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# THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

## A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

### SOURCE NOTES

*This chronology describes key events relating to the Cuban missile crisis. It begins in 1959 and describes the evolution of relations between the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba in the period before the missile crisis, focusing particularly on the Soviet military buildup in Cuba during 1962. The chronology also provides a day-by-day (in some cases, hour-by-hour) account of the October missile crisis and the continuing crisis over Soviet IL-28 bombers in Cuba, which extended well into November 1962. Additional entries in the chronology trace the aftermath of the missile crisis with regard to U.S.-Cuban relations.*

*All times cited in the chronology are Eastern Daylight Time, unless otherwise noted. Square brackets in quoted*

*text indicate either editorial clarifications or sections excised by government declassification reviewers.*

*Each entry is followed by a citation for its sources. Documents that are included in this reader are cited by number. Documents that appear in the National Security Archive's microfiche collection, *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: The Making of U.S. Policy*, are cited by document title and date. Books and periodicals are cited in an abbreviated form, often with references to specific sections or pages. A few unpublished sources and documents that do not appear in the document collection are also cited in this manner. For a listing of the abbreviated titles used in this chronology, see the "Abbreviations" section on pages 399-400.*

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*January 1, 1959:* Fidel Castro assumes power in Cuba, the culmination of the six-year revolution that toppled the government of General Fulgencio Batista.

*October 28, 1959:* Turkey and the United States sign an agreement for the deployment of fifteen nuclear-tipped Jupiter missiles in Turkey. June 1, 1961, is tentatively set as a target installation date for the first launch site. (*Jupiters in Italy and Turkey*, 10/22/62)

*February 4-13, 1960:* Soviet First Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan visits Cuba and attends the opening of a Soviet trade exhibit in Havana. During

his trip, Mikoyan negotiates economic and trade agreements that help Fidel Castro wean Cuba away from economic dependence on the United States. (*The Military Buildup in Cuba*, 7/11/61)

*May 7, 1960:* The Soviet Union and Cuba establish diplomatic relations. (Halperin, p. 77)

*July 8, 1960:* The United States suspends the Cuban sugar quota, effectively cutting off 80 percent of Cuban exports to the United States. The following day, the Soviet Union agrees to buy sugar previously destined for the U.S. market. On October 6, citing the suspension of the sugar quota, Cuba nationalizes ap-

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proximately one billion dollars in U.S. private investments on the island. (*NYT*, 8/7/60; Brenner, p. 528)

*August 16, 1960:* The first assassination plot by the United States against Fidel Castro is initiated when a CIA official is given a box of Castro's favorite cigars and told to poison them. It is unknown whether any attempt was later made to pass the cigars on to Castro. The plan becomes one of at least eight assassination plots against the Cuban leader devised by the U.S. government between 1960 and 1965, according to a 1975 Senate investigation. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 73)

*August 28, 1960:* The United States imposes an embargo on trade with Cuba. (Brenner, p. 528)

*September 1960:* The first large Soviet Bloc arms shipment arrives in Cuba. Soon afterward, Czech and Soviet technicians are reportedly assisting the Cuban military in assembling equipment and installing weapons such as anti-aircraft batteries. Soviet Bloc personnel also begin to be employed as military instructors, advisers, and technicians. (*The Military Buildup in Cuba*, 7/11/61)

*December 19, 1960:* Cuba and the Soviet Union issue a joint communiqué in which Cuba openly aligns itself with the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union and indicates its solidarity with the Sino-Soviet Bloc. (*NYT*, 12/20/60)

*January 2, 1961:* Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev tells a gathering at the Cuban embassy in Moscow: "Alarming news is coming from Cuba at present, news that the most aggressive American monopolists are preparing a direct attack on Cuba. What is more, they are trying to present the case as though rocket bases of the Soviet Union are being set up or are already established in Cuba. It is well known that this is a foul slander. There is no Soviet military base in Cuba." (Abel, p. 15)

*January 3, 1961:* The United States and Cuba sever diplomatic and consular relations. The United States turns over the handling of its affairs to the Swiss embassy, and the Cuban government refers its affairs to the embassy of Czechoslovakia. (*NYT*, 1/4/61)

*January 20, 1961:* John F. Kennedy is inaugurated as the thirty-fifth president of the United States.

*April 12, 1961:* On the eve of the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, President Kennedy decides that U.S. armed forces will not take part in the operation. Any conflict that takes place, Kennedy tells his aides in private, will be "between the Cubans themselves." (Sorensen, p. 298)

*April 14, 1961:* Early in the morning, a group of B-26 bombers piloted by Cuban exiles attack air bases in Cuba. The raid, coordinated by the CIA, is designed to destroy as much of Castro's air power as possible before the scheduled landing of a force of U.S.-trained Cuban exiles. However, to keep the U.S. connection from becoming public, an additional set of airstrikes on Cuban airfields is canceled. (Sorensen, pp. 300-302)

*April 17-18, 1961:* With U.S. direction, training, and support, a group of about fourteen hundred Cuban émigrés attempt an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Cuban government aircraft that survived the earlier airstrikes are able to pin the invasion force on the beachhead, and without additional supplies of ammunition, the invaders are quickly crushed by Cuban ground forces. Of the anti-Castro émigrés, 114 are killed and 1,189 are captured. In response to the invasion, Fidel Castro orders the arrest of some two hundred thousand suspected dissidents to prevent internal uprisings. (Wyden, p. 303)

*April 19, 1961:* In a memo for the president, Attorney General Robert Kennedy warns, "if we don't want Russia to set up missile bases in Cuba, we had better decide now what we are willing to do to stop it." Robert Kennedy identifies three possible courses of action: (1) sending American troops into Cuba, a proposal "you [President Kennedy] have rejected...for good and sufficient reasons (although this might have to be reconsidered)"; (2) placing a strict blockade around Cuba; or (3) calling on the Organization of American States (OAS) to prohibit the shipment to Cuba of arms from any outside source. He concludes

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that "something forceful and determined must be done.... The time has come for a showdown for in a year or two years the situation will be vastly worse." (Schlesinger, p. 471)

*April 19, 1961:* In continuing correspondence with President Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs invasion, Premier Khrushchev assures Kennedy that the Soviet Union "does not seek any advantages or privileges in Cuba. We do not have any bases in Cuba, and we do not intend to establish any." Khrushchev, however, also warns against arming Cuban émigrés for future attacks on Cuba. Such a policy of "unreasonable actions," he writes, "is a slippery and dangerous road which can lead the world to a new global war." (*Soviet Public Statements with Respect to Cuban Security*, 9/10/62)

*April 27-28, 1961:* While at a Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) meeting in Ankara, Turkey, Secretary of State Dean Rusk privately raises the possibility of withdrawing the U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey with Turkish Foreign Minister Salim Sarper. Sarper objects to Rusk's suggestion, pointing out that the Turkish Parliament has just approved appropriations for the missiles and that it would be embarrassing for the Turkish government to inform Parliament that the Jupiters now are to be withdrawn. Upon returning to Washington, D.C., Rusk briefs President Kennedy on his discussion with Sarper, and Kennedy accepts the idea of some delay in removing the Jupiters. (*Recollection by Dean Rusk of Negotiating Channel through Andrew Cordier and Details of Negotiations To Remove Jupiters Prior to Crisis*, 2/25/87)

*June 3-4, 1961:* President Kennedy meets with Premier Khrushchev in Vienna. On the second day of the summit, Khrushchev delivers an ultimatum on the status of Berlin, a continuing source of tension between the two superpowers. Khrushchev threatens to "normalize" the situation in Berlin (and consequently cut Allied access to West Berlin) if the city's status is not resolved within six months. Kennedy tells reporters after the meeting that Khrushchev's demands had made the prospects for war "very real." (Sorensen, p. 549)

*June 13, 1961:* General Maxwell Taylor submits a report on U.S. limited war programs that President Kennedy had ordered following the Bay of Pigs invasion. Concluding that there is "no long term living with Castro as a neighbor" and that Cuban subversion "constitutes a real menace" to Latin American nations, Taylor calls for the creation of a new program of action against Cuba, possibly employing the full range of political, military, economic, and psychological tactics. (*The Taylor Report on Limited War Programs*, 6/13/61)

