what's going on. Uh, second, to point out that the issues this raises as far as the U.S. security is concerned, it's a breach of two of the points that you have made public. Uh, first, the ground-to-ground missile, and, second, obviously, it's a Soviet-operated base in Cuba. Uh, thirdly, this raises the greatest problems for Castro, as we see it. In the first place, uh, by this action the Soviets have, uh, threatened him with attack from the United States, and, uh, therefore the overthrow of his regime; used his territory to, uh, make this, uh, to put him in this jeopardy. And, secondly, the Soviets are talking to other people about the possibility of bargaining this support and these missiles, uh, against concessions in Berlin and elsewhere, and therefore are threatening to, to bargain him away. Uh, in these circumstances, we wonder whether he, uh, realizes the, the position that, uh, he's been put in and the way the Soviets are using him.

Then go on to say that, uh, we will have to inform our people of the threat that exists here, and we mean to take action about it in the next day or so. And we'll have to do this unless we receive word from him that he is prepared to take action to get the Soviets out of the site. Uh, he will have to show us that not only by statements, privately or publicly, but, uh, by action; that we intend to, uh, keep close surveillance by overflights of the site to make su-, to know what is being done. But we will have to know that he is doing something to remove this threat, uh, in order to withhold the action that we intend to, we will be compelled to take.

Uh, if, uh, Castro feels that an attempt by him to take the kind of action that we're suggesting to him, uh, would result in serious difficulties for him within Cuba, we at least want him to know that, uh, er, to, and to convey to him and remind him of the statement that you, Mr. President, made a year and a half ago in effect that there are two points that are non-negotiable. One is the Soviet tie and presence, and the second is aggression in Latin America. This is a, a hint, but no more than that, that, uh, we might have sympathy and help for him in case he ran into trouble trying to throw the old-line Communists and the Soviets out.

Rusk: Yes.

Martin: We'll give him twenty-four hours to respond.

Rusk: The disadvantage in that is, of course, the, uh, the advance notice if he judges that we, we would not in this, in such approach here say exactly what we would do, but, uh, it might, of course, lead him to bring up mobile anti-aircraft weapons around these, uh, missiles themselves, uh, or, uh, take some other action that will make the strike that more difficult. Um, but there is that, there is that [move that?].

There are two other problems that we are concerned about. Uh, if we strike these missiles, we would expect, I think, uh, maximum Communist reaction in Latin America. In the case of about six of those governments, unless the heads of government had some intimation, uh, requiring some preparatory steps from the security point of view, uh, one or another of those governments could easi-, uh, could easily be overthrown--they, Venezuela for example or Guatemala, Bolivia, Chile, possibly even Mexico--uh, and therefore, uh, uh, the question will arise as to whether we should not somehow, uh, indicate to them in some way the seriousness of the situation so they can take precautionary steps, whether we tell them exactly what we have in mind or, or not.

The other is the NATO problem. Um, we, uh, we would estimate that the Soviets, uh, would almost certainly take, uh, some kind of action somewhere. Um, for us to, to take an action of this sort without letting, uh, our closer allies know of a matter which could subject them to very great, uh, danger, uh, is a very, uh, far-reaching decision to make. And, uh, we could find ourselves, uh, isolated and the alliance crumbling, very much as it did for a period during the Suez affair, but at a moment of much greater danger over an issue of much greater danger than the Suez affair, for the alliance. I think that these are matters that we'll be working on very hard this evening, but I think I ought to mention them because it's, uh, necessarily a part of this problem.

JFK: Can we get a little idea about what the military thing is? Well, of course, one, would you suggest taking these out?

McNamara: Yes, Mr. President. Uh, General Taylor has just been with the Chiefs, and the unified commanders went through this, uh, in detail. Uh, to take out only the missiles, uh, or to take out the missiles and the MIG aircraft and the associated nuclear storage facilities if we locate them, uh, could be done in twenty-four-hours' warning. That is to say, twenty-four hours between the time of decision and the time of strike, uh, starting with a decision no later than, no earlier than this coming

Friday and with the strike therefore on Saturday, /3/ or anytime thereafter with twenty-four hours between the decision and time of strike. Uh, General Taylor will wish to comment on this, but the Chiefs are strong in their recommendation against that kind of an attack, believing that it would leave, uh, too great a capability in Cuba undestroyed. The specific number of sorties required to, to accomplish this end has not been worked out in detail. The capability is for something in excess of seven hundred sorties per day. Uh, it seems highly unlikely that that number would be required to carry out that limited an objective, but at least that capability is available in the air force alone, and the navy sorties would rise on top of that number. The Chiefs have also considered other alternatives extending into the full invasion, uh, you may wish to discuss later. But that's the answer to your first question.

/3/October 19 and 20.

JFK: That would be taking out these three missile sites, uh, plus all the MIGs?

McNamara: Well, you can go from the three missile sites to the three missile sites plus the MIGs, to the three missile sites plus MIGs plus nuclear storage plus airfields and so on up through the offensive, potential offensive [words unintelligible] . . .

JFK: Just the three missiles, however, would be?

McNamara: Could be done with twenty-four-hours' notice and would require, uh, a relatively small number of sorties, less than a day's air attack, in other words.

JFK: Of course, all you'd really get there would be. . . . What would you get there? You'd get the, probably you'd get the missiles themselves that are, have to be on the . . .

McNamara: You'd get the launchers . . .

JFK: . . . [Words unintelligible].

McNamara: . . . the launchers and the missiles on the [words unintelligible] . . .

JFK: The launchers are just what? They, they're not much are they?

McNamara: No, they're simply a mobile launchers, uh, device.

Taylor: This is a point target, Mr., uh, President. You're never sure of having, absolutely of getting everything down there. We intend to do a great deal of damage because we can [words unintelligible]. But, as the Secretary says here, there was unanimity among all the commanders involved in the Joint Chiefs, uh, that in our judgment, it would be a mistake to take this very narrow, selective target because it invited reprisal attacks and it may be detrimental. Now if the, uh, Soviets have been willing to give, uh, nuclear warheads to these missiles, there is every, just as good reason for them to give nuclear capability to these bases. We don't think we'd ever have a chance to take 'em again, so that we lose this, the first strike surprise capability. Our recommendation would be to get complete intelligence, get all the photography we need, the next two or three days, no, no hurry in our book. Then look at this target system. If it really threatens the United States, then take it right out with one hard crack.

JFK: That would be taking out the, uh, some of those fighters, bombers and . . .

Taylor: Fighters, the bombers, uh, IL-28s may turn up in this photography. It's not that all unlikely

there're some there.

JFK: Think you could do that in one day?

Taylor: Uh, we think that the first strike, we'd get a great majority of this. We'll never get it all, Mr. President. But we then have to come back day after day for several days--we said, uh, five days perhaps--to do the complete job. Uh, meanwhile, we could then be making up our mind as to whether or not to go on and invade the island. I'm very much impressed with the need for a time something like five to seven days for this air purpose because of the parachute aspect of the in-, proposed invasion. You can't take parachute formations, close formations of, uh, troop carrier planes in in the face of any air opposition really. So the first job, before the, any land, uh, attack, including [parachutes or paratroops?], is really cleaning out the, the MIGs and the, uh, the accompanying aircraft.

McNamara: Mr. President, could I outline three courses . . .

JFK?: [Yes?].

McNamara: . . . of action we have considered and speak very briefly on each one? The first is what I would call the political course of action, in which we, uh, follow some of the possibilities that Secretary Rusk mentioned this morning by approaching Castro, by approaching Khrushchev, by discussing with our allies. An overt and open approach politically to the problem [attempting, or in order?] to solve it. This seemed to me likely to lead to no satisfactory result, and it almost stops subsequent military action. Because the danger of starting military action after they acquire a nuclear capability is so great I believe we would decide against it, particularly if that nuclear capability included aircraft as well as, as, uh, uh, missiles, as it well might at that point.

A second course of action we haven't discussed but lies in between the military course we began discussing a moment ago and the political course of action is a course of action that would involve declaration of open surveillance; a statement that we would immediately impose an, uh, a blockade against offensive weapons entering Cuba in the future; and an indication that with our open-surveillance reconnaissance, which we would plan to maintain indefinitely for the future, we would be prepared to immediately attack the Soviet Union in the event that Cuba made any offensive move against this country . . .

Bundy: Attack who?

McNamara: The Soviet Union. In the event that Cuba made any offensive move against this country. Now this lies short of military action against Cuba, direct military action against Cuba. It has some, some major defects.

But the third course of action is any one of these variants of military action directed against Cuba, starting with an air attack against the missiles. The Chiefs are strongly opposed to so limited an air attack. But even so limited an air attack is a very extensive air attack. It's not twenty sorties or fifty sorties or a hundred sorties, but probably several hundred sorties. Uh, we haven't worked out the details. It's very difficult to do so when we lack certain intelligence that we hope to have tomorrow or the next day. But it's a substantial air attack. And to move from that into the more extensive air attacks against the MIGs, against the airfields, against the potential nuclear storage sites, against the radar installations, against the SAM sites means, as, as Max suggested, possibly seven hundred to a thousand sorties per day for five days. This is the very, very rough plan that the Chiefs have outlined, and it is their judgment that that is the type of air attack that should be carried out. To move beyond that into an invasion following the air attack means the application of tens of

thousands, between ninety and, and, uh, over a hundred and fifty thousand men to the invasion forces. It seems to me almost certain that any one of these forms of direct military action will lead to a Soviet military response of some type some place in the world. It may well be worth the price. Perhaps we should pay that. But I think we should recognize that possibility, and, moreover, we must recognize it in a variety of ways. We must recognize it by trying to deter it, which means we probably should alert SAC, probably put on an airborne alert, perhaps take other s-, alert measures. These bring risks of their own, associated with them. It means we should recognize that by mobilization. Almost certainly, we should accompany the initial air strike with at least a partial mobilization. We should accompany an, an invasion following an air strike with a large-scale mobilization, a very large-scale mobilization, certainly exceeding the limits of the authority we have from Congress requiring a declaration therefore of a national emergency. We should be prepared, in the event of even a small air strike and certainly in the event of a larger air strike, for the possibility of a Cuban uprising, which would force our hand in some way. Either force u-, us to accept a, a, uh, an unsatisfactory uprising, with all of the adverse comment that result; or would, would force an invasion to support the uprising.

Rusk: Mr. President, may I make a very brief comment on that? I think that, um, uh, any course of action involves heavy political involvement. Um, it's going to affect all sorts of policies, positions, uh, as well as the strategic situation. So I don't think there's any such thing as a nonpolitical course of action. I think also that, um, uh, we have to consider what political preparation, if any, is to occur before an air strike or in connection with any military action. And when I was talking this morning, I was talking about some steps which would put us in the best position to crack the . . .

JFK: I think the difficulty . . .

Rusk: . . . the strength of Cuba.

JFK: . . . it seems to me, is. . . . I completely agree that there isn't any doubt that if we announced that there were MRBM sites going up that that would change, uh, we would secure a good deal of political support, uh, after my statement; and, uh, the fact that we indicated our desire to restrain, this really would put the burden on the Soviet. On the other hand, the very fact of doing that makes the military. . . . We lose all the advantages of our strike. Because if we announce that it's there, then it's quite obvious to them that we're gonna probably do something about it. I would assume. Now, I don't know, that, it seems to me what we ought to be thinking about tonight is if we made an announcement that the intelligence has revealed that there are, and if we [did the note?] message to Khrushchev. . . . I don't think, uh, that Castro has to know we've been paying much attention to it any more than. . . . Over a period of time, it might have some effect, [have settled?] back down, change. I don't think he plays it that way. So [have?] a note to Khrushchev. . . . I don't. . . . It seems to me, uh, my press statement was so clear about how we wouldn't do anything under these conditions and under the conditions that we would. He must know that we're going to find out, so it seems to me he just, uh . . .