*August 12-13, 1961:* Soviet forces aid the East Germans in erecting the Berlin Wall. U.S.-Soviet tensions over the Berlin situation flare up throughout this period, culminating in a sixteen-hour confrontation between U.S. and Soviet tanks at the Berlin border on October 27-28. However, the construction of the Berlin Wall staunches the destabilizing flow of East Germans to the West, and Nikita Khrushchev allows his "deadlines" on resolving the Berlin question to pass without further incident. (Betts, pp. 255-57)

*September 21, 1961:* An interagency report on Soviet nuclear capabilities, National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) 11-8/1-61, is disseminated within the government. The NIE and later intelligence reports show for the first time that the Soviet ICBM program is far behind previous U.S. estimates. Only some ten to twenty-five Soviet ICBMs on launchers are believed to exist, with no major increase in Soviet ICBM strength expected in the near future. (*But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?*, 5/31/63, p. 15)

*October 21, 1961:* In a major speech cleared by Rusk, Bundy, and President Kennedy, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric publicly deflates the "missile gap" hypothesis—the theory that the United States is dangerously behind the Soviet Union in its nuclear capabilities. Gilpatric tells his audience in Hot Springs, Virginia, that the United States actually possessed a substantially larger nuclear arsenal than the Soviet Union. (*Address by Roswell Gilpatric, Deputy Secretary of Defense before the Business Council at the Homestead, Hot Springs, Virginia*, 10/21/61; Hilsman, p. 163)

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*November 30, 1961:* President Kennedy authorizes a major new covert action program aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government. The new program, code-named OPERATION MONGOOSE, will be directed by counterinsurgency specialist Edward G. Lansdale under the guidance of Attorney General Robert Kennedy. A high-level interagency group, the Special Group Augmented (SGA), is created with the sole purpose of overseeing Mongoose. (*The Cuba Project*, 3/2/62; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, pp. 139, 144)

*Late 1961 or early 1962:* William K. Harvey is put in charge of Task Force W, the CIA unit for OPERATION MONGOOSE. Task Force W operates under guidance from the SGA and subsequently will involve approximately four hundred Americans at CIA headquarters and its Miami station, in addition to about two thousand Cubans, a private navy of speedboats, and an annual budget of some \$50 million. Task Force W carries out a wide range of activities, mostly against Cuban ships and aircraft outside Cuba (and non-Cuban ships engaged in Cuban trade), such as contaminating shipments of sugar from Cuba and tampering with industrial products imported into the country. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 140; Branch)

*January 1, 1962:* The New Year's Day parade in Cuba provides U.S. intelligence sources with the first reliable intelligence on the extent of Soviet Bloc arms deliveries to Cuba. Aircraft in the possession of the Cuban Revolutionary Air Force are estimated to include around sixty Soviet-built jet fighters, primarily MiG-15 and MiG-17 aircraft with a limited number of somewhat more advanced MiG-19 planes. Small numbers of helicopters and light transport aircraft are also believed to have been provided to Cuba. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, pp. 6-8)

*January 18, 1962:* Edward Lansdale outlines "The Cuba Project," a program under OPERATION MONGOOSE aimed at the overthrow of the Castro govern-

ment. Thirty-two planning tasks, ranging from sabotage actions to intelligence activities, are assigned to the agencies involved in Mongoose. The program is designed to develop a "strongly motivated political action movement" within Cuba capable of generating a revolt eventually leading to the downfall of the Castro government. Lansdale envisioned that the United States would provide overt support in the final stages of an uprising, including, if necessary, using military force. (*The Cuba Project*, 1/18/62; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 142)

*January 19, 1962:* A meeting of the SGA is held in Robert Kennedy's office. Notes taken by CIA representative George McManus contain the following passages: "Conclusion Overthrow of Castro is Possible...a solution to the Cuban problem today carried top priority in U.S. Gov[ernment]. No time, money, effort—or manpower is to be spared. Yesterday...the president indicated to [Robert Kennedy] that the final chapter had not been written—it's got to be done and will be done." McManus attributes the phrase "top priority in the U.S. government—no time, money...to be spared" to Attorney General Kennedy. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 141)

*January 22-30, 1962:* A conference of the OAS is held in Punta del Este, Uruguay. At the close of the conference on October 30, the foreign ministers from the twenty-one American republics vote to exclude Cuba "from participation in the inter-American system." The measure is approved fourteen-to-one, with six abstentions. Another resolution is also adopted prohibiting OAS members from selling arms to Cuba and setting measures for collective defense against Cuban activities in the hemisphere. (*U.S. Policy toward Cuba and Related Events 1 November 1961 - 15 March 1963*, 3/16/63, pp. 9-10; Sorensen, p. 669-70)

*February 1962:* The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) establishes a "first priority basis" for the completion of all contingency plans for military action against Cuba. (*USCONARC Participation in the Cuban Crisis*, 10/63, p. 17)

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*February 20, 1962:* Edward Lansdale presents a six-phase schedule for OPERATION MONGOOSE designed to culminate in October 1962 with an "open revolt and overthrow of the Communist regime." The basic plan includes political, psychological, military, sabotage, and intelligence operations as well as proposed "attacks on the cadre of the regime, including key leaders." Lansdale notes that a "vital decision" has not yet been made regarding possible U.S. military actions in support of plans to overthrow Fidel Castro. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, pp. 143-44)

*February 26, 1962:* At a meeting of the SGA, the scale of Lansdale's "Cuba Project" is sharply reduced, and Lansdale is directed to develop a detailed plan for an intelligence-gathering program only. On March 1, the SGA confirms that the immediate objective of the program would be intelligence collection and that all other actions would be inconspicuous and consistent with the U.S. overt policy of isolating Castro and neutralizing Cuban influence in the hemisphere. (*Document 6, Guidelines for Operation Mongoose*, 3/14/62; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 145)

*March 14, 1962:* Guidelines for OPERATION MONGOOSE are approved by the SGA. Drafted by Maxwell Taylor, they note that the United States would attempt to "make maximum use of indigenous resources" in trying to overthrow Fidel Castro but recognize that "final success will require decisive U.S. military intervention." Indigenous resources would act to "prepare and justify this intervention, and thereafter to facilitate and support it." Kennedy is briefed on the guidelines on March 16. (*Document 6, Guidelines for Operation Mongoose*, 3/14/62; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, pp. 145-47, 159)

*April 1962:* U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey become operational. All positions are reported "ready and manned" by U.S. personnel. (*History of the Jupiter Missile System*, 7/27/62)

*Late April 1962:* While vacationing in the Crimea, across the Black sea from Turkey, Khrushchev reflects on the Turkish missiles and reportedly conceives the idea of deploying similar weapons in Cuba. Soviet sources have identified three reasons that might have led Khrushchev to pursue the idea seriously. The deployment of missiles in Cuba would: (1) perhaps most important, increase Soviet nuclear striking power, which lagged far behind that of the United States; (2) deter the United States from invading Cuba; and (3) psychologically end the double standard by which the United States stationed missiles on the Soviet perimeter but denied the Soviets a reciprocal right.

Upon returning to Moscow, Khrushchev discusses the idea with First Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan. Although Mikoyan is opposed, Khrushchev asks a group of his closest advisers, including Frol Kozlov, Commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces (SRF) Sergei Biryuzov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, and Marshal Malinovsky to evaluate the idea. The group proposes that a mission be sent to Cuba to see if Fidel Castro would agree to the proposed deployment and to determine whether the deployment could be undertaken without being detected by the United States. (Garthoff 1, p. 13)

*May 1962:* Deliberations regarding the possible installation of missiles in Cuba continue in Moscow. In early May, Khrushchev informs the newly designated ambassador to Cuba, Aleksandr Alekseyev, of the plan. Although Alekseyev expresses concern over the idea (as did Gromyko and Mikoyan at different times), it is decided that Alekseyev and Marshal Biryuzov should secretly travel to Cuba to explore the question with Castro. (See May 30, 1962, entry.)