Bundy: That's, of course, why he's been very, very explicit with us in communications to us about how dangerous this is, and . . .

JFK: That's right, but he's . . .

Bundy: . . . the TASS statement and his other messages.

JFK: He's initiated the danger really, hasn't he? He's the one that's playing [his card, or God?], not us. So we could, uh . . .

Rusk: And his statement to Kohler on the subject of his visit and so forth, completely hypocritical.

[Reel 1 ends.]

[Reel 2 begins mid-conversation.]

McNamara: . . . Cuba. Is a great possibility they can place them in operational condition quickly. Unless, as General Carter said, the system may have a, a normal reaction time, set-up time of six hours. Whether it has six hours or two weeks, we don't know how much time has started, nor do we know what air-launch capabilities they have for warheads. We don't know what air-launch capability they have for high explosives. It's almost certainly, uh, a, a substantial high-explosive capability in the sense that they could drop one or two or ten high-explosive bombs some place along the East Coast. And that's the minimum risk to this country we run as a result of advance warning, too.

Taylor: I'd like to stress this last point, Mr. President. We are very vulnerable to conventional bombing attack, low-level bombing attacks in the Florida area. Our whole, uh, air defense has been oriented in other directions. We've never had low-level defenses prepared for this country. So it would be entirely possible for MIGs to come through with conventional weapons and do some amount, some damage.

JFK: Yeah. Not, uh, talking overall, not a great deal of damage . . .

Taylor: No, but it certainly is fair to . . .

JFK: . . . if they get one strike.

Dillon: What if they carry a nuclear weapon?

JFK: Well, if they carry a nuclear weapon. . . . You assume they wouldn't do that.

Taylor: [Words unintelligible] I think we would expect some conventional weapon.

Rusk: I would not think that they would use a nuclear weapon unless they're prepared to [join?] a nuclear war, I don't think. I just don't s-, don't, don't see that possibility.

Speaker ?: I would agree.

Bundy?: I agree.

Rusk: That would mean that, uh, we could be just utterly wrong, but, uh, we've never really believed that, that Khrushchev would take on a general nuclear war over Cuba.

Bundy: May I ask a question in that context?

JFK: We certainly have been wrong about what he's trying to do in Cuba. There isn't any doubt about that [possibly a word unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: [Words unintelligible] that we've been wrong.

JFK: . . . many of us thought that he was going to put MRBMs on Cuba.

Bundy: Yeah. Except John McCone.

Carter: Mr. McCone.

JFK: Yeah.

Bundy: But, the, uh, question that I would like to ask is, quite aside from what we've said--and we're very hard-locked onto it, I know--What is the strategic impact on the position of the United States of MRBMs in Cuba? How gravely does this change the strategic balance?

McNamara: Mac, I asked the Chiefs that this afternoon, in effect. And they said, substantially. My own personal view is, not at all.

Bundy: Not so much.

McNamara: And, and I think this is an important element here. But it's all very . . .

Carter: The reason our estimators didn't think that they'd put them in there because of . . .

McNamara: That's what they said themselves . . .

Bundy: That's what they said themselves. . . .

McNamara: . . . in TASS statement.

Bundy: Yeah.

Carter: But then, going behind that . . .

JFK: [But why? Did it indicate? Being?] valuable enough?

Bundy: Doesn't prove anything in the strategic balance [overall?].

Carter: Doesn't prove anything. That was what the estimators felt, and that the Soviets would not take the risk. Mr. McCone's reasoning, however, was if this is so, then what possible reason have they got for going into Cuba in the manner in which they are with surface-to-air, uh, missiles and cruise-type missiles. He just couldn't understand while their, why the Soviets were so heavily bolstering Cuba's defensive posture. There must be something behind it, which led him then to the belief that they must be coming in with MRBMs.

Taylor: I think it was [cold-blooded?] . . .

Carter: [Words unintelligible]

Taylor: . . . point of view, Mr. President. You're quite right in saying that these, these are just a few more missiles, uh, targeted on the United States. Uh, however, they can become a, a very, a rather important adjunct and reinforcement to the, to the strike capability of the Soviet Union. We have no idea how far they will go. But more than that, these are, uh, uh, to our nation it means, it means a great deal more. You all are aware of that, in Cuba and not over in the Soviet Union.

Bundy: Well, I ask the question . . .

Taylor: Yeah.

Bundy: . . . with an awareness [laughter?] of the political . . .

JFK: I will say, my understanding's that . . .

Bundy: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: . . . let's just say that, uh, they get, they get these in there and then you can't, uh, they get sufficient capacity so we can't, uh, with warheads. Then you don't want to knock 'em out ['cause?], uh, there's too much of a gamble. Then they just begin to build up those air bases there and then put more and more. I suppose they really. . . . Then they start getting ready to squeeze us in Berlin, doesn't that. . . . You may say it doesn't make any difference if you get blown up by an ICBM flying from the Soviet Union or one that was ninety miles away. Geography doesn't mean that much.

Taylor: We'd have to target them with our missiles and have the same kind of, of pistol-pointed-at-the-head situation as we have in the Soviet Union at the present time.

Bundy: No question, if this thing goes on, an attack on Cuba becomes general war. And that's really the question whether . . .

JFK: That's why it shows the Bay of Pigs was really right. [We've, or We'd?] got it right. That was better and better and worse and worse.

Taylor: I'm [a pessimist,?] Mr. President. We have a war plan over there for you, calls for a, uh, for a quarter of a million Americans--soldiers, marines and airmen--to take an island we launched eighteen hundred Cubans against a year and a half ago.

[Faint laughter]

Taylor: [We've changed?] our evaluations well.

RFK: Of course, the other problem is, uh, in South America a year from now. And the fact that you got, uh, these things in the hands of Cubans, here, and then you, say your, some problem arises in Venezuela, er, you've got Castro saying, You move troops down into that part of Venezuela, we're going to fire these missiles.

Taylor: Well, I think you've [words unintelligible].

RFK: I think that's the difficulty . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible].

RFK: . . . rather than the [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible].

RFK: I think it gives the [word unintelligible] image.

JFK: It makes them look like they're coequal with us and that . . .

Dillon: We're scared of the Cubans.

RFK: We let the, uh. . . . I mean like we'd hate to have it in the hands of the Chinese. [Possibly words unintelligible]

Dillon: [Right?] I agree with that sort of thing very strongly.

Martin: It's a psychological factor. It won't reach as far as Venezuela is concerned.

Dillon: Well, that's . . .

McNamara: It'll reach the U.S. though. This is the point.

Speaker ?: That's the point.

Dillon: Yeah. That is the point.

Martin: Yeah. The psychological factor of our having taken it.

Dillon: Taken it, that's the best.

RFK: Well, and the fact that if you go there, we're gonna fire it.

JFK: What's that again, Ed? What are you saying?

Martin: Well, it's a psychological factor that we have sat back and let `em do it to us, that is more important than the direct threat. Uh, it is a threat in the Caribbean . . .

JFK: [Words unintelligible] I said we weren't going to.

Martin: . . . [Words unintelligible].

Bundy?: That's something we could manage.

JFK: Last month I said we weren't going to.

[Laughter]

JFK: Last month I should have said we're . . .

Speaker ?: Well . . .

JFK: . . . that we don't care. But when we said we're not going to and then they go ahead and do it, and then we do nothing, then . . .

Speaker ?: That's right.

JFK: . . . I would think that our risks increase. Uh, I agree. What difference does it make? They've got enough to blow us up now anyway. I think it's just a question of. . . . After all this is a political struggle as much as military. Well, uh, so where are we now? Where is the. . . . Don't think the message to Castro's got much in it. Uh, let's just, uh, let's try to get an answer to this question. How much. . . . It's quite obviously to our advantage to surface this thing to a degree before. . . . First to inform these governments in Latin America, as the Secretary suggests; secondly to, uh, the rest of NATO--*[1 line of source text not declassified]*. Uh, how much does this diminish. . . . Not that

we're going to do anything, but the existence of them, without any say about what we're gonna do. Let's say we, twenty-four hours ahead of our doing something about it, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] we make a public statement that these have been found on the island. That would, that would be notification in a sense that, uh, of their existence, and everybody could draw whatever conclusion they wanted to.

Martin?: I would say this, Mr. President, that I would, that if you've made a public statement, you've got to move immediately, or they, you're going to have a . . .

JFK: Oh, I . . .

Martin?: . . . a [words unintelligible] in this country.

JFK: . . . oh, I understand that. We'll be talking about. . . . Say, say we're going to move on a Saturday and we would say on Friday that these MRBMs, that the existence of this presents the gravest threat to our security and that appropriate action must be taken.

RFK: Could you stick planes over them, until you made the announcement at six o'clock Saturday morning? And at the same time or simultaneously put planes over to make sure that they weren't taking any action or movement, and that you could move in if they started moving in the missiles in place or something, you would move in and knock, that would be the trigger that you would move your planes in and knock them out. Otherwise you'd wait until six o'clock or five o'clock that night. I don't, is that, uh, is that. . . .

Taylor: I don't think anything like that. . . . I can't visualize doing it, uh, doing it successfully that way. I think that, uh, anything that shows, uh, our intent to strike is going to place the airplanes and, and the missiles into, these are por-, really mobile missiles. They can be . . .

RFK: [You mean they can just?] . . .

Taylor: They can pull in under trees and forest and disappear almost at once, as I visualize.

McNamara: And they can also be readied, perhaps, between the time we, in effect, say we're going to come in and the time we do come in. This, this is a very, very great danger to this, this coast. I don't know exactly how to appraise it because . . .

Speaker ?: I don't know.

McNamara: . . . of the readiness period, but it is possible that these are field missiles, and then in that case they can be readied very promptly if they choose to do so.

Carter: These are field missiles, sir. They are mobile-support-type missiles.

Taylor: About a forty-minute countdown, something like that's been estimated.

Ball?: So you would say that, uh, the strike should precede any public discussion?

McNamara: I believe so, yes, if you're going to strike. I think before you make any announcements, you should decide whether you're going to strike. If you are going to strike, you shouldn't make an announcement.

Bundy: That's right.

Dillon: What is the advantage of the announcement earlier? Because it's, it's to build up sympathy or something for doing it; but you get the simultaneous announcement of what was there and why you struck, with pictures and all, I [believe?] would serve the same . . .

Ball?: Well, the only announ-, the only advantage is, it's a kind of ultimatum, it's, there is an opportunity of a response that, which would preclude it. I mean it's, it's more, a more, for, for the appearance than as for the reality. 'Cause obviously you're not going to get that kind of response. But I would suppose that there is a course which is a little different, which is a private message from the President to [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] . . .

Martin?: [1 line of source text not declassified]

Ball?: Uh, and, uh, that this is, you're going to have to do this, you're compelled and you've gotta move quickly and you want them to know it. Maybe two hours before the strike, something like that . . .

Dillon: Well, that's it, that's different.

Ball?: . . . even the night before. Uh, but you. . . . But it has to be kept on that basis of total secrecy. And then the question of what you do with these Latin American governments is another matter. I think if you, if you notify them in advance . . .

JFK: That's right. [Indicated?]

Ball?: . . . it may be all over.

JFK: Then you just have to, uh, Congress would, take Congress along . . .

Bundy: I can't. . . . I think that's just not, not right.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: I'm not completely, uh, I don't think we ought to abandon just knocking out these missile bases as opposed to, that's much more, uh, defensible, explicable, politically or satisfactory-in-every-way action than the general strike which takes us . . .

Speaker ?: Move down . . .

JFK: . . . us into the city of Havana . . .

Speaker ?: . . . those two.

JFK: . . . and [it is plain to me?] takes us into much more . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: . . . hazardous, shot down. Now I know the Chiefs say, Well, that means their bombers can take off against us, uh, but, uh . . .