Following further discussions in May and June, Khrushchev authorizes Soviet military officials to decide independently on the exact composition of nuclear forces to be deployed in Cuba. The military proposes a force of twenty-four medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) launchers and sixteen intermediate-range (IRBM) launchers; each of the launchers would be equipped with two missiles (one serving as a spare) and a nuclear warhead. Soviet officials also decide that a large contingent of Soviet combat forces should be

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sent to Cuba. The proposed Soviet contingent includes four elite combat regiments, twenty-four advanced SA-2 surface-to-air missile (SAM) batteries, forty-two MiG-21 interceptors, forty-two IL-28 bombers, twelve Komar-class missile boats, and coastal defense cruise missiles. (Garthoff 1, pp. 12-18)

*May 8, 1962:* A multiservice military exercise designed to test contingency planning for Cuba begins. The operation, codenamed Whip Lash, concludes on May 18. Another U.S. military exercise in the Caribbean known as Jupiter Springs is planned for sometime in the spring or summer. Soviet and Cuban sources have suggested that the series of U.S. military exercises conducted in the region throughout the year are perceived as additional evidence of U.S. intentions to invade Cuba. (*operation mongoose, 4-10 May, 5/10/62; Garthoff 1, p. 31*)

*May 29, 1962:* Sharif Rashidov, an alternate member of the Soviet Presidium, arrives in Cuba with a delegation, ostensibly on a ten-day mission to study irrigation problems. The presence of the ambassador-designate in Cuba, Aleksandr Alekseyev, Marshal Biryuzov, and two or three military experts is not known to the United States. Shortly before the departure of the delegation, Premier Khrushchev informs all Presidium members that the Soviet Union plans to deploy nuclear missiles in Cuba and that Biryuzov and Alekseyev will broach the idea with the Cuban government.

On the evening of its arrival, the Soviet delegation meets with Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl, the Cuban minister of defense. Expressing their concern over the possibility of a new U.S. invasion of Cuba, the Soviet officials state that the Soviet Union is prepared to assist Cuba in fortifying its defenses, even to the extent of deploying nuclear missiles on Cuban soil. Castro responds by calling the idea "interesting," but tells the group that he will need to consult with his colleagues before providing a final answer. (Alekseyev, pp. 7-8)

*May 30, 1962:* After conferring with Raúl Castro, Che Guevara, Osvaldo Dorticos and Blas Roca, Fidel Cas-

tro informs the visiting Soviet officials that Cuba will accept the deployment of nuclear weapons. Since the crisis, Castro and other Cuban sources have suggested that this decision was made not only because the missiles would serve to deter a U.S. invasion but also because the Cuban government wished to shift the "correlation of forces" in favor of socialism. In addition, Havana felt indebted to the Soviet Union for its support of the Cuban revolution.

*July 2, 1962:* Raúl Castro and a high-level Cuban military delegation arrive in Moscow, where they are met at the airport by Marshal Rodion Malinovsky and Anastas Mikoyan. Nikita Khrushchev subsequently meets with Raúl Castro on July 3 and 8. During these discussions, detailed arrangements are made for the missile deployment. According to the formal agreement, which is renewable every five years, the missiles and their servicing will be completely under the jurisdiction of the Soviet military command. Raúl Castro spends a total of two weeks consulting with Soviet officials before returning to Cuba on July 17. (Alekseyev, p. 9; Medvedev, p. 184; Garthoff 2, p. 67)

*July 15, 1962:* Around this time, Soviet cargo ships begin moving out of the Black Sea for Cuba with false declarations of their destinations and reporting tonnages well below their capacities. Aerial reconnaissance of the ships in the following months showing them "riding high in the water" would confirm that the vessels carried unusually light cargo, typically a sign that military equipment is being transported. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962, 6/18/63, p. 1*)

*July 17, 1962:* Raúl Castro leaves Moscow after two weeks of secret talks with Nikita Khrushchev and other high-ranking Soviet officials on the scheduled deployment of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. (See entry for July 2, 1962, above.) Although aware of the military makeup of the Cuban delegation, the fact that no public communiqué is issued after the visit leads the U.S. intelligence community at first to believe that the mission had failed. Upon his return to Cuba, Raúl Castro tells a gathering that neither internal uprisings

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nor exile landings are a threat, only a U.S. invasion, which, he said, "we can now repel." (*Forwarding of and Comments on CIA Memo on Soviet Aid to Cuba*, 8/22/62; Allison, p. 48; Garthoff 2, p. 67)

**July 25, 1962:** Edward Lansdale provides the SGA an assessment of Phase One of OPERATION MONGOOSE. Some successes are reported, such as the infiltration of eleven CIA guerrilla teams into Cuba, including one team in Pinar del Río Province that has grown to as many as 250 men. Nonetheless, Lansdale warns that "time is running out for the U.S. to make a free choice on Cuba." (Document 7, Brig. Gen. Edward Lansdale, *Review of operation mongoose*, 7/25/62)

**July 26, 1962:** On the ninth anniversary of the 26th of July Movement, Fidel Castro states that "mercenaries" no longer pose a threat to Cuba: President Kennedy had already "made up his mind" to invade Cuba, he asserts, but Cuba has acquired new arms to beat back such a direct attack. (Draper, p. 39; CR, 1/30/63)

**August 1962:** U.S. intelligence receive several reports of Soviet missiles in Cuba during the month, all of which are either linked to SAM or cruise missiles or shown to be incorrect. After late August, numbers of such reports increase, as do reported sightings of MiG-21s and IL-28s. (*The Cuban Crisis, 1962, ca. 8/22/63*, pp. 10-11)

**August 10, 1962:** After examining CIA reports on the movement of cargo ships from the Black and Baltic seas to Cuba, CIA Director John McCone dictates a memorandum for the president expressing the belief that Soviet MRBMs are destined for Cuba. McCone's memorandum is sent over the objections of subordinates concerned that McCone has no hard evidence to back up his suspicions. (*Chronology of John McCone's Suspicions on the Military Build-up in Cuba Prior to Kennedy's October 22 Speech*, 11/30/62; *Recollection of Intelligence Prior to the Discovery of Soviet Missiles and of Penkovsky Affair*, n.d.)

**August 13, 1962:** Aleksandr Alekseyev arrives in Havana to take up his post as the Soviet ambassador to

Cuba. Alekseyev delivers to Fidel Castro the text of the agreement governing the missile deployment that Raúl Castro had worked out during his June visit to Moscow. Castro makes a few corrections in the text and gives it to Che Guevara to take to Moscow in late August. The text calls for "taking measures to assure the mutual defense in the face of possible aggression against the Republic of Cuba" (see August 27, entry). (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 6; Alekseyev, p. 10; *Draft Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Cuba and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on military cooperation for the defense of the national territory of Cuba in the event of aggression*)

**August 17, 1962:** On the basis of additional information, CIA Director John McCone states at a high-level meeting that circumstantial evidence suggests that the Soviet Union is constructing offensive missile installations in Cuba. Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara disagree with McCone, arguing that the buildup is purely defensive. (*Chronology of John McCone's Suspicions on the Military Build-up in Cuba Prior to Kennedy's October 22 Speech*, 11/30/62)

**August 20, 1962:** Maxwell Taylor, the chairman of the SGA, informs President Kennedy in a memo that the SGA sees no likelihood that the Castro government can be overthrown without direct U.S. military intervention. Taylor reports that the SGA recommends a more aggressive OPERATION MONGOOSE program. Kennedy authorizes the development of aggressive plans aimed at ousting Castro, but specifies that no overt U.S. military involvement should be made part of those plans (see entry for August 23, 1962, below). (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 147)

**August 23, 1962:** President Kennedy calls a meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) to air John McCone's concerns that Soviet missiles were in the process of being introduced into Cuba. Although Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara argue against Mc-

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Cone's interpretation of the military buildup in Cuba, Kennedy concludes the meeting by saying that a contingency plan to deal with a situation in which Soviet nuclear missiles are deployed in Cuba should be drawn up.