Bundy: Their bombers take off against us, then they have made a general war against Cuba of it, which is a, it then becomes much more their decision. We move this way. . . . The political

advantages are, are very strong, it seems to me, of the small strike. Uh, it corresponds to the, the punishment fits the crime in political terms, that we are doing only what we warned repeatedly and publicly we would have to do. Uh, we are not generalizing the attack. The things that we've already recognized and said that we have not found it necessary to attack and said we would not find it necessary to attack . . .

JFK: Well, here's. . . . Let's, look, let's, let's, tonight, it seems to me we ought to go on the assumption that we're going to have the general--number two we've called it . . .

Bundy: Uh-huh.

JFK: . . . course number two, which would be a general strike--that you ought to be in position to do that . . .

Bundy: I agree.

JFK: . . . then if you decide you'd like to do number one.

RFK: How does that in. . .

JFK: What?

RFK: Does that encompass, uh, an invasion?

JFK: Uh, no, I'd say that's the third course. Let's first start with. . . . I'd have to say first find out, uh, the air, so that I would think that we ought to be in position to do one and two. Which would be. . . . One would be just taking out these missiles, if there were others we'd find in the next twenty-four hours. Number two would be to take out all the airplanes, and number three is invade [here?].

Speaker ?: Well, they'd have to take out the SAM sites . . .

Dillon ?: [Words unintelligible] also, Mr. President.

JFK: [Okay?] but that's in, that would be in two, included in number two . . .

Speaker ?: Well . . .

Speaker ?: That's the, that's a terrifically difficult . . .

Dillon: That's a, I mean that's just [words unintelligible] . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible] that may be three, and invasion four.

Taylor: In order to get in to get the airfields, there's a good number we'd have to [get out?].

Gilpatric?: Well, isn't there a question whether any of the SAM sites are operational?

Taylor?: We're not sure yet.

JFK: Okay, well, let's say we've decided, uh, we've gotta go in the whole way. So let's say that number two is the SAM site plus the air . . .

Bundy: It's actually to clear the air . . .

JFK: Yeah. Well, whatever it is . . .

Bundy: . . . to win the air battle.

JFK: . . . [words unintelligible] [to talk over?]. Yeah. Now, it seems to me we ought to be preparing now in the most covered [covert?] way to do one and two, with the freedom to make the choice about number one depending on what information we have on it, uh, what [word unintelligible] moves that requires, and how much is that gonna . . .

McNamara: Mr. President, it requires no action other than what's been started, and you can make a decision prior to the start Saturday or any time thereafter.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: Well, where do we put all these planes?

Taylor: You recall, uh, we have . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

Taylor: . . . this problem, Mr. President. We're going to get new intelligence that will be coming in from these flights . . .

JFK: Right.

Taylor: . . . and that's gonna be, have to be cranked into the, any strike plans we're preparing, so there is that factor of time. The Secretary has given you the, the time, the minimum time is to make a decision, uh, now to, so that we can brief the pilots and then crank in the new intelligence. I would point out that, well . . .

McNamara: [The main fact?], to answer the question you asked, we don't have to decide how we're gonna do it. All we have to decide is if we want . . .

Taylor: No.

McNamara: . . . Sweeney to be prepared to do it.

Taylor: That's correct, the [words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: And Sweeney has said that he will take the tape that comes in tomorrow and process it Thursday and Friday and prepare the mission folders for [word unintelligible] strikes on Saturday or earl-, every day thereafter.

Taylor: Yes. The point is that we'll have to brief pilots. We're, we're . . .

McNamara: Right.

Taylor: . . . holding, uh, holding that back. And there'll be, oh, would say four hundred pilots will have to go, to be briefed in the course of this. So I'm just saying this is widening the, the whole military scope of this thing very materially, if that's what we're, we're supposed to do at this time.

JFK: Well, now when do we start briefing the pilots?

Taylor: They'll need at least twenty-four hours on that . . .

JFK: They will.

Taylor: . . . when this new intelligence comes in and it's, uh . . .

JFK: In other words, then, until tomorrow. . . . All I was thinking of at least until . . .

Bundy: Can they be briefed in such a way that they're secure . . .

Taylor: [Words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: [Words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: . . . they have no access to [words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: . . . [words unintelligible] now. You don't have to s-. . . . The President does not have to make any decision until twenty-four hours before the strike, except the decision to be prepared.

Speaker ?: Uh-huh.

McNamara: And the process of preparation will not in itself run the risk of overt disclosure of the preparation.

Bundy? Doesn't imply briefing, the preparation?

Taylor: Uh, it does but . . .

McNamara: It implies the preparation of mission folders.

Taylor: . . . uh, say twenty-four hours before they, before they go, they start a briefing. I'd like to say this, Mr. President, the more time you can give, the better. Because they can then do a lot more rehearsing and checking out of all the pilots, so, uh, while I accept the, the, uh, the time cycle, I . . .

JFK: Well, now let's say you give a pilot, uh. . . . I mean, how does he find his way down to, uh, a SAM site off of one of these things?

Taylor: Well, they'll give him a target folder with all, all the possible, uh . . .

JFK: They know how to do that, do they?

Taylor: . . . uh, guidance and so on to hit the target. Yes, sir, they're well-trained in that, that procedure.

McNamara: Mission folders have already been prepared on all the known targets. The problem is that we don't have the unknown targets, specifically these, these, uh, missile-launchers and the nuclear storage, and we won't have that until tomorrow night at the earliest, and it'll be processed photographically on Thursday, interpreted Thursday night, turned into target folders on Friday, and the mission could go Saturday. This is Sweeney's estimate of the earliest possible time for a spare

strike against the missiles. Decision by the President on Friday, strike on Saturday. As General Taylor pointed out, if, if we could have either another day of preparation, which means no strike till Saturday, or al-, and/or alternatively . . .

Speaker: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . more than twenty-four hours between the time of decision and the first strike, it will run more smoothly.

JFK: Right. Well, now, what is it, in other, the next twenty-four hours, what is it we need to do in order, if we're going to do, well, let's first say, one and two by S-, S-, Saturday or Sunday? You're doing everything that is . . .

McNamara: Mr. President, we need to do two things, it seems to me. First, we need to develop a specific strike plan limited to the missiles and the nuclear storage sites, which we have not done. This would be a part of the broader plan . . .

JFK: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . but I think we ought to estimate the minimum number of sorties. Since you've indicated some interest in that possibility, we ought to provide you that option. We haven't done this.

JFK: Okay.

McNamara: But that's an easy job to do. The second thing we ought to do, it seems to me as a government, is to consider the consequences. I don't believe we have considered the consequences . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . of any of these actions satisfactorily, and because we haven't considered the consequences, I'm not sure we're taking all the action we ought to take now to minimize those. I, I don't know quite what kind of a world we live in after we've struck Cuba, and we, we've started it. We've put let's say a hundred sorties in, just for purposes of illustration, I don't think you dare start with less than a hundred. You have, you have, uh, uh, twenty-four objects. Well, you have twenty-four, you have twenty-four, uh, laun-, uh, vehicles, plus, uh, sixteen launchers, plus a possible nuclear storage site, but there's the absolute minimum that you would wish to kill. And you couldn't possibly go in after those with less than, I would think, uh, fifty to a hundred sorties.

Taylor: And you'll miss some.

McNamara: And you'll miss some. That's right. Now after we've launched fifty to a hundred sorties, what kind of a world do we live in? How, how do we stop at that point? I don't know the answer to this. I think tonight State and we ought to work on the consequences of any one of these courses of actions, consequences which I don't believe are entirely clear . . .

Ball: With . . .

McNamara: . . . to any of us.

Ball: . . . at any place in the world.

McNamara: At any place in the world, George. That's right. I agree with you.

Taylor: Uh, Mr. President, I should say that the, the Chiefs and the commanders feel so strongly about the, the dangers inherent in the limited strike, that they would prefer taking no military action rather than to take [that limited?] strike. They feel that the, it's opening up the United States to attacks which they can't prevent if we don't take advantage of . . .

JFK: Yeah, but I, I think the only thing is the, the, uh, chances of it becoming a much broader struggle are increased as you step up the, uh. . . . Talk about the dangers to the United States, uh . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

JFK: . . . once you get into, uh, beginning to shoot up those airports, then you get in, you get a lot of anti-aircraft, and you got a lot of, I mean you're running a much more major operation, therefore the dangers of the world-wide effects are substantial to the United States are increased. That's the only argument for it. I quite agree that the, if [you're? or we're?] just thinking about Cuba, the best thing to do is to be bold if you're thinking about trying to get this thing under some degree of, uh, control.

Rusk?: In that regard, Mr. President, there is a combination of the plans which might be considered, namely the limited strike and then the messages, or simultaneously the messages to Khrushchev and Castro, which would indicate to them that this was none other than simply the, fulfilling the statements we've made all along.

JFK: Well, I think we. . . . In other words, that's a matter we've gotta think about tonight.

Speaker ?: Well . . .

JFK: I don't. . . . Let's not let the Chiefs knock us out on this one . . .

[Laughter]

JFK: . . . uh, General, because I think that, uh, uh, what we gotta be thinking about is if you go into Cuba in the way we're talking about and taking out all the planes and all the rest, then you really haven't got much of an argument against invading it.

Martin?: It seems to me a limited strike plus planning for invasion five days afterwards, to be taken unless something untoward occurs, makes much more sense.

Taylor: Well, I would be. . . . First thing, Mr. President, my, my inclination all against, against the invasion, but none the less trying to eliminate as effectively as possible every weapon that can strike the United States.

JFK: But you're not for the invasion?

Taylor: I would not at this moment [words unintelligible].

McNamara: This is why . . .

Taylor: [Words unintelligible] we get committed to the, to the degree that shackles us with West

Berlin.

McNamara: This is why I say I, I think we have to think of the consequences here. I, I would think an, a forced invasion, uh, associated with assisting an uprising, following an extensive air strike, is, is a highly probable set of circumstances. I don't know whether you could carry out an extensive air strike of, let's say, the kind we were talking about a moment ago--seven hundred sorties a day for five days--without an uprising in Cuba. I, I just don't . . .

Martin: [Well?] in this morning's discussion we went into this, talked to some of your people, I believe, a little bit, and we felt an air strike, even of several days, against any military targets primarily, would not result in any substantial unrest. People would just stay home and try to keep out of trouble.

McNamara: Well, when you're talking about military targets, we have seven hundred targets here we're talking about. It, this is a very . . .

JFK: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . a damned expensive target system.

Taylor: That was in number [word unintelligible], Mr. Secretary . . .

McNamara: Yeah.

Taylor: . . . but that's not the one I recommended.

McNamara: Well, neither is the one I'd recommend.

JFK: What does that include, every anti-aircraft gun, or what does that include?

McNamara: Yeah, uh . . .

Taylor: This includes [related?] defenses, all sorts of things.

McNamara: . . . radar, radar sites, uh, SAM sites, and so on. But whether it's seven hundred or two hundred, uh, and it's at least two hundred, I think . . .

Taylor: More in the order of two hundred, I'd say.

McNamara: It's at least two hundred. You can't carry that out without the danger of an uprising.

RFK: Mr. President, while we're considering this problem tonight, I think that we should also consider what, uh, Cuba's going to be a year from now, or two years from now. Assume that we go in and knock these sites out, uh, I don't know what's gonna stop them from saying, We're gonna build the sites six months from now, bring 'em in . . .

Taylor: Noth-, nothing permanent about it.

RFK: Uh, the, what, where are we six months from now? Or that we're in any better position, or aren't we in worse position if we go in and knock 'em out and say, uh . . .

Speaker ?: [We sure are?]

RFK: . . . Don't do it. Uh, I mean, obviously they're gonna have to do it then.

McNamara: You have to put a blockade in following any . . .

Speaker ?: Sure.

McNamara: . . . limited action.

RFK: Then we're gonna have to sink Russian ships.

McNamara ?: Right.

RFK: Then we're gonna have to sink . . .

McNamara ?: Right.

RFK: . . . Russian submarines. Now whether it wouldn't be, uh, the argument, if you're going to get into it at all, uh, whether we should just get into it and get it over with and say that, uh, take our losses, and if we're gonna. . . . If he wants to get into a war over this, uh. . . . Hell, if it's war that's gonna come on this thing, or if he sticks those kinds of missiles in, it's after the warning, and he's gonna, and he's gonna get into a war for, six months from now or a year from now, so. . . .

McNamara: Mr. President, this is why I think tonight we ought to put on paper the alternative plans and the probable, possible consequences thereof in a way that State and Defense could agree on, even if we, uh, disagree and put in both views. Because the consequences of these actions have not been thought through clearly. The one that the Attorney General just mentioned is illustrative of that.

JFK: If the, uh, it doesn't increase very much their strategic, uh, strength, why is it, uh, can any Russian expert tell us why they. . . . After all Khrushchev demonstrated a sense of caution [thousands?] . . .

Speaker ?: Well, there are several, several possible . . .

JFK: . . . Berlin, he's been cautious, I mean, he hasn't been, uh . . .

Ball?: Several possibilities, Mr. President. One of them is that he has given us word now that he's coming over in November to, to the UN. If, he may be proceeding on the assumption, and this lack of a sense of apparent urgency would seem to, to support this, that this isn't going to be discovered at the moment and that, uh, when he comes over this is something he can do, a ploy. That here is Cuba armed against the United States, or possibly use it to try to trade something in Berlin, saying he'll disarm Cuba if, uh, if we'll, uh, yield some of our interests in Berlin and some arrangement for it. I mean, that this is a, it's a trading ploy.

Bundy: I would think one thing that I would still cling to is that he's not likely to give Fidel Castro nuclear warheads. I don't believe that has happened or is likely to happen.

JFK: Why does he put these in there though?

Bundy: Soviet-controlled nuclear warheads [of the kind?] . . .

JFK: That's right, but what is the advantage of that? It's just as if we suddenly began to put a major number of MRBMs in Turkey. Now that'd be goddam dangerous, I would think.

Bundy?: Well, we did, Mr. President.

U.A. Johnson?: We did it. We . . .

JFK: Yeah, but that was five years ago.

U.A. Johnson?: . . . did it in England; that's why we were short.

JFK: What?

U.A. Johnson?: We gave England two when we were short of ICBMs.

JFK: Yeah, but that's, uh . . .

U.A. Johnson?: [Testing?]

JFK: . . . that was during a different period then.

U.A. Johnson?: But doesn't he realize he has a deficiency of ICBMs, needs a PR capacity perhaps, in view of. . . . He's got lots of MRBMs and this is a way to balance it out a bit?

Bundy?: I'm sure his generals have been telling him for a year and a half that he had, was missing a golden opportunity to add to his strategic capability.

Ball?: Yes, I think, I think you, you look at this possibility that this is an attempt to, to add to his strategic capabilities. A second consideration is that it is simply a trading ploy, that he, he wants this in so that he could, he could [words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy?: [A prime consistent to his?] [words unintelligible] . . .

Speaker ? : [Words unintelligible] it means if he can't trade, he's still got the other.

[Several speakers speak at once and only a few words are intelligible.]

Speaker ? : And so . . .

Speaker ? : But [words unintelligible] . . .

Speaker ? : . . . the political impact in Latin America.

Speaker ? : [Words unintelligible] the source [words unintelligible].

Speaker ? : [Words unintelligible] up front?

Speaker ? : Sure. Sure.

U.A. Johnson?: We are now considering these then Soviet missiles, a Soviet . . .

Speaker ? : I think we ought to.

U.A. Johnson?: . . . offensive capability.

Taylor?: You have to consider them Soviet missiles.

U.A. Johnson?: It seems to me if we go in there, lock-stock-and-barrel, we can consider them entirely Cuban.

Bundy: Ah, well, what we say for political purposes and what we think are not identical here.

Speaker ?: But, I mean, any, any rational approach to this must be that they are Soviet missiles, because I think . . .

Speaker ?: You mean . . .

Speaker ?: . . . Khrushchev himself would never, would never risk a major war on, on a fellow as obviously erratic, uh, and foolish as, as Castro.

Speaker ?: [A sub-lieutenant?]

JFK: Well, now let's say . . .

RFK: Let me say, of course . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . one other thing is whether, uh, we should also think of, uh, uh, whether there is some other way we can get involved in this through, uh, Guantanamo Bay, or something, er, or whether there's some ship that, you know, sink the Maine again or something.

Taylor: We think, Mr. President, that under any of these plans we will probably get an attack on, on Guantanamo, at least by, by fire. They have artillery and mortars in the, easily within range, and, uh, any of these actions we take we'll have to give air support to Guantanamo and probably reinforce the garrison.

JFK: Well, that's why, uh, it seems to me that, uh, this, if we decide that we are going to be in a position to do this, either one and two Saturday or Sunday, then I would think we would also want to be in a position, depending on [really?] what happens, either because of an invasion, attack on Guantanamo or some other reason to do the inva-, uh, to, to do the eviction.

Taylor: Mr. President, I personally would just urge you not to set a schedule such as Saturday or Sunday . . .

JFK: No, I haven't.

Taylor: . . . until all the intelligence that could be . . .

JFK: That's right. I just wanted, I just wanted, I thought we ought to be moving, I don't want to waste any time though if we decide that, uh, time is not particularly with us. I just think we ought to be ready to do something, even if we decide not to do it. I'm not saying . . .

Taylor: All . . .

JFK: . . . we should do it.

Taylor: . . . all of this is moving, short of the briefing. We've held back, uh . . .

JFK: I understand.

Taylor: . . . we've restricted people to . . .

JFK: What about, now, this invasion? If we were going to launch that, what do you have, what do we have to be doing now so that wh-, ten days from now we're in a position to invade if that was immediate?

Taylor: I would say that my answer would be largely planning, particularly in the field of mobilization, just what we wan-, uh, what we will, uh, want to recreate after we, uh, [words unintelligible] these forces to Cuba.

Speaker ?: This is [perhaps?] [words unintelligible].

Taylor: I might say that air defense measures we're going to, we're started to take already. We moved more fighters into the southeastern United States and gradually improving some of our, our patrol procedures, uh, under the general guise of, uh, of preparations for that part of the country. We don't think there'd be any, any leaks there that might react against our military targets. I, I'd repeat that our defenses have always been weak in that part of the country.

JFK: Uh, Mr. Secretary, is there anything that, or any of these contingencies if we go ahead that, uh, the next twenty-four hours--we're going to meet again tomorrow [for this?] in the afternoon--is there anything [words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: No, sir, I believe that the military planning has been carried on for a considerable period of time, is well under way. And I believe that all the preparations that we could take without the risk of preparations causing discussion and knowledge of this, either among our public or in Cuba, have been taken and are authorized; all the necessary reconnaissance measures are being taken and are authorized. The only thing we haven't done, really, is to consider fully these alternatives.

Bundy: Our principal problem is to try and imaginatively to think . . .

McNamara: Yes.

Bundy: . . . what the world would be like if we do this . . .

McNamara: [I know?]

Bundy: . . . and what it will be like if we don't . . .

McNamara: That's exactly right.

Bundy: . . . if we fail if we do.

McNamara: We ought to work on that tonight.

Ball?: This may be incidental, Mr. President, but if we're going to get the prisoners out this would be

a good time to get them out.

JFK: I guess they're not gonna get. . . . Well. . . .

Bundy: You mean take 'em out.

Ball?: No, what I meant was . . .

[Laughter]

Ball?: . . . if we're gonna trade 'em [word unintelligible] . . .

JFK: They're on the Isles of Pines? These prisoners?

RFK: No. Some of them . . .

Speaker ?: [Yes?] sir.

RFK: . . . are. They're split up.

Bundy: [If you can?] get them out alive, I'd make that choice.

JFK: There's no sign of their getting out now, is there? The exchange?

RFK: No, but they will take a few weeks.

JFK: A few weeks.

RFK: [Yeah?]. You know they're having that struggle between the young Cuban leaders and the [words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: We have a list of the sabotage options, Mr. President, and I. . . . It's not a very loud noise to raise at a meeting of this sort, but I think it would need your approval. I take it you are in favor of sabotage. The one question which rises is whether we wish to do this in, uh, naval area, [getting in?] international waters, or in positions which may. . . . Mining international waters or mining Cuban waters, may hit. . . . Mines are very indiscriminate. Uh. . . .

JFK: Is that what they're talking about? Mining?

Bundy: That's one of the items. There are, uh, there. . . . Most of them relate to infiltration of raiders, and will simply be deniable internal Cuban activities. The question that we need guidance from you on is whether you now wish to authorize sabotage which might have its impact on neutrals or even friendly ships.

JFK: I don't think we want to put mines out right now, do we? [Make use of the nets?]

McNamara: Shouldn't wait for twenty-four hours at least before any [words unintelligible] . . .

RFK: [Words unintelligible]

Bundy: Well, let's put the others into action then in Cuba, the internal ones, not . . .

Speaker ?: Huh?

Bundy: . . . the other ones.

JFK: Mr. Vice President, do you have any thoughts? Between one and two?

L.B. Johnson: I don't think I can add anything [that is essential?].

JFK: The, uh . . .

Speaker ?: There's a . . .

JFK: . . . the, uh, let's see, what time we gonna meet then tomorrow? What is it we want to have by tomorrow from the . . . We want to have from the department tomorrow in a little bit more concise form whether there is any kind of a [words unintelligible] we have to give. How much of a [words unintelligible] and, number two, what you think of these various alternatives we've been talking about, if you see there is any use bringing this to Khrushchev in the way of, [for?], for example, do we want to, for ex-, here is Dobrynin now, he's repeated. . . . Uh, I got to go to, uh, see Schroeder. Let's meet at, uh, eleven to twelve. What time do I get back tomorrow night?

Bundy?: Reasonably [early?].

JFK: Get back about 7:45.

JFK: We meet here by five. . . .

Bundy: Mr. Secretary, some of the staff are in trouble with the dinner for Schroeder tomorrow night.

JFK: Okay, well, now the. . . . I don't think, I don't know, think we'll have anything by noon tomorrow, do we?

Bundy: Would you want to wait until Thursday4 morning, Mr. President?

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JFK: Looks to me like we might as well. I, I. . . . Uh. Everybody else can meet if they want to, if they need to. The Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense can . . .

McNamara: I think it'd be very useful to meet or else stay afterwards tonight [words unintelligible] [for a while?].

Bundy: It would be a great improvement not to have any more intense White House meetings--trouble with all the [words unintelligible] if we could meet at the State Department tomorrow.

[Several speakers speak at once and none of the words are intelligible.]

JFK: All right, then I could meet you, Mac, when I get back tomorrow and just as well, whatever the thing is and then we can meet Thursday morning. I don't. . . . The question is whether, uh. . . . I'm going to see Gromyko Thursday and I think the question that I'd really like to have is some sort of a judgment on, is whether we ought to do anything with Gromyko. Whether we ought to say

anything to him; whether we ought to, uh, indirectly give him sort of a, give him an ultimatum on this matter, or whether we just ought to go ahead without him. It seems to me that . . .

Speaker ?: In other words . . .

JFK: . . . he said we'd be. . . . The Attorney General, the ambassador told the Attorney General, as he told Bohlen the other day that they were not going to put these weapons there. Now either he's lying or doesn't know. Whether the Attorney General saw Dobrynin--not acting as if we had any information about 'em--said that, of course, that they must realize that if this ever does happen that this is going to cause this, give a very clear indication of what's going to happen. Now I don't know what would come out of that, I. . . . Possibly nothing. Possibly, uh, this'd alert them. Possibly they would reconsider their decision, but I don't think we've had any clear evidence of that, and it would give them. . . . We'd lose a week.