Kennedy's instructions are formalized in National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 181, issued that same day. Kennedy directs that several additional actions and studies to be undertaken "in light of the evidence of new bloc activity in Cuba." Papers are to consider the pros and cons of a statement warning against the deployment of any nuclear weapons in Cuba; the psychological, political, and military effect of such a deployment; and the military options that might be exercised by the United States to eliminate such a threat. In addition, Kennedy requests that the Defense Department investigate what actions could be taken to remove U.S. Jupiter nuclear missiles from Turkey. With regard to Mongoose, Kennedy orders that "Plan B Plus," a program aimed at overthrowing Castro without overtly employing the U.S. military, be developed "with all possible speed." (*Document 12, National Security Action Memorandum 181, on Actions and Studies in Response to New Soviet Bloc Activity in Cuba, 8/23/62; Recollection of Intelligence Prior to the Discovery of Soviet Missiles and of Penkovsky Affair, n.d.; Chronology of John McCone's Suspicions on the Military Build-up in Cuba Prior to Kennedy's October 22 Speech, 11/30/62*)

*August 26, 1962:* Che Guevara, Cuba's Minister of Industries, and Emilio Aragonés Navarro, a close associate of Fidel Castro, arrive in the Soviet Union. On August 30, Guevara and Aragonés meet with Nikita Khrushchev at his dacha in the Crimea, where Guevara delivers Castro's amendments to the Soviet-Cuban agreement governing the deployment of missiles in Cuba. Although Guevara urges Khrushchev to announce the missile deployment publicly, the Soviet premier declines to do so. The agreement is never signed by Khrushchev, possibly to preclude the Cuban government from leaking it. Following additional talks in Prague, Guevara and Aragonés return to Cuba on September 6. (*Evidence of Soviet Military Commitment To Defend Cuba, 10/19/62; Visit to the*

*Soviet Union by Che Guevara and Emilio Aragonés, 8/31/62; Alekseyev, pp. 9-10; Garthoff 1, p. 25)*

*August 29, 1962:* A high-altitude U-2 surveillance flight provides conclusive evidence of the existence of SA-2 SAM missile sites at eight different locations in Cuba. Additional reconnaissance shortly thereafter also positively identifies coastal defense cruise missile installations for the first time. However, U-2 photography of the area around San Cristóbal, Cuba, where the first nuclear missile sites are later detected, reveals no evidence of construction at this time. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis, 4/29/63, pp. 7-8; Interim Report by the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee on the Cuban Military Buildup, 5/9/63, p. 6; The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962, 6/18/63, p. 7*)

*August 29, 1962:* At a news conference, President Kennedy tells reporters: "I'm not for invading Cuba at this time...an action like that...could lead to very serious consequences for many people." Kennedy repeats that he has seen no evidence that Soviet troops were stationed in Cuba and stated that there was "no information as yet" regarding the possible presence of air defense missiles in Cuba. (*President's News Conference of August 29, 1962, 8/29/62*)

*August 31, 1962:* President Kennedy is informed that the August 29 U-2 mission has confirmed the presence of SAM batteries in Cuba. (Sorensen, p. 670)

*August 31, 1962:* Senator Kenneth Keating tells the U.S. Senate that there is evidence of Soviet "rocket installations in Cuba." Keating urges President Kennedy to take action and proposes that the OAS send an investigative team to Cuba. Although Keating's sources of information remain unclear, it appears that he simply made firm declarations based on rumors and reports that U.S. intelligence officials consider too "soft" to be definitive. (*Soviet Activities in Cuba, 8/31/62; Paterson 1, p. 98*)



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*First week of September 1962:* Soviet troops belonging to four elite armored brigades are believed to have begun arriving in Cuba at this time. Troops belonging to the combat groups continue to embark through the second week of October. However, U.S. intelligence does not recognize the existence of the organized combat units until the middle of the missile crisis, on October 25 (see entry for that date). (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 13)

*September 3, 1962:* At President Kennedy's request, senior State Department official Walt Rostow submits his assessment of the Soviet military buildup. According to Rostow, while the SAMs do not pose a threat to U.S. national security, a "line should be drawn at the installation in Cuba or in Cuban waters of nuclear weapons or delivery vehicles..." Rostow recommends that current OPERATION MONGOOSE activities be intensified but also suggests studying the possibility of having independent anti-Castro groups oust Castro with minimal U.S. assistance. (Document 14, *W. W. Rostow's Memorandum to the President, Assessing Soviet Military Aid to Cuba*, 9/3/62)

*September 4, 1962:* Following a discussion between President Kennedy, Dean Rusk, and Robert McNamara, during which they review evidence that SAM sites and possibly a submarine base are under construction in Cuba, Attorney General Robert Kennedy meets with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Dobrynin tells the attorney general that he has been instructed by Premier Khrushchev to assure President Kennedy that there would be no surface-to-surface missiles or offensive weapons placed in Cuba. After his meeting with Dobrynin, Robert Kennedy relates the conversation to the president and suggests issuing a statement making it clear that the United States will not tolerate the introduction of offensive weapons into Cuba. (Kennedy, pp. 24–26)

*September 4, 1962:* President Kennedy releases a statement revealing that SAMs and substantially more military personnel than previously estimated have been detected in Cuba. Kennedy also declares:

"There is no evidence of any organized combat force in Cuba from any Soviet Bloc country; of military bases provided to Russia; of a violation of the 1934 treaty relating to Guantánamo; of the presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles; or of other significant offensive capability...Were it otherwise the gravest issues would arise." (*President Kennedy's Statement on Soviet Military Shipments to Cuba*, 9/4/62)

*September 7, 1962:* Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin assures U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson that "only defensive weapons are being supplied" to Cuba. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 13)

*September 7, 1962:* The U.S. Tactical Air Command (TAC) establishes a working group to begin developing plans for a coordinated air attack against Cuba to be launched well before an airborne assault and amphibious landing. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) military planners have, until then, made no provision for such an operation. (*The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October–November 1962*, 1/63)

*September 11, 1962:* TASS releases an authorized Soviet government statement condemning U.S. overseas bases and denying any intention of introducing offensive weapons into Cuba. The statement declares: "The arms and military equipment sent to Cuba are intended solely for defensive purposes.... [T]here is no need for the Soviet Union to set up in any other country—Cuba for instance—the weapons it has for repelling aggression, for a retaliatory blow." (*Soviet Statement on U.S. Provocations*, 9/11/62)

*September 13, 1962:* President Kennedy, speaking at a news conference, states that Fidel Castro, "in a frantic effort to bolster his regime," is attempting to "arouse the Cuban people by charges of an imminent American invasion." The president reiterates that new movements of Soviet technical and military personnel to Cuba do not constitute a serious threat and that "unilateral military intervention on the part of the

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United States cannot currently be either required or justified." Nevertheless, he again warns that if Cuba "should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force...or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies." (*The President's News Conference of September 13, 1962*, 9/13/62)

*September 15, 1962:* The *Poltava*, a Soviet large-hatch cargo ship, docks at the port of Mariel, Cuba, apparently carrying the first MRBMs to be deployed. U.S. intelligence sources report what appears to be unloading of MRBMs at that port September 15-17 and the movement of a convoy of at least eight MRBMs to San Cristóbal, where the first missile site is constructed. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 15; Allyn, p. 152)

*September 19, 1962:* The United States Intelligence Board (USIB) approves a report on the Soviet arms buildup in Cuba. Its assessment, Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) 85-3-62, states that some intelligence indicates the ongoing deployment of nuclear missiles to Cuba. In particular, the report notes: (1) two large-hatch Soviet lumber ships, the *Omsk* and the *Poltava*, had been sighted "riding high in the water," suggesting that they carried military cargo; (2) intelligence accounts of sightings of missiles and a report that Fidel Castro's private pilot, after a night of drinking in Havana, had boasted, "We will fight to the death and perhaps we can win because we have everything, including atomic weapons"; and (3) evidence of the ongoing construction of elaborate SA-2 air defense systems.

The report asserts that the Soviet Union "could derive considerable military advantage from the establishment of Soviet medium and intermediate range ballistic missiles in Cuba..." However, it concludes that "the establishment on Cuban soil of Soviet nuclear striking forces which could be used against the U.S. would be incompatible with Soviet policy as we presently estimate it...[and the Soviets] would almost certainly estimate that this could not be done without

provoking a dangerous U.S. reaction." (Document 13, *CIA National Intelligence Estimate, The Military Buildup in Cuba*, 9/19/62)

*September 20, 1962:* A Senate resolution on Cuba sanctioning the use of force, if necessary, to curb Cuban aggression and subversion in the western hemisphere, passes the Senate by a vote of eighty-six to one. The resolution states that the United States is determined "to prevent the creation or use of an externally supported offensive military capability endangering the security of the U.S." and to "support the aspirations of the Cuban people for a return to self-determination."