Ball?: You mean tell them that. . . .

JFK: Well, not tell them that we know that they've got it, but merely in the course of a conversation Dobrynin, having said that they would never do it, the Attorney General, who sees Dobrynin once in a while, would . . .

Ball?: How would we lose a week?

JFK: What?

Ball?: How would we lose a week?

JFK: Oh, we would be. . . . What we'd be, Bobby would be saying to them, in short, is if these ever come up that we're going to do, the present state would have to take action. And, uh, this [words unintelligible], uh, this could cause [words unintelligible] the most far-reaching consequences. On the possibility that that might cause them to reconsider their action. I don't know whether his, they're aware of what I sai-. . . . I can't understand their viewpoint, if they're aware of what we said at the press conferences. I say, I've never. . . . I don't think there's any record of the Soviets ever making this direct a challenge, ever, really . . .

Bundy: We have to be clear, Mr. President . . .

JFK: . . . since the Berlin blockade.

Bundy: . . . that they made this decision, in all probability, before you made your statements.

McNamara: Uh-huh.

Bundy: This is, uh, important element in the calendar.

Dillon: That didn't change it.

Bundy: No. Indeed, they didn't change it, but they, they. . . . It's quite a different thing. There was either a contravention on one . . .

Dillon: Yeah.

Bundy: My, I wouldn't bet a cookie that Dobrynin doesn't know a bean about . . .

Dillon?: Uh-huh.

Bundy: . . . this.

JFK: You think he does know?

RFK: He didn't know.

Bundy: I, I would [words unintelligible] . . .

RFK: He didn't even know that [words unintelligible] in my judgment.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

Taylor: Why it's, I mean there's evidence of sightings in late August, I think, and early September of, of some sort.

Speaker ?: It seems to me, Mr. President, there's, in your public presentation, simultaneous or subsequent to an action, your hand is strengthened somewhat if the Soviets have, uh, lied to you, either privately or in public.

Bundy?: I'll agree to that.

Speaker ?: And then if, or if you, uh, without knowing, if you ask Gromyko, or if Bobby asks Dobrynin again, or if some other country could get the Soviets to say publicly in the UN, No, we have no offensive . . .

RFK: TASS, of course, said they're gonna. . . .

JFK: When did TASS say that?

Speaker ?: A while back.

RFK: . . . said they would send offensive weapons to Cuba.

Bundy: Yeah. The TASS . . .

JFK: Khrushchev say that?

Bundy: . . . statement I read this morning.

RFK?: [Yes?]

Bundy: No, the TASS statement. It's . . .

Speaker ?: We don't know if Khrushchev under control yet.

Speaker ?: Uh.

Bundy: Uh, no, we don't have any detail on that. Soviet . . .

JFK: Well, what about my. . . . What question would be there for what I might say to Gromyko about this matter, if you want me just get in the record . . .

Speaker ?: Uh-huh.

JFK: . . . like asking him whether they plan to do it.

Speaker ?: Well, I think what you get is to . . .

Bundy: Putting it the other way around saying that we are . . .

Speaker ?: . . . call his . . .

Bundy: . . . putting great weight upon the assurances of him . . .

Speaker ?: . . . call the attention to the statement that you've made on this . . .

Speaker ?: Yup.

Speaker ?: . . . this is your public commitment and that, uh, you, you are going to have to, you're gonna abide by this, and you just want assurances from him that, that, uh, they're, they're living up to what they've said, that they're not gonna . . .

JFK: Well, let's say he said, Well, we're not planning to.

Bundy: "The government of the Soviet Union also authorized TASS to state that there is no need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons for the repulsion of aggression for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance, Cuba. Our nuclear weapons are so powerful in their explosive force, the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry those nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for" . . .

JFK: [I see?]

Bundy: . . . "sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union."

JFK: Well, what date was that?

Bundy: September eleventh.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

Dillon: When they were all there.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible] certainly on the way.

JFK: But isn't that. . . . but, as I say, we have to. . . . We never really ever had a case where it's been quite this, uh. . . . After all, they backed down in, uh, Chinese Communists in '58. They didn't go into Laos. Agreed to a ceasefire there.

[Several speakers speak at once and many of the words are unintelligible.]

Bundy: We had this trouble . . .

JFK?: They backed up . . .

Bundy: . . . at [words unintelligible] where they . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK?: [What's?] . . .

Bundy: . . . nuclear storage site.

Speaker ?: At least.

Bundy: Yeah. It's very clear.

JFK: What?

Bundy: I'm as puzzled as Bob is by the absence of a nuclear storage site.

Taylor: We don't know enough about it yet and we [words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: I understand that. We may learn a lot overnight.

Speaker ?: Isn't it puzzling, also, there is no evidence of any troops protecting the sites?

Taylor: Well, there're troops there. At least there're tents . . .

[Several speakers speak at once and many of the words are unintelligible.]

Speaker ?: [A few campers?] [words unintelligible].

Taylor: . . . [presumably they have some personnel?].

McNamara?: But they look like [words unintelligible]. It's as if you could walk over the fields into those vans. [I agree?]

JFK: Well, it's a goddamn mystery to me.

McNamara?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: I don't know enough about the Soviet Union, but if anybody can tell me any other time since the Berlin blockade where the Russians have given us so clear provocation, I don't know when it's been, because they've been awfully cautious really. The Russians, I never. . . . Now, maybe our mistake was in not saying some time before this summer that if they do this we're [word unintelligible] to act. Maybe they'd gone in so far [that?] it's. . . .

RFK: Yeah, but then why did they put that statement in it?

JFK: Perhaps it. . . .

Speaker ?: That's it [words unintelligible] . . .

JFK: This was following my statement, wasn't it?

RFK: September eleventh.

Taylor: Quick ground [words unintelligible].

JFK: When was my statement? What?

Taylor: Ground it up. Well, I was asking Pat if they had any way of getting quick intelligence, that means somebody in there and out of there so we can really take a look on the ground.

Speaker ?: No, this is two days before your statement.

Carter: Uh, we can try it, but your problems about exfiltration and your problems with training an individual as to what to look for are not handled in twenty-four hours.

McNamara: A better way would be to send in a low-flying airplane . . .

Carter: Yes.

McNamara: . . . and we have today put those on alert, but we would recommend against . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . using the low-flying planes until shortly before the intention to strike.

Taylor: This was considered by the, by the co-, commanders today, and they're all of that opinion that the, the loss of surprise would there, was more serious than the, the information we'd get from that.

Speaker ?: I would think it would be very valuable to have them go in shortly before the strike, just to build the evidence. I mean, when you've got pictures that really show what you were, what was there.

JFK: Now, with these great demono-, uh, uh, Bohlen and Thompson, did they have an explanation of why the Russians are sticking a [word unintelligible] by itself?

[Several conversations are going on at once and only the following fragments are intelligible.]

Speaker ?: Take them out . . .

JFK: [Words unintelligible] Acheson [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: . . . a little bit later something [words unintelligible]. Yeah.

JFK: What're we going to say up in Connecticut? You expected the [Bentley trial?].

[Laughter]

JFK: This is a jeer for the . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible] President?

JFK: [Words unintelligible] eight or nine-thirty . . .

Bundy: The cabinet at ten.

JFK: Yeah. I'll just see Tom Mann at one.

Bundy: And that's Mann or Sato or both?

JFK: Sato.

Speaker ?: Japanese, uh . . .

JFK: Mann ought to know something. Let's have it here at eleven. Rusk at nine-thirty. In fact, they don't even have to come.

Speaker ?: No.

JFK: [Words unintelligible] the cabinet.

Speaker ?: You just. . . .

JFK: We're going to discuss the [words unintelligible] budget. What about Schroeder? Do I have anything we want to say to Schroeder?

Bundy: We, uh, have a lot on that to discuss which, uh, was halfway in early in the morning. I don't think it's very complicated. The big issue that has come up is Schroeder makes a very strong case for refusing visas on the grounds that he thinks that, uh, that would undermine morale in Berlin in a very dangerous way. I think that's the principal issue that's between us.

JFK: I wonder if we could get somebody to give me something about what our position . . .

Bundy: You want that?

JFK: . . . should be on that.

Bundy: Yeah. Very happy to. You want it tonight?

JFK: No, no. Just in the morning.

Speaker ?: Mr. President, at least they're setting up the time . . .

Speaker ?: Yes, Mr. President.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: That's very good, General, thank you.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible] [Thompson here?]

[Several conversations are going on at once and only the following fragments are intelligible.]

McNamara: Where is Reilly going to be?

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

Carter: Mr. McCone is coming in tonight.

McNamara: . . . in Mac's office. I'll get you one. Did you see him?

Carter: Yes. [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: Yeah, I'll go down and see him [words unintelligible].

Carter: I would suggest that we get into this hot water partly because of this.

JFK: Yeah, I want to talk to him in the morning. I'd like to just be briefed [words unintelligible].
Why is that? [Words unintelligible]

Bundy?: He won't be. . . . Does he get back tonight?

Carter: Coming in tonight. Yes, sir. I'm going to get . . .

Bundy?: Then could he come in in the morning?

Carter: [Words unintelligible]

[Several conversations continue at the same time and only the following fragments are intelligible.]

Bundy?: Could he come in then at nine-thirty?

Carter?: Sure.

Speaker ?: [Bob?], [words unintelligible].

McNamara: Could we agree to meet, uh, mid-afternoon?

Speaker ?: Any time you say, Bob.

McNamara: And then, uh, guide our work tonight and tomorrow on that [schedule?]. Why, why don't we say three o'clock? This'll give us some time . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . to cover all we've done . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . and then do some more tomorrow night if necessary tomorrow afternoon.

Bundy: Would it be [word unintelligible] to make it a little earlier? I ought to get to a four o'clock meeting with Schroeder.

McNamara: [Word unintelligible] said two o'clock, I think, with Schroeder.

Dillon?: Two o'clock.

Bundy: Good.

McNamara: Really plenty of time between [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: Two o'clock [words unintelligible].

McNamara: [Words unintelligible] At 2:00 P.M. we'll do it at State.

Speaker ?: All right.

McNamara: Now, could we agree what we're gonna do? I would suggest that we, and I don't expect, in fact I . . .

[McNamara and another speaker speak at the same time and none of the words are intelligible.]

McNamara: . . . I would suggest that we, uh, divide the, the, uh, series of targets up by, in effect, numbers of DGZs and, uh, and, uh, numbers of sorties required to take those out for a series of alternatives starting only with the missiles and working up through the nuclear storage sites and the MIGs and the, er, and the SAMs and so on. So we can say, This target system would take so many points, eighty points and so many objects would take so many sorties to knock out. The, the. . . . Not because I think that these are reasonable alternatives . . .

Bundy?: They're not really going to be realistic, even, but they give us [words unintelligible] . . .

McNamara: . . . but they give an order [words unintelligible] to the President to get some idea of this. And this we can do, and this can be done very easily. But the most important thing we need to do is this appraisal of the world after any one of these situations . . .

Bundy: Sure.

McNamara: . . . in great detail.

Bundy?: That's right.

McNamara: And, and I think probably this is something State would have to do . . .

Speaker ?: [Word unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . and I would strongly urge we put it on paper . . .

Speaker ?: That's right.

McNamara: . . . and we, I'll be happy to stay, or, how, or, uh, look at it early in the morning, or something like that if, in order that we may inject disagreement if we [words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: What I would suggest is that someone be deputized to, to do a piece of paper which really is what happens. I think the margin is between whether we take out the [missile zone?, or missiles on?] strike or take a lot of air bases. This is tactical within a decision to take military action. Now, doesn't, overwhelmingly, it may substantially if it doesn't overwhelmingly change the world. I think

any military action does change the world. And I think not taking action changes the world. And I think these are the two worlds that we need to look at.