In the House of Representatives, a foreign aid appropriations bill is approved with three amendments designed to cut off aid to any country permitting the use of its merchant ships to transport arms or goods of any kind to Cuba. (*Joint [Congressional] Resolution Expressing the Determination of the United States with respect to the Situation in Cuba*, 10/3/62; CR, 1/31/63)

*September 21, 1962:* In a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko charges the United States with whipping up "war hysteria" and threatening to invade Cuba. Gromyko states that "any sober-minded man knows that Cuba is not...building up her forces to such a degree that she can pose a threat to the United States or...to any state of the Western Hemisphere." Gromyko further warns that any U.S. attack on Cuba or on Cuba-bound shipping would mean war. (*Statement by Andrei Gromyko before the U.N. General Assembly Including Comments on U.S. Policy toward Cuba*, 9/21/62)

*September 27, 1962:* The plan for a coordinated tactical air attack on Cuba in advance of an airborne assault and amphibious landing is presented to Curtis LeMay, the Air Force chief of staff. The concept is approved and October 20, is set as the date when all preparations needed to implement such an attack should be completed. (*The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October-24 November 1962*, 1/63, Tab B-2)

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*September 28, 1962:* Navy air reconnaissance aircraft observing Cuba-bound ships photograph ten large shipping crates on the decks of the Soviet vessel *Kasimov*. After studying the size and configuration of the crates, photoanalysts determine that the containers hold Soviet IL-28 light bomber aircraft. The IL-28s are over twelve years old and have been removed almost entirely from the Soviet Air Force in 1960. Although technically capable of carrying nuclear payloads, the aircraft have never been given a nuclear delivery role. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 16; *Interim Report by the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee on the Cuban Military Buildup*, 5/9/63, p. 7; *Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara*, 2/28/63, p. N-1; Garthoff 1, p. 104)

*October 1, 1962:* Secretary McNamara meets with the JCS for a briefing on the latest intelligence on Cuba and to discuss intensified Cuban contingency planning. Defense Intelligence Agency analysts inform the group that some intelligence points to the possibility that MRBMs have been positioned in Pinar del Río Province. After the meeting, Admiral Robert Dennison, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Atlantic Command (CINCLANT), is directed by McNamara "to be prepared to institute a blockade against Cuba." The commanders-in-chief of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force under the Atlantic Command are also directed to preposition military equipment and weapons needed to execute the airstrike plan. (*USCONARC Participation in the Cuban Crisis*, 10/63, p. 8; *CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 39; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 2)

*October 2, 1962:* As a result of his meeting with the JCS the previous day, Robert McNamara sends a memo to the JCS outlining six circumstances in which military action against Cuba may be necessary:

- a. Soviet action against Western rights in Berlin....
- b. Evidence that the Castro regime has permit-

ted the positioning of bloc offensive weapons on Cuban soil or in Cuban harbors.

c. An attack against the Guantánamo Naval 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....

e. Cuban armed assistance to subversion in other parts of the Western Hemisphere.

f. A decision by the President that the affairs in Cuba have reached a point inconsistent with continuing U.S. national security.

McNamara asks that future military planning cover a variety of these contingencies, and place particular emphasis on plans that would assure that Fidel Castro is removed from power. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, pp. 41–42; Johns, pp. 81–82)

*October 4, 1962:* The SGA meets to discuss the progress of OPERATION MONGOOSE. According to minutes of the meeting, Robert Kennedy states that the president was "concerned about progress on the MONGOOSE program" and believed that "more priority should be given to trying to mount sabotage operations." The attorney general also expresses the president's "concern over [the] developing situation," and urges that "massive activity" be undertaken within the MONGOOSE framework. The group agrees that plans for the mining of Cuban harbors and for capturing Cuban forces for interrogation should be considered. (*Memorandum of Mongoose Meeting Held on Thursday, October 4, 1962*, 10/4/62; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 147)

*October 6, 1962:* CINCLANT directs increased readiness to execute an invasion of Cuba. On October 1, CINCLANT orders military units to increase their readiness posture to execute Oplan 312, the airstrike on Cuba. With the new orders, the repositioning of troops, aircraft, ships, and other equipment and supplies are directed to increase readiness to follow an airstrike with a full invasion of the island using one of two U.S. invasion plans known as Oplan 314 and

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Oplan 316. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 40)

October 8, 1962: Cuban President Dorticós, addressing the U.N. General Assembly, calls upon the United Nations to condemn the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. Near the end of his address, Dorticós declares: "If...we are attacked, we will defend ourselves. I repeat, we have sufficient means with which to defend ourselves; we have indeed our inevitable weapons, the weapons which we would have preferred not to acquire and which we do not wish to employ." The speech is interrupted four times by anti-Castro demonstrators. (*Address by H.E. Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós, President of the Republic of Cuba*, 10/8/62; Szulc, p. 646)

October 13, 1962: State Department Ambassador-at-Large Chester Bowles has a long conversation with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin. Bowles, after having been briefed by Thomas Hughes of the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, tells Dobrynin that the United States "had some evidence" indicating that Soviet nuclear missiles were in Cuba. Dobrynin, who had not been told of the missile deployment by the Kremlin, repeatedly denies that the Soviet Union harbored any intention of placing such weapons in Cuba. (*Ambassador Bowles Visit to Nkrumah*, 11/2/62; *Oral History Interview with Chester Bowles by Robert Brooks*, 2/2/65; Hilsman 1, p. 166)

October 14, 1962—early morning: A U-2 aircraft flies over western Cuba from south to north. The reconnaissance mission, piloted by Major Richard Heyser, is the first Strategic Air Command (SAC) mission after authority for the flights is transferred from the CIA to the air force. The photographs obtained by the mission provide the first hard evidence of MRBM sites in Cuba. (Bundy, p. 301)

October 15, 1962—morning: Quick readout teams at the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) in Washington analyze photos taken by Richard Heyser's U-2 mission. Late in the afternoon,

one of the teams finds pictures showing the main components of a Soviet MRBM in a field at San Cristóbal. Analysis of reconnaissance photos during the day also identifies all but one of the remaining twenty-four SAM sites in Cuba. Other photographs of San Julián airfield show that IL-28 light bombers are being uncrated. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 40; Cline, p. 89; Prados, p. 110)

October 15, 1962—late afternoon: A senior officer at NPIC phones CIA Deputy Director of Intelligence Ray Cline to inform him of the discovery. The officials at NPIC have tried to contact CIA Director McCone but are unable to reach him en route to Los Angeles. Cline requests that NPIC completely recheck the photographs and consult with missile experts outside of the agency. Cline asks that he be called again between 8:00 and 10:00 P.M. to be informed of the results of these additional analyses. (Cline, p. 89)

October 15, 1962—evening: Key Kennedy administration officials are tracked down in Washington and briefed about the discovery of the missiles. National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, who is given the news by Ray Cline, decides to wait until morning to alert President Kennedy. Bundy later states that he chose to wait because it was not possible to prepare a presentation information until morning and because he feared that a hastily summoned meeting at night would jeopardize secrecy. (*Explanation of Why McGeorge Bundy Did Not Inform President Kennedy of the Missiles in Cuba until the Morning of October 16*, 3/4/63; Cline, pp. 90–91)

October 15, 1962: The SGA orders the acceleration of covert activities against Cuba. In particular, the group agrees that "considerably more sabotage should be undertaken" and that "all efforts should be made to develop new and imaginative approaches with the possibility of getting rid of the Castro regime." (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 147)

A major U.S. military exercise named PHIBRIX-62 is scheduled to begin. The two-week long

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maneuver was to have employed twenty thousand Navy personnel and four thousand Marines in an amphibious assault on Puerto Rico's Vieques Island and the overthrow of its imaginary tyrant, "Ortsac"—"Castro" spelled backwards. However, because of the impending crisis, Phibriglex-62 is used primarily as cover for troop and equipment deployments aimed at increasing military readiness for a strike on Cuba. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 2; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 72-73; Allison, p. 47)

*October 16, 1962—8:45 A.M.:* McGeorge Bundy informs President Kennedy that "hard photographic evidence" has been obtained showing Soviet MRBMs in Cuba. Kennedy immediately calls an 11:45 A.M. meeting and dictates the names of the fourteen or so advisers he wants present. This is the group that becomes known as the "ExComm"—the Executive Committee of the National Security Council. Later that morning, President Kennedy briefs his brother Robert, who expresses surprise at the news. Kennedy also telephones John McCloy, a Republican lawyer who acted as a private adviser to the president. McCloy recommends that the president take forceful action to remove the missiles, even if that involves an airstrike and an invasion. (Abel, pp. 44-45; Issacson, p. 620)

*October 16, 1962—11:15 A.M.:* President Kennedy confers for half an hour with Charles Bohlen, the former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union who has just been appointed ambassador to France. Bohlen later recalls that at this early stage in the crisis, "there seemed to be no doubt in [Kennedy's] mind, and certainly none in mine, that the United States would have to get these bases eliminated...the only question was how it was to be done." Bohlen participates in the first ExComm meeting later that morning but leaves for France on the following day. (*The President's Appointment Book*, ca. 11/22/62; *Interview with Charles E. Bohlen by Arthur Schlesinger: Excerpts on the Cuban Crisis*, 5/21/64)

*October 16, 1962—11:50 A.M.:* The first meeting of the ExComm convenes. Photographic evidence is presented to the group, including pictures of missile sites under construction with canvas-covered missile trailers. The missiles are initially identified by photoanalysts as nuclear-tipped SS-3s by their length; by evening, the MRBMs are correctly identified as longer range SS-4 missiles. No nuclear warheads are reported seen in the area. CIA photoanalyst Sidney Graybeal informs the group that "we do not believe [the missiles] are ready to fire." The first part of the noon meeting covers questions regarding the validity and certainty of the evidence, Soviet military capabilities in Cuba and what additional U.S. surveillance might be required. Further U-2 flights are ordered, and six U-2 reconnaissance missions are flown during the day. In the freewheeling discussion, participants cover a number of different options for dealing with the Cuban situation. The principle options discussed are: (1) a single, surgical airstrike on the missile bases; (2) an attack on various Cuban facilities; (3) a comprehensive series of attacks and invasion; or (4) a blockade of Cuba. Preliminary discussions lean toward taking some form of military action. As discussions continue on proposals to destroy the missiles by airstrike, Robert Kennedy passes a note to the president: "I now know how Tojo felt when he was planning Pearl Harbor." (*Transcript of October 27 Cuban Missile Crisis ExComm Meetings*, 10/27/62; Kennedy, pp. 30-31)

*October 16, 1962—afternoon:* McNamara, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric, and the JCS hold a luncheon meeting to begin preparing the military for any actions that might be ordered. At the State Department, additional discussions continue with Dean Rusk, Under Secretary of State George Ball, Adlai Stevenson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Edwin Martin, Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson, and State Department Soviet specialist Llewellyn Thompson. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 1; Taylor, p. 269)

The USIB meets to examine U-2 photographs and to coordinate intelligence on the crisis. During the meeting, the USIB directs the Guided Missile and As-

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tronautics Intelligence Committee (GMAIC) to prepare an immediate evaluation of the Soviet missile sites. The GMAIC concludes that the missiles are clearly under Soviet control and that there is no evidence that nuclear warheads are present in Cuba. It also concludes that the missile installations thus far identified do not appear to be operational. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 36)

The SGA convenes in the White House prior to the second ExComm meeting. According to Richard Helms's notes, Robert Kennedy expresses President Kennedy's "general dissatisfaction" with progress under the MONGOOSE program. The SGA discusses but rejects several alternatives for eliminating the newly discovered Soviet missile sites in Cuba, including a proposal to have Cuban émigrés bomb the missile sites. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 146; Hurwitch, p. 33)

October 16, 1962—6:30 P.M.: At the second ExComm meeting, Marshall Carter states that the missiles could be "fully operational within two weeks," although a single missile might achieve operational capability "much sooner." After the intelligence report is presented, Robert McNamara outlines three broad options for action. The first is "political," involving communications with Fidel Castro and Premier Khrushchev; the second is "part political, part military," involving a blockade of weapons and open surveillance; the third is "military" involving an attack on Cuba and the missile sites. The ExComm members debate, but do not resolve, which option should be used. (Document 16, *Transcript of the Second Executive Committee Meeting*, 10/16/62)

October 16, 1962: Premier Khrushchev receives U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Foy Kohler for a three-hour conversation on a variety of subjects. Khrushchev reassures Kohler that the Cuban fishing port that the Soviet Union has recently agreed to help build will remain entirely nonmilitary. Khrushchev adds that the Cuban government has announced the agreement without consulting Soviet officials, and that when he learned of the leak, he "cursed them and said they should have waited until after the U.S. elec-

tions." Once again, Khrushchev insists that all Soviet activity in Cuba was defensive and sharply criticizes U.S. bases in Turkey and Italy. (*Report on Khrushchev-Kohler Meeting, October 16 (Part IV: Discussion of U-2, Cuban Fishing Port, Nuclear Test Ban and U.S. Elections) In Two Sections*, 10/16/62; Sorensen, p. 691; Hilsman 1, p. 166)

October 17, 1962—morning: Adlai Stevenson writes to President Kennedy that world opinion would equate the U.S. missiles stationed in Turkey with Soviet bases in Cuba. Warning that U.S. officials could not "negotiate with a gun at our head," he states, "I feel you should have made it clear that the existence of nuclear missile bases anywhere is negotiable before we start anything." Stevenson suggests that personal emissaries should be sent to both Fidel Castro and Premier Khrushchev to discuss the situation. (*Document 19, U.N. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson's Opinions Against an Airstrike on Cuba*, 10/17/62)

October 17, 1962—morning: Further debate on the Cuban situation takes place at the State Department. Dean Acheson and John McCone attend discussions for the first time, though President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson are absent. By this time, Robert McNamara has become the strongest proponent of the blockade option. McNamara reports that a "surgical" airstrike option is militarily impractical in the view of the JCS and that any military action would have to include attacks on all military installations in Cuba, eventually leading to an invasion. McNamara urges seeking alternative means of removing the missiles from Cuba before embarking on such a drastic course of action. However, critics of the blockade, led primarily by Dean Acheson, argue that a blockade would have no effect on the missiles already in Cuba. Airstrike proponents also express concern that a U.S. blockade would shift the confrontation from Cuba to the Soviet Union and that Soviet counteractions, including a Berlin blockade, might result. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15–28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 2; Kennedy, pp. 34–35)

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*October 17, 1962:* Around this time, Georgi Bolshakov, a Soviet embassy official who served as an authoritative back channel for communications between Soviet and U.S. leaders, relays a message from Premier Khrushchev to Attorney General Robert Kennedy that the arms being sent to Cuba are intended only for defensive purposes. Bolshakov had not been told by Khrushchev that the Soviet Union is actually in the process of installing MRBMs and IRBMs in Cuba. By the time Bolshakov's message reaches President Kennedy, he has been fully briefed on the Soviet missile deployment. (Hilsman, p. 166; Kennedy, p. 27; Schlesinger, pp. 499-502)

An SS-5 IRBM site, the first of three to be identified, is detected in Cuba. The SS-5s have ranges of up to 2,200 nautical miles, more than twice the range of the SS-4 MRBMs. The GMAIC estimates that the IRBM sites would not become operational before December but that sixteen and possibly as many as thirty-two MRBMs would be operational in about a week. No SS-5 missiles actually reach Cuba at any time, although this is not completely confirmed by U.S. officials during the crisis. (*The Cuban Crisis, 1962*, ca. 8/22/63, p. 36; *Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara, 2/28/63*, p. F-2; Garthoff 1, p. 209)

*October 18, 1962—11:00 A.M.:* The ExComm convenes for further discussions. The JCS, attending part of the meeting, recommends that President Kennedy order an airstrike on the missiles and other key Cuban military installations. However, Robert Kennedy responds by asking whether a surprise air attack would be a morally acceptable course of action. According to Robert Kennedy, the ExComm spent "more time [deliberating] on this moral question during the first five days than on any other single matter." (Kennedy, pp. 38-39; Taylor, p. 269)

*October 18, 1962—2:30 P.M.:* More discussions take place in Dean Rusk's conference room at the State Department. President Kennedy, who does not attend the talks, confers privately with Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara at 3:30 P.M. During the day, Kennedy also meets privately with Dean Acheson for

over an hour. When the president raises his brother's concern over the morality of a "Pearl Harbor in reverse," Acheson reportedly tells Kennedy that he was being "silly" and that it was "unworthy of [him] to talk that way." Acheson again voices his opinion that the surgical airstrike is the best U.S. option. Acheson, however, is in the minority in dismissing the Pearl Harbor analogy. Although Paul Nitze also recalls thinking that the analogy was "nonsense," others like George Ball find it persuasive. In some cases, as with Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon, the moral argument becomes the deciding factor behind their support for the blockade. (Blight, pp., 142, 152; Schlesinger, p. 508; Issacson, p. 622)