McNamara: I'm very much inclined to agree, but I think we have to make that point . . .

Bundy: I agree.

McNamara: . . . within the military action . . .

Bundy: I agree.

McNamara: . . . a gradation . . .

Bundy: Oh, many gradations and they have major, it can have major effects.

McNamara: Yeah.

Bundy: I mean, I don't need to exaggerate that now. The question is how to get ahead with that, and whether, uh, I would think, myself, that it, it, it, the appropriate place to make this preliminary analysis is at the Department of State. I think the rest of us ought to spend the evening really to some advantage separately trying to have our own views of this. And I think we should meet in order, at least, to trade pieces of paper, before two o'clock, uh, tomorrow morning if that's agreeable.

McNamara: Why don't we meet tomorrow morning, and, and with pieces of paper, uh, from State, and this is a h- . . .

Speaker ?: No.

McNamara: . . . maybe you don't feel this is reasonable, but . . .

Speaker ?: No. [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . I, I would strongly urge that tonight State [words unintelligible] . . .

Bundy: Well, who is State's de facto? Is, are, are you all tied up tonight? Or what?

Speaker ?: No, no.

Ball?: Uh, the situation is that the only one who's tied up tonight is, is the Secretary and he is coming down at eleven o'clock from his dinner to look at what we will have done in the meantime.

Speaker ?: Alex is back waiting for him.

Ball?: Oh, good, we'll have Alex, we'll have Tommy. Well, we've kept . . .

Bundy: Right.

Ball?: . . . this to our, this has, this has been . . .

Bundy: But you have Tommy? I . . .

Speaker ?: Talked to him this afternoon some.

Bundy: Then you're, do you have any, uh. . . . I'd be fascinated by this, the first sense of how he sees this.

Ball?: Well, the, the, the argument was really between, uh, Hilsman's demonologists, who were already cut in because they [word unintelligible] your boots, who thought this was a low-risk operation. Tommy thought it was a high-risk operation by the Soviets, in other words they were taking real chances. Other people rather thought that they, they probably had miscalculated us and thought this wasn't a risky operation. You know, on the way they were going at it . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

Ball?: . . . either impatient like the SAM sites hadn't been set up to protect it, the various factors which suggest to them that they didn't think anything was gonna happen. Tommy leaned the other way.

McNamara: Could I suggest that tonight we actually draft a paper and it start this way--just a paragraph or two of, of the knowns. Uh, we have to. . . . The knowns are that the SAMs that are here. Let's say the, the probable knowns, because we're not certain of any of them. The probabilities are the SAM system isn't working today. This is important. The probabilities are that these missiles are not operational today. The probabilities are that they won't be operational in less than X days, although we can't be certain. Pat said two weeks. I'm not so sure I'd put it that far. But I. . . . There's just two or three of these knowns. I would put in there, by the way . . .

Speaker ?: How . . .

McNamara: . . . the number of . . .

Speaker ?: Unprotected.

McNamara: Uh, they're unprotected. Another known I'd put in is that they have about fifty X, uh, MIGs,-15,-17 and-19s; that they have certain crated, uh, I've forgotten, say, ten, er, X crated MIG-21s, only one of which we believe to have been assembled. They have X crated IL-28s, none of which we believe to have been assembled. These, this is, in a sense, the problem we, we face there.

Bundy: Do you believe State or the agencies should state the military knowns?

McNamara: Well, this. . . . I can sta- . . .

Speaker ?: I think . . .

McNamara: . . . we can do this in just ten seconds . . .

Speaker ?: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . a very, very simple . . .

Speaker ?: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . statement I think. But then I would follow that by the, the alternatives of, not all of

them but the more likely alternatives that we consider open to us. And would hope we could stay just a second here and see if we could sketch them out now. Like . . .

Bundy: I'd like to throw one in of a military kind, and what. . . . Shall we get them in order and, uh, you move. . . . Well, we'll all [words unintelligible]. I would like to throw one in that I do not think the army and the Chiefs would normally consider, and that is, uh, the possibility of genuinely making a quite large-scale, uh, strike, followed by a drop, followed by a recovery of the people dropped to get these things and not simply to increase the chance that we've hit most of them. There's always unc-, incompleteness in a military opera-, in an air operation. But if these things are what the pictures show, you could drop a battalion of paratroopers and get 'em. Now what you do with a battalion, I grant you, is a hell of a problem.

Speaker ?: Yeah.

Bundy: I think there's an enormous political advantage, myself, within these options, granting that all the Chiefs didn't fully agree, taking out the thing that gives the trouble and not the thing that doesn't give the trouble.

McNamara?: This, as opposed to, uh, is it an air attack on . . .

Bundy: Supplementary to an air attack. I mean, how're you gonna know that you've got 'em? And if you haven't got 'em, what've you done?

Taylor: Well, this, this, of course, raises the question of having gotten this set, what happens to the set that arrives next week?

McNamara: Oh, I, I think the ans- . . .

Taylor: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . I, let me answer Mac's question first. How do we know we've got them? We will have photo recon [militarily?] with the strike. Sweeney specifically plans this, and . . .

Bundy: Proving a negative is a hell of a job.

McNamara: Pardon me?

Bundy: Proving a negative is a hell of a job.

Taylor: Yeah, but Central's on the ground very well out of there, uh, Mac.

Bundy: That's true.

McNamara: Terrible risk to put them in there, uh. . . .

Bundy: I ag-, I think the [words unintelligible] is probably a bad idea, but it . . .

McNamara: I think the risk troubles me, it's too great in relation to the risk of not knowing whether we get them.

Bundy: Well . . .

McNamara: But, in any case, this is a small variant of one . . .

Bundy: That's right, it's a minor . . .

McNamara: . . . of the plans.

Bundy: . . . variant of one plan.

McNamara: It seems to me that there are some major alternatives here that I don't think we discussed them fully enough today, and I'd like to see them laid on the paper, if State agrees. The first is what I, I still call it the political approach. Uh, let me say it's a nonmilitary action.

[Laughter]

McNamara: It doesn't start with one and it isn't gonna end with one.

Speaker ?: Yeah.

McNamara: And I, for that reason I call it a political approach.

Speaker ?: Right . . .

McNamara: And I say it isn't gonna end with one because once you start this political approach, I don't think you're gonna have any opportunity for a military operation.

Speaker ?: I agree.

Taylor: It becomes very difficult.

McNamara: But at least I think we ought to put it down there, uh.

Taylor: Right.

Bundy: And it should be worked out. I mean what, what is the maximum . . .

Speaker ?: Your ride is waiting downstairs [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: Very good, thank you [words unintelligible].

McNamara: Yeah, it should, should definitely be worked out. What, exactly what does it in-, involve, and what are the chances of success of it? They're not zero. They're plus I think.

Taylor?: We did an outline this morning along these lines.

McNamara: All right. That, that's [word unintelligible] anyway . . .

Bundy: Um, but, do you see, it's, it's not just the chances of success, it's the, it ought to be examined in terms of the pluses and minuses of, of nonsuccess . . .

McNamara: Yes. Yes.

Bundy: . . . because there is such a thing as making this thing pay off in ways that are . . .

McNamara: Yeah. Yeah.

Bundy: . . . are of some significance, even though we don't act . . .

McNamara: Yeah. I completely agree.

Bundy: . . . or go with that.

McNamara: And, and this is my second alternative in . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . particular and I want to come to that in a moment. But the first one I . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . I completely agree it isn't. I, I phrased it improperly. Not the chances of success. It's the results . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . that [we're calling? or causing?] . . .

Bundy: Yep.

McNamara: . . . for the mankind.

Bundy: Yep.

McNamara: Now, the second alternative, I, I'd like to discuss just a second, because we haven't discussed it fully today, and I alluded it to, to it a moment ago. I, I, I'll be quite frank. I don't think there is a military problem here. This is my answer to Mac's question . . .

Bundy: That's my honest [judgment?].

McNamara: . . . and therefore, and I've gone through this today, and I asked myself, Well, what is it then if it isn't a military problem? Well, it's just exactly this problem, that, that, uh, if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the U.S., the U.S. would act.

Speaker ?: That's right.

Speaker ?: That's right.

McNamara: Now, it's that problem, this . . .

Speaker ?: You can't get around that one.

McNamara: . . . this, this is a domestic, political problem. The announcement--we didn't say we'd go in and not, and kill them, we said we'd act. Well, how will we act? Well, we want to act to prevent their use, and it's really the . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . the act. Now, how do we pre-, act to prevent their use? Well, first place, we carry out open surveillance, so we know what they're doing. All times. Twenty-four hours a day from now and forever, in a sense indefinitely. What else do we do? We prevent any further offensive weapons coming in. In other words we blockade offensive weapons.

Bundy: How do we do that?

McNamara: We search every ship.

Taylor: There're two kinds of, of blockade: a blockade which stops ships from coming in and, and simply a seizure, I mean a, simply a search.

McNamara: A search, that's right . . .

Taylor?: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . and . . .

Speaker ?: Well, it would be a search and removal if found.

Bundy: You have to make the guy stop to search him, and if he won't stop, you have to shoot, right?

Speaker ?: All [word unintelligible] up . . .

Speaker ?: And you have to remove what you're looking for if you find it.

Speaker ?: That's right.

McNamara: Absolutely. Absolutely. And then an ul-, I call it an ultimatum associated with these two actions is a statement to the world, particularly to Khrushchev, that we have located these offensive weapons; we're maintaining a constant surveillance over them; if there is ever any indication that they're to be launched against this country, we will respond not only against Cuba, but we will respond directly against the Soviet Union with, with a full nuclear strike. Now this alternative doesn't seem to be a very acceptable one, but wait until you work on the others.

Bundy: That's right.

[Laughter]

McNamara: This is the, this is the problem, but I've thought something about the others this afternoon.

Speaker ?: He's right.

Ball?: Bob, let me ask you one thing that seems slightly irrelevant. What real utility would there be in the United States if we ever actually captured one of these things and could examine it and take it apart?

McNamara: Not very much. No. No.

Ball?: Would we learn anything about the . . .

McNamara: No. no.

Ball?: . . . technology that would be meaningful?

McNamara: I don't [words unintelligible]. Pat may . . .

Carter: I don't think so.

McNamara: . . . disagree with [me?], but I . . .

Speaker ?: Yeah.

McNamara: Well, in any case, that's an alternative. I'd like to see it expressed and discussed.

Ball?: Of course, if, if it takes two hours to screw a head on as a guy said this morning, two to four hours . . .

McNamara: Oh, by the way, that should be one of the knowns in this . . .

Ball?: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . initial paragraph.

Bundy?: That's right.

Ball?: . . . uh, they got all night. How're you gonna survey 'em during the night? Uh, I mean, it seems to me that they're some gaps in the surveillance.

McNamara: Oh, well, it's really the, yes, it isn't the surveillance, it's the ultimatum that is . . .

Ball?: Yeah.

McNamara: . . . the key part in this.

Ball?: Yeah.

McNamara: And really what I tried to do was develop a little package that meets the action requirement of that paragraph I read.

Speaker ?: Yeah.

McNamara: Because, as I suggested, I don't believe it's primarily a military problem. It's primarily a, a domestic, political problem.

Ball: Yeah, well, as far as the American people are concerned, action means military action, period.

McNamara: Well, we have a blockade. Search and, uh, removal of, of offensive weapons entering Cuba. Uh, [word unintelligible] again, I don't want to argue for this . . .

Ball: No, no, I . . .

McNamara: . . . because I, I don't think it's . . .

Ball: . . . I think it's an alternative.

McNamara: . . . a perfect solution by any means. I just want to . . .