*October 18, 1962—5:00 P.M.:* Andrei Gromyko and President Kennedy meet at the White House. Gromyko states that Premier Khrushchev plans to visit the United Nations following the U.S. elections in November and that he believes a meeting with Kennedy at that time would be useful. After Kennedy agrees to meet the Soviet Premier, Gromyko turns the discussion to Cuba, charging that the United States is "pestering" a small country. According to the minutes of the meeting, "Gromyko stated that he was instructed to make it clear...that [Soviet military] assistance, [was] pursued solely for the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba...If it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would never had become involved in rendering such assistance." Kennedy has decided not to discuss U.S. awareness of the missiles with Gromyko. So, without taking exception to Gromyko's claim, Kennedy responds by reading a portion of his September 4 statement warning against the deployment of offensive weapons in Cuba. After a discussion of other issues, the meeting ends at 7:08 P.M. Following the talk with Gromyko, Kennedy directs Llewellyn Thompson to inform Ambassador Dobrynin that a summit would not in fact be appropriate at that time. Kennedy then meets with Robert Lovett, a former government official brought in to give advice in the crisis. Lovett warns that an airstrike would appear to be an excessive first step. He argues that a blockade is a better alternative, although he expresses a preference for blocking the movement of all

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materials into Cuba except for food and medicine, rather than limiting the quarantine to offensive weapons. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 56-58; *Memoranda of Conversations on Kennedy-Gromyko Meeting [in Four Parts]*, 10/18/62; Bundy, p. 399; Garthoff 1, p. 48)

*October 18, 1962—9:00 P.M.:* Meeting at the White House, the ExComm presents its recommendations to President Kennedy. By this time, most members of the committee support the blockade option. As the meeting progresses however, individual opinions begin to shift and the consensus behind the blockade breaks down. Kennedy directs the group to continue its deliberations. (Kennedy, pp. 43-44)

*October 18, 1962—evening:* Robert Kennedy phones his deputy, Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, to request the preparation of a brief establishing the legal basis for a blockade of Cuba. The legality of a blockade is also examined independently at the State Department by Leonard C. Meeker, the deputy legal adviser. (*NYT*, 11/3/62)

*October 18, 1962:* The first of a series of daily "Joint Evaluation" intelligence reports is disseminated. The evaluation, the product of collaboration between the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee (JAEIC) and the Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee (GMAIC), states that the MRBMs in Cuba could probably be launched within eighteen hours. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 45-46, 53)

*October 19, 1962—11:00 A.M.:* At the State Department, Nicholas Katzenbach and Leonard Meeker provide the ExComm with their legal opinions regarding a blockade of Cuba. As the meeting progresses, it becomes apparent that sharp disagreements about how the United States should proceed still exist. In order to provide clear options to President Kennedy, the ExComm decides that independent working groups should be established. Separate groups are to develop the blockade and airstrike options, drafting speeches for each plan and outlining

possible contingencies. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 63; Document 21, *Minutes of October 19, 1962*, 11:00 A.M. *ExComm Meeting*, 10/19/62; Schlesinger, p. 515)

*October 19, 1962—early afternoon:* Discussions continue in the ExComm. The papers developed by the separate working groups are exchanged and critiqued. In the course of this process, airstrike proponents begin to shift their support to the blockade option. The airstrike speech is abandoned, and Theodore Sorensen agrees to try to put together a speech for President Kennedy on the blockade. Sorensen completes the speech at 3:00 A.M. the following day. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 3; Kennedy, pp. 45-47; Sorensen, pp. 692-93)

*October 19, 1962—8:40 P.M.:* U. Alexis Johnson and Paul Nitze meet to develop a specific timetable for carrying out all of the diplomatic and military actions required by the airstrike or the blockade plan. The schedule includes raising military alert levels, reinforcing Guantánamo naval base and briefing NATO allies. All timing revolves around the "P Hour"—the time when President Kennedy would address the nation to inform Americans of the crisis. (*Quarantine*, 10/20/62; Blight, p. 145; Johnson, pp. 383-86)

*October 19, 1962—evening:* Responding to questions about an article by Paul Scott and Robert Allen dealing with Soviet missiles in Cuba, a Defense Department spokesperson replies that the Pentagon has no information indicating that there are missiles in Cuba. Reports that emergency military measures are being implemented are also denied. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 4; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 71a)

*October 19, 1962:* SNIE 11-18-62, entitled "Soviet Reactions to Certain U.S. Courses of Action on Cuba," reports that a direct approach to Premier Khrushchev or Fidel Castro is unlikely to halt the ongoing deployment of missiles to Cuba. On the other hand, a total blockade of Cuba, the SNIE projects,



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would "almost certainly" lead to "strong direct pressures" elsewhere by the Soviet government. Any form of direct military action against Cuba would result in an even greater chance of Soviet military retaliation. In such a situation, the report notes, there exists "the possibility that the Soviets, under great pressure to respond, would again miscalculate and respond in a way which, through a series of actions and reactions, could escalate to general war..." The SNIE is read by President Kennedy and most of the main policy planners the following day. SNIE 11-19-62, produced on October 20, draws similar conclusions. (*Soviet Reactions to Certain U.S. Courses of Action on Cuba*, 10/19/62; Document 24, *CIA SNIE, Major Consequences of Certain US Courses of Action on Cuba*, 10/20/62; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 68)

*October 20, 1962—9:00 A.M.:* ExComm meetings continue at the State Department. Final planning for the implementation of a naval blockade is completed, and Theodore Sorensen's draft speech for President Kennedy is amended and approved. As McNamara leaves the conference room, he reportedly phones the Pentagon and orders four tactical squadrons to be readied for a possible airstrike on Cuba. McNamara explains to an official who overhears the conversation, "If the president doesn't accept our recommendation, there won't be time to do it later." (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 4; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63 p. 71b; Abel, p. 93)

*October 20, 1962—2:30 P.M.:* President Kennedy meets with the full group of planning principals. He notes that the airstrike plan as presented is not a "surgical" strike but a massive military commitment that could involve heavy casualties on all sides. As if to underscore the scale of the proposed U.S. military attack on Cuba, one member of the JCS reportedly suggests the use of nuclear weapons, saying that the Soviet Union would use its nuclear weapons in an attack. President Kennedy directs that attention be focused on implementing the blockade option, calling it the only course of action compatible with American principles. The scenario for the full quarantine operation, covering diplomatic initiatives, public statements,

and military actions, is reviewed and approved. Kennedy's address to the nation is set for October 22, at 7:00 P.M.

Adlai Stevenson, who has flown in from New York, enters the discussion late. He proposes that the quarantine be accompanied by a U.S. proposal for a settlement involving the withdrawal of U.S. missiles from Turkey and the evacuation of Guantánamo. The proposal is promptly attacked by several of the participants who believe it concedes too much. President Kennedy is among those critical of Stevenson's proposal. According to minutes of the meeting, Kennedy "agreed that at an appropriate time we would have to acknowledge that we were willing to take strategic missiles out of Turkey and Italy if this issue was raised by the Russians.... But he was firm in saying we should only make such a proposal in the future." After the meeting adjourns at 5:10 P.M., President Kennedy tells Theodore Sorensen that he is canceling the remainder of his midterm election campaign trip. Kennedy instructs Sorensen to redraft the quarantine speech, although he notes that he would not make a final decision on whether to opt for the quarantine or an airstrike until he has consulted one last time with air force officials the next morning. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 74-77; Schlesinger, p. 515; Kennedy, p. 48; Sorensen, pp. 1-3)

*October 20, 1962—late night:* James Reston, Washington Bureau Chief for the *New York Times*, phones George Ball and McGeorge Bundy to ask why there is such a flurry of activity in Washington. Reston is given a partial briefing on the Cuban situation but is requested to hold the story in the interests of national security. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 83a)

*October 20, 1962:* The intelligence community prepares another SNIE reviewing the possible consequences of certain courses of action that the United States could follow with regard to Cuba. The study, numbered SNIE 11-19-62, describes the status of armaments deployed in Cuba. It is estimated that sixteen launchers for SS-4 MRBMs are operational and that these operational missiles could be fired within eight hours of a decision to launch. The inventory of

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other major Soviet weapons identified in Cuba by the SNIE includes: (a) twenty-two IL-28 jet light bombers; (b) thirty-nine MiG-21 jet fighters; (c) sixty-two less advanced jet fighters; (d) twenty-four 24 SA-2 missile sites; (e) three cruise missile sites for coastal defense; and (f) twelve Komar-class cruise missile patrol boats. (Document 24, *CIA SNIE, Consequences of Certain U.S. Courses of Action on Cuba*, 10/20/62)

A nuclear warhead storage bunker is identified at one of the Cuban MRBM sites for the first time. U.S. intelligence proves unable to establish definitively whether warheads are actually in Cuba at any time, however, and the ExComm believes it prudent simply to assume that they are. Soviet sources have recently suggested that twenty of a planned deployment of forty nuclear warheads reached the islands but that none of the warheads were ever actually "mated" to the missiles. (*Chronology of JCS Decisions Concerning the Cuban Crisis*, 12/21/62; Garthoff 1, pp. 37-42)