Bundy: Which one are we [still on?] would you say?

McNamara: Still on the second one, uh . . .

Ball: Now, one of the things we look at is whether any, the actual operation of a blockade doesn't, isn't a greater involvement almost than a . . .

McNamara: Might well be, George.

Ball: . . . military action.

Speaker ?: I think so.

McNamara: It's, it's a search, not a, not an embargo, uh. . . .

Speaker ?: Yeah.

Ball: It's a series of single, unrelated acts, not by surprise. This, uh, come in there on Pearl Harbor just frightens the hell out of me as to what's going beyond. [Yeah, well, anyway?] the Board of National Estimates have been working on this ever since . . .

Bundy: What, what goes, what goes beyond what?

Ball: What happens beyond that. You go in there with a surprise attack. You put out all the missiles. This isn't the end. This is the beginning, I think. There's a whole hell of a lot of things . . .

Bundy: Are they all working on powerful reaction in your [word unintelligible]?

Carter: Yes, sir.

Bundy: Good.

Ball: . . . which goes back down to, uh, Mr. Secretary, is this the central . . .

Bundy: Yeah.

Ball: . . . point of, to connect . . .

[Two conversations are going on at once. Only these fragments are intelligible.]

McNamara: Well, that, that takes me into the third category of action. I'd lump them all in the third category. I call it overt military action of varying degrees of intensity, ranging. . . . And, if you feel there's any difference in them, in the kind of a world we have after the varying degrees of intensity . . .

.

Speaker ?: Right.

McNamara: . . . you have to divide category three into subcategories by intensity and probable effect on the world thereafter. And I think there is, at least in the sense of the Cuban uprising, which I happen to believe is a most important element of category three, it applies to some elements in category three, some categories of category three, but not all. But, in any event, what, what kind of a world do we live in? In Cuba what action do we take? What do we expect Castro will be doing after, uh, you attack these missiles? Does he survive as a, as a political leader? Is he overthrown? Uh, is he stronger, weaker? Uh, how will he react? How will the Soviets react? What can. . . . How, how could Khrushchev afford to accept this action without some kind of rebuttal? I don't think, he can't accept it without some rebuttal. It may not be a substantial rebuttal, but it's, gonna have to be some. Where? How do we react in relation to it? What happens when we do mobilize? How does this affect our allies' support of us in relation to Berlin? Well, you know far better than I the problems, uh, but it would seem to me if we could lay this out tonight and then meet at a reasonable time in the morning to go over a tentative draft, discuss it, and then have another draft for some time in the afternoon . . .

Gilpatric?: One kind of planning, Bob, that, uh, that, uh, we didn't explicitly talk about today, uh, which is to look at the points of vulnerability around the world, not only in Berlin . . .

McNamara: Sure.

Gilpatric?: . . . not only in Turkey . . .

McNamara: Sure. Iran.

Gilpatric?: Iran and all of them . . .

McNamara: And Korea.

Gilpatric?: What, what precautionary measures ought to be taken?

McNamara: Yes. Yes.

Gilpatric?: Well, these, this, these are, these are both military and political . . .

McNamara: Exactly. Well, uh, and we call it a world-wide alert . . .

Speaker ?: [Yeah?]

McNamara: . . . under that heading we've got a whole series of precautionary measures that we, we think, uh, should be taken. All of our forces should be put on alert, but beyond that, mobilization, redeployment, movement, and so on. . . . Well, would it be feasible to meet at some time in the morning, uh, that's . . .

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . [words unintelligible]? Mac, what would you think?

Bundy: I ought to, uh, join the President for the meeting with Schroeder and I'll be involved in getting some, started for that until ten o'-, uh, from about nine-thirty on. I could be, meet any time before that.

Speaker ?: Well, why don't we take the [words unintelligible]?

Carter: Well now, the President was going to see Mr. McCone at nine-thirty.

Bundy: That's right.

McNamara: Well, why don't we meet at eight-thirty? Is that . . .

Bundy: [Fine?]

McNamara: Let's, let's try that.

Bundy: Okay.

Speaker ?: Well you want. . . . Is [Halberstam?] coming?

McNamara: Now, there's not much we can do to help, uh, I'd be happy to, though . . .

Speaker ?: No. [Words unintelligible]

McNamara: . . . if you think of anything we can do. We'll, we'll go to work tonight and get these numbers of sorties by target systems laid out. I'll, Reilly's up in Mac's office and I'll go down there now and get them started on it.

Carter: I think Mr. McCone could be helpful to you all in the morning.

McNamara: Well, I think he should try to stay here at eight-thirty.

Speaker ?: Yeah.

Carter: He didn't worry about this for a heck of a long time . . .

Bundy: Sure.

Carter: . . . [word unintelligible] some.

[Meeting appears to be breaking up. Only the following fragments of conversation are intelligible.]

McNamara: Yeah.

Speaker ?: We can meet while [words unintelligible].

Speaker ?: Yeah.

Speaker ?: Are you going to be dining tonight? Or whatever it was you [word unintelligible]?

Bundy: I'm at your service.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible] I thought I, we might be in touch with you . . .

Bundy: I'll be right there. I can come down, or at supper privately. Either way.

[Laughter]

Speaker ?: Well, uh, why don't we, why don't we see what it looks like . . .

Speaker ?: Yeah.

Speaker ?: . . . uh, [starting?] under way.

Ball?: We're trying to run this with a minimum of manpower and it must still [words unintelligible].

[Several speakers speak at once and only the following words are intelligible.]

Bundy: We must do.

Taylor?: Secretarial problems. This has been one of the problems.

Speaker ?: Well, I think I could bust out a staff . . .

Bundy: I have two, extremely, totally . . .

McNamara: I've got, I'd trust my staff anywhere, I mean, I . . . They [word unintelligible]. . . . I've got my car out here, Admiral.

Speaker ?: Oh, it's out this way.

McNamara: Yeah. All right. Good night.

Bundy: Good night.

Speaker ?: [Words unintelligible]

[Conversations end. Room noises for almost four minutes. Telephone rings in the distance.]

Lincoln: Hello. [In the distance.]

[Footsteps]

Cleaning man: Yes, lady, I'm gonna bring this.

Lincoln: Hello, [words unintelligible] [left?]

Cleaning man: [Laughs] Here. There's just some stacks, that's all.

[Recording ends.]

22. Memorandum of Meeting

Washington, October 17, 1962, 8:30 a.m.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Memo for the Record. Top Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone. Also reproduced in CIA Documents on the Cuban

Missile Crisis, 1962, pp. 159-160.

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING ATTENDED IN SECRETARY BALL'S CONFERENCE ROOM BY SECRETARY MCNAMARA, BUNDY, GENERAL TAYLOR, ROBERT KENNEDY, MARTIN AND MCCONE AT 0830, 17 OCTOBER

1. Meeting involved an inclusive exploration of alternatives open to us in connection with the Cuban matter.

Ball seemed to feel military action would throw the NATO allies in disarray and permit Britain and France to separate from us on Berlin policy. Stated Kohler discussions with Khrushchev did not fit in with Soviet action in Cuba./1/ Suggested Cuban situation might be by inadvertance. Suggested we might give Khrushchev an "out" on the grounds that he does not know what is going on in Cuba and discussed various types of action ranging from a limited military strike to minimize losses to the calling of a Summit conference.

/1/See Document 20.

2. During the discussion Taylor and Ball speculated as to whether this whole thing was not a "mock up" designed to draw out action by us, and that the war heads were not there. This view was not supported.

3. McNamara urged avoiding taking a position, considering all alternatives, with meetings this afternoon and this evening in preparation of final discussion with the President tomorrow.

4. Urged exploration of all facts and listed the following:

About 50 or 60 MIG 17s and 19s now in Cuba and these apparently have no offensive capability.

One MIG 21 has been seen and a number of suspicious crates also seen indicating some MIG 21 capability and we do not know whether the MIG 21 has an offensive capability.

IL 28's have been delivered.

Three MRBM sites under construction and can be ready in two weeks.

Warhead locations unknown; also unknown whether MRBM's are nuclear or conventional. Also feels that if nuclear warheads supplied them Soviet will also supply nuclear bombs for bombers with offensive capability.

Shiploads of boxes of unknown purpose reported by Lundahl to DCI on October 14th.

28 Soviet ships en route to Cuba at the present time.

Sited at Havana, mysterious excavations, revetments, covered buildings, railroad tracks through tunnels, etc., might be nuclear storage site.

Other facts should be developed today.

Note: McCone responded by reading numbered paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of attached memorandum dated October 17th./2/

/2/Document 26.

5. General Taylor and Thompson discussed political nature of problem including possibility of forcing settlement in Berlin and elsewhere--Khrushchev wished show down on Berlin and this gave a show down issue. Believes Khrushchev would be surprised to find we know about MRBMs. Thompson emphasized Khrushchev wants Berlin settlement but on his terms. And will probably deny knowledge of Cuban situation but at any event would justify actions because of our missiles in Italy and Turkey. Also Khrushchev recognizes that action by us would be divisive among our allies.

6. McCone emphasized his views on political objectives as stated in paragraph 5 of the attached memorandum, and also repeated paragraph 2-C. Also made the point in paragraph 6.

7. McNamara discussed many operational questions concerning the use of Soviet nuclear warheads in Cuba; how communications could be arranged; what authority was in the field. Thompson believes Soviet nuclear warheads was under very tight control. McCone reviewed recent Chicadee reports, indicated considerable autonomy in hands of field commanders much more so than we have.

8. Bundy and McCone left for meeting with the President.

23. Memorandum for the File

Washington, October 17, 1962.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Memo for the Record. No classification marking. Drafted by McCone on October 19. Also reproduced in CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, pp. 169-173.

Memorandum of Meeting, Wednesday, October 17th, at 8:30 a.m./1/ and again at 4:00 p.m., attended by Rusk, Ball (each part of the time) Martin, Johnson, McNamara, Gilpatric, Taylor, McCone, Bohlen, Thompson, Bundy, Sorensen, Dean Acheson (for a short time).

/1/See Document 22.

Note: The 4:00 o'clock meeting adjourned at about 7:00, and reassembled at 10:00 p.m., in Secretary Ball's conference room, adjourning at 11:45 p.m./2/

/2/These meetings, which are summarized below, are also described in Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy, pp. 681-682; Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days, p. 34; and Dean Acheson, "Homage to Plain Dumb Luck," in Robert A. Devine, The Cuban Missile Crisis, pp. 197-198. The Deputy Secretary of Defense's handwritten notes on the day are in the Supplement. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Notes on Cuba)

Note: At 9:30 a.m. DCI went to see the President,/3/ then went to Gettysburg to see General Eisenhower./4/

/3/McCone's record of this meeting reads as follows:

"President seemed inclined to act promptly if at all, without warning, targeting on MRBM's and possible airfields. Stated Congressional resolutions gave him all authority he needed and this was confirmed by Bundy, and therefore seemed inclined to act." (Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Meetings with the President)

/4/McCone's memorandum for the file on his meeting with Eisenhower is not printed. (Ibid.) See the Supplement.

The purpose of the discussion was to develop a plan of action in connection with Cuba, and the alternatives are summarized in my memorandum of October 18th addressed to USIB, copy of which is attached./5/

/5/Not printed. (Central Intelligence Agency, DCI/McCone Files, Job 80-B01285A, Meetings with the President)

This memorandum will record views as they were expressed and developed throughout the meetings.

Ambassador Bohlen warned against any action against Cuba, particularly an air strike without warning, stating such would be divisive with all allies and subject us to criticism throughout the world. He advocated writing both Khrushchev and Castro; if their response was negative or unsatisfactory then we should plan action; advise our principal allies, seek a two-thirds vote from the OAS and then act. The Attorney General and Bohlen exchanged views as to just what type of an answer we could expect from Khrushchev and what he might do if we threatened an attack. During this discussion Secretary Rusk seemed to favor asking Congress for a declaration of a state of war against Cuba and then proceed with OAS, NATO, etc., but always preserve flexibility as to the type of action. Bohlen consistently warned that world opinion would be against us if we carried out a military strike. Secretary Ball emphasized the importance of time, stating that if action was over quickly, the repercussions would not be too serious.

The Attorney General raised the question of the attitude of Turkey, Italy, Western European countries, all of which have been "under the gun" for years, and would take the position that now that the U.S. has a few missiles in their backyard, they become hysterical. This point was discussed back and forth by various people throughout both days of discussion.

Secretary McNamara made the point that missiles in Cuba had no great military consequence because of the stalemate mentioned in my October 18th memorandum. General Taylor supported this view in the early parts of the discussion, but in the later meetings expressed increasing concern over the importance of the missile threat from Cuba. Gilpatric supported McNamara's position. McCone doubted it, stating that McNamara's facts were not new as they had appeared in estimates months ago (which McNamara questioned). Nevertheless, he and McCone felt that a complex of MRBMs and IRBMs in Cuba would have very important military significance. McNamara took issue claiming that the military equation would not be changed by the appearance of these missiles.

Bohlen and Thompson questioned the real purpose of the Soviet's actions in Cuba and seemed to feel that their acts may be in preparation for a confrontation with President Kennedy at which time they would seek to settle the entire subject to overseas bases as well as the Berlin question. McCone indicated this might be one of several objectives and undoubtedly would be the subject of discussion at the time of confrontation; however, McCone doubted that this was the prime purpose of such an elaborate and expensive installation as the Soviets were going forward with in Cuba. Bohlen seemed to favor precipitating talks, and was supported by Thompson.

SecDef and Taylor both objected to political talks because it would give time for threatening missiles to become operational and also give the Soviets an opportunity to camouflage the missiles. McCone pre-sented most recent photographs and indicated CIA opinion that the first missiles will be operational within one or two weeks.

Bohlen again raised the question of opening up discussions. McNamara agreed that this would be desirable but emphasized the importance of developing sequence of events which would lead to military action.

There followed an extensive discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of a military blockade, total or partial.

It was at this point that McNamara and Taylor presented their schedule of alternative military strikes, copy of which is attached, and which was the subject of continual discussion in the ensuing meetings./6/

/6/Not attached, but a copy of this 1-page paper, initialed by McNamara, is in the Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General.

Dean Acheson then expressed his views as follows:

We should proceed at once with the necessary military actions and should do no talking. The Soviets will react some place. We must expect this; take the consequences and manage the situations as they evolve. We should have no consultations with Khrushchev, Castro, or our allies, but should fully alert our allies in the most persuasive manner by high level people. This would include all NATO partners, and the OAS. The President should forget about the elections and should cancel all future campaign speeches.

As an alternate to military action, a plan was discussed involving a declaration of war and the creation of an all-out blockade. Thompson spoke strongly in favor of a blockade. General Taylor at this point indicated that he favored a blockade although in subsequent meetings he seemed inclined towards a military strike. McCone gave an intelligence estimate on the effects of a blockade, indicating its seriousness would depend upon how "hard" a blockade it turned out to be, and finally stated that the main objective of taking Cuba away from Castro had been lost and we have been overly consumed with the missile problem. McCone stated that we must all bear in mind that we have two objectives, one, disposing of the missile sites, and the other, getting rid of Castro's communism in the Western Hemisphere.

The meeting adjourned for dinner and in the evening Secretary Rusk came forward with the following plan.

The United States cannot accept operational MRBMs in Cuba. There is not much profit in preliminary exchanges with Khrushchev and Castro because the President has said that the establishment of Soviet bases and offensive weapons in the Western Hemisphere would raise serious problems and therefore on September 5th [4th] and 13th/7/ the President has in effect warned both Khrushchev and Castro.

/7/For texts of these statements, see American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962, pp. 369-370 and 373-374.

Rusk continued that more talks with Khrushchev would result in extended parlays and therefore he recommended against such an approach. Rusk then proposed that we hold until the middle of next week and then follow the OD course No. 1 (52 sorties against MRBMs). Prior, we inform key allies probably on Tuesday (Macmillan, de Gaulle, Adenauer, possibly the Turks and a few Latin American Presidents). On Wednesday, we strike with missiles and simultaneously send a message to Khrushchev, NATO, OAS, etc. We should be alert for an attack on Turkey and be prepared for the consequences in Berlin, Quemoy, Matsu, Korea, etc. Rusk made the estimate that world opinion

would go along, 42 allies would go along and some neutrals would be favorable. Latin Americans must be told that we are acting in the interests of the Western Hemisphere. Rusk advocated that the first step--we take out the missiles and thus remove the immediate problem of the establishment of an offensive capability, but that we be prepared for subsequent steps. He emphasized the United States cannot accept missiles in our security interests and in view of statements made by the President and others and our various policy declarations. Bohlen continued to persist for diplomatic approach but Rusk and several others were not at this point persuaded. McNamara raised innumerable questions concerning military operations; the manner in which the strike could be properly covered with protective air and how it might be restricted and also the advisability of case one, as contrasted with case one, two and/or three.

Both Ambassador Thompson and Secretary Martin in discussing the Rusk proposal favored a blockade, coupled with a declaration of war.

General Taylor at this point spoke in favor of a military strike taking out the MRBMs and the planes as well, and was supported by McCone, who took the opportunity to cover the points set forth in "talking paper for principals, October 17, 1962," attached.^{/8/} Also during the course of these meetings, McCone reported to the group and later to the President the results of his discussions with General Eisenhower, as covered in the attached memorandum of October 17th, this subject.

^{/8/}Not attached, but a possible reference to Document 26.

In addition to the attached papers, State tabled during the day's meetings the following:

(a) Possible course of action (undated) in 14 pages.^{/9/}

^{/9/}Not printed. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Historical, Cuba, October 1962) See the Supplement.

(b) Possible world consequences in military action, undated,^{/10/} 5 pages.

^{/10/}Not found.

(c) Political actions (undated) 4 pages.^{/11/}

^{/11/}A copy of this paper is in Department of State, Central Files, 737.56361/10-1862.

(d) Political actions in support of major military action (undated) 3 pages.^{/10/}

These were all referred to as State papers (draft) and some were revised the following day.

Also State tabled the following papers:

Limited one-time strike against MRBM sites, undated, 6 pages.^{/11/}

Plan of blockade (undated) 4 pages.^{/11/}

Paper labeled "Attack Three--Invasion" 5 pages with an attached scenario of 4 pages.^{/10/}

Possible Soviet Reactions to the following alternatives, C.E. Bohlen, October 17th, 2 pages.^{/10/}

Also, proposed letter to Khrushchev was tabled, paper dealing with probable Castro response to

U.S. appeal and a proposed letter to Fidel Castro, marked "To Mr. F.C.", all included in State papers./12/

/12/None of these drafts has been found.

At the conclusion of the meetings, which served the purpose of airing the views of all parties responsible for giving advice to the President, the alternatives open to us were summarized by the Attorney General/13/ and are covered in my memorandum to USIB, dated October 18th.

John A. McCone/14/

Director

/13/By evening on October 17 The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff records that the following five possibilities were still under consideration:

"1. On Tuesday, 23 October, inform Western European and some Latin American leaders of the situation. On Wednesday, attack the MRBM's, issue a public statement, and send a message to Premier Khrushchev. Then wait and see what happens. Secretary Rusk rejected this suggestion.

"2. Same as 1, but notify Chairman Khrushchev beforehand and wait about three days to obtain his reply. Defense spokesmen argued against this solution.

"3. Tell the Soviets that the United States was aware of the missiles and would prevent any more from arriving. Impose a blockade, declare war, and make preparations for invasion. Mr. Rusk and Mr. Ball seemed inclined to favor this course, but first wanted surveillance without air strikes.

"4. After limited political preliminaries, attack targets in Categories III-IV and prepare for invasion.

"5. Same as 4, but omit the political preliminaries." (The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vol. VIII, Part II, p. 250)

/14/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

24. Editorial Note

At 10 a.m. on October 17, 1962, the Joint Chiefs of Staff met and decided that a surgical strike against the MRBM sites alone represented an unacceptable risk. They incorporated their views in a memorandum to Secretary of Defense McNamara (JCSM-794-62; JCS Files), which suggested air attacks on a wide variety of military targets.

25. Letter From the Representative to the United Nations (Stevenson) to President Kennedy

Washington, October 17, 1962.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba. Secret; Eyes Only. The source text indicates it was written during the morning. A copy of Stevenson's handwritten notes, "Cuba--Memo to Self for Conf--Dept--Oct. 17," which seem to be the basis for this letter, are at Princeton University, Stevenson Papers, Box 846, Selected Correspondence, Cuba.

Dear Mr. President: I have reviewed the planning thus far and have the following comments for you:

As I have said I think your personal emissaries should deliver your messages to C and K. There is no disagreement as to C. As to K an emissary could better supplement the gravity of the situation you have communicated to Gromyko. And talking with K would afford a chance of uncovering his motives and objectives far better than correspondence thru the "usual channels."

As to your announcement, assuming it becomes imperative to say something soon, I think it would be a mistake at this time to disclose that an attack was imminent and that merely reciting the facts, emphasizing the gravity of the situation and that further steps were in process would be enough for the first announcement.

Because an attack would very likely result in Soviet reprisals somewhere--Turkey, Berlin, etc.--it is most important that we have as much of the world with us as possible. To start or risk starting a nuclear war is bound to be divisive at best and the judgments of history seldom coincide with the tempers of the moment.

If war comes, in the long run our case must rest on stopping while there was still time the Soviet drive to world domination, our obligations under the Inter-American system, etc. We must be prepared for the widespread reaction that if we have a missile base in Turkey and other places around the Soviet Union surely they have a right to one in Cuba. If we attack Cuba, an ally of the USSR, isn't an attack on NATO bases equally justified. One could go on and on. While the explanation of our action may be clear to us it won't be clear to many others. Moreover, if war is the consequence, the Latin American republics may well divide and some say that the U.S. is not acting with their approval and consent. Likewise unless the issue is very clear there may be sharp differences with our Western Allies who have lived so long under the same threat of Soviet attack from bases in the satellite countries by the same IRBMs.

But all these considerations and obstacles to clear and universal understanding that we are neither rash, impetuous or indifferent to the fate of others are, I realize, only too familiar to you.

I know your dilemma is to strike before the Cuban sites are operational or to risk waiting until a proper groundwork of justification can be prepared. The national security must come first. But the means adopted have such incalculable consequences that I feel you should have made it clear that the existence of nuclear missile bases anywhere is negotiable^{1/} before we start anything.

^{1/}The word "negotiable" is double underlined in the source text.

Our position, then, is that we can't negotiate with a gun at our head, a gun that imperils the innocent, helpless Cuban people as much as it does the U.S., and that if they won't remove the missiles and restore the status quo ante we will have to do it ourselves--and then we will be ready to discuss bases in the context of a disarmament treaty or anything else with them. In short it is they, not the U.S., that have upset the balance and created this situation of such peril to the whole world.

I confess I have many misgivings about the proposed course of action, but to discuss them further would add little to what you already have in mind. So I will only repeat that it should be clear as a pikestaff that the U.S. was, is and will be ready to negotiate the elimination of bases and anything else; that it is they who have upset the precarious balance in the world in arrogant disregard of your warnings--by threats against Berlin and now from Cuba--and that we have no choice except to restore that balance, i.e., blackmail and intimidation never, negotiation and sanity always.

Yours,

Adlai S. Stevenson^{2/}

/2/Printed from a copy that indicates Stevenson signed the original.

P.S. I'm returning to New York and can return, of course, at your convenience.

[end of document]