*October 21, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* President Kennedy meets with secretaries Rusk and McNamara. After a brief discussion, Kennedy gives final approval to the quarantine plan. Around this time, White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger is informed of the crisis for the first time by McGeorge Bundy. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 78-79a)

*October 21, 1962—11:30 A.M.:* At a meeting in the Oval Office, the commander of the Tactical Air Command (TAC), General Walter C. Sweeney, meets with President Kennedy and other top officials to discuss the air attack concept. Sweeney tells the group that to eliminate the missiles in Cuba, TAC believes that additional strikes are required on, at a minimum, Soviet SAM sites and MiG airfields, and that altogether several hundred bombing sorties would be required. After carrying out all these strikes, Sweeney states, he can only guarantee that 90 percent of the Soviet missiles would be destroyed. Although Kennedy has apparently finalized plans for the quarantine before Sweeney's briefing, he nonetheless directs that the military be prepared to carry out an airstrike anytime after the morning of October 22. (Document 25, *Robert McNamara, Notes on Military Briefing for President Kennedy*, 10/21/62)

*October 21, 1962—2:30 P.M.:* The president convenes a formal meeting of the National Security Council. Admiral George Anderson briefs the gathering on the quarantine plans and procedures that he has drawn up earlier in the day. Anderson explains that each ship approaching the quarantine line will be signaled to stop for boarding and inspection. If the ship does not respond, a shot will be fired across the bow. If there is still no response, a shot will be fired into the rudder to cripple the vessel. President Kennedy expresses concern that such an action might unintentionally destroy the boat, but Anderson reassures the president that it is possible to cripple a ship without sinking it. Kennedy concludes the meeting by observing that the United States might be subjected to threats in the following days but that "the biggest danger lay in taking no action."

Midway through the ExComm session, Kennedy and Robert Lovett leave the room briefly to hold a private conversation. Kennedy asks Lovett if he thinks that Adlai Stevenson is capable of handling negotiations at the United Nations. Lovett replies that he does not think Stevenson is right for the job and recommends that Stevenson be assisted by John McCloy. Kennedy agrees, and Lovett arranges to have McCloy flown from Germany to the United States. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 81; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 2; Issacson, p. 627; Sagan, p. 112)

*October 21, 1962:* Despite White House precautions, several newspapers have by this time pieced together most of the details of the crisis. Pierre Salinger notifies President Kennedy in four separate calls during the day that security is crumbling. To keep the story from breaking, Kennedy phones Max Frankel at the *New York Times* and Philip Graham at the *Washington Post* and asks Robert McNamara to call John Hay Whitney, the publisher of the *New York Herald Tribune*. All three agree to hold their stories. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 83a-b; Abel, p. 102; Detzer, p. 169)

*October 22, 1962—10:55 A.M.:* The State Department transmits a special "go" message to most U.S. diplomatic posts abroad instructing envoys to brief foreign heads of government or foreign ministers

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about the Cuban missile crisis. (*Instructions to Brief Foreign Minister and Chief of State on the Situation in Cuba upon Receipt of the "Go" Signal*, 10/21/62)

October 22, 1962—11:00 A.M.: Dean Acheson briefs Charles de Gaulle and delivers President Kennedy's letter on the Cuban situation. Acheson is not able to provide de Gaulle with a copy of Kennedy's speech because only part of the text has arrived. After Acheson concludes his summary of the contents of the letter, de Gaulle declares, "it is exactly what I would have done.... You may tell your President that France will support him." At about the same time, U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain David Bruce briefs Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and Lord Home, the British foreign minister. Bruce also fails to receive a complete copy of Kennedy's speech and briefs MacMillan without it. MacMillan's initial reaction upon seeing the photos of the missile sites reportedly is to remark: "Now the Americans will realize what we here in England have lived through for the past many years." He hastens to assure Bruce that he will assist and support the United States in any way possible. (*Briefing of Charles de Gaulle by Dean Acheson*, 10/23/62; Abel, p. 112; *Briefing of British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan on the Cuban Situation*, 10/22/62; Cooper)

The ExComm meets with President Kennedy for a brief discussion. The president directs that personal messages be sent to commanders of Jupiters missiles in Italy and Turkey instructing them to destroy or render inoperable the Jupiters if any attempt is made to fire them without Kennedy's authorization. During the meeting, State Department Legal Advisor Abram Chayes successfully suggests changing the legal justification for the blockade presented in Kennedy's speech. Instead of basing the action on the U.N. charter, which assures a country's inherent right of self-defense in case of armed attack, Chayes suggests citing the right of the OAS to take collective measures to protect hemispheric security. In addition, Kennedy accepts Leonard Meeker's suggestion that the limited nature of the "blockade" be stressed by calling it a "quarantine." (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 89; *Chronology of JCS Decisions Concerning the Cuban Crisis*, 12/21/62; Abel, p. 115)

October 22, 1962—12:00 noon: SAC initiates a massive alert of its B-52 nuclear bomber force, guaranteeing that one-eighth of the force is airborne at any given time. B-52 flights begin around the clock, with a new bomber taking off each time another bomber lands. The alert is directed to take place quietly and gradually and to be in full effect by October 23. SAC also begins dispersing 183 B-47 nuclear bombers to thirty-three civilian and military airfields. The Air Defense Command (ADC) also disperses 161 aircraft to sixteen bases in nine hours. For the first time in ADC history, all aircraft are armed with nuclear weapons. (*Chronology of JCS Decisions Concerning the Cuban Crisis*, 12/21/62)

October 22, 1962—2:14 P.M.: The JCS notify the State Department that U.S. military forces worldwide would go to DEFCON 3—an increased alert posture—effective at 7:00 P.M. They also state that Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) Lauris Norstad has been ordered to try to persuade NATO forces to assume a comparable alert posture but that he is authorized to "exercise his discretion in complying with this directive." During the day, Norstad confers with Harold MacMillan, who strongly argues against "mobilizing" European forces. Aware that an alert might weaken European support for the United States—and having received a personal message from President Kennedy stressing the need to keep the alliance together—Norstad decides not to put European forces on higher alert status. (Document 29, *Cable from Joint Chiefs of Staff Announcing DEFCON 3 Military Alert*, 10/22/62; *Text of Message to Lauris Norstad on the Impact of the Cuban Crisis on NATO*, 10/22/62; MacMillan, p. 190)

October 22, 1962—3:00 P.M.: The president reviews the crisis in a formal meeting of the National Security Council. During the meeting, attended by representatives from the Office of Emergency Planning for the first time, Kennedy formally establishes the ExComm. (*National Security Action Memorandum 196: Establishment of an Executive Committee of the National Security Council*, 10/22/62; NYT, 11/1/62)

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October 22, 1962—5:00 P.M.: Seventeen congressional leaders from both parties assemble at the White House for a briefing by President Kennedy, Secretary of State Rusk and an intelligence officer. Most express support for Kennedy's blockade plan. Others, however, led by Senators Richard B. Russell and J. William Fulbright, argue that the quarantine will not compel the Soviet Union to remove the missiles from Cuba and that an airstrike or invasion should be employed instead. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 98; Kennedy, p. 55)

October 22, 1962—6:00 P.M.: Secretary of State Rusk meets with Anatoly Dobrynin. Calling the Soviet missile deployment "a gross error," Rusk hands the Soviet ambassador an advance copy of President Kennedy's speech. Rusk later recalls that Dobrynin, who had never been told by Soviet leaders of the Cuban missile deployment, aged "ten years right in front of my eyes." (*Brief Summary of Dean Rusk-Anatoly Dobrynin Meeting on October 22 Prior to President Kennedy's Speech on the Cuban Crisis*, 10/22/62; *Interview with Sergo Mikoyan on Soviet Views on the Missile Crisis*, 10/13/87; Kennedy, p. 52)

U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Foy Kohler calls the Kremlin to deliver a letter from President Kennedy and the text of the speech. "I must tell you that the United States is determined that this threat to the security of this hemisphere be removed," read the president's letter. (Document 27, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Khrushchev*, 10/22/62; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 107)

October 22, 1962—6:26 P.M.: The State Department receives a letter addressed to President Kennedy from British Prime Minister Macmillan. MacMillan warns that Premier Khrushchev, in reaction to the blockade,

may try to escort his ships into the Caribbean and force you to attack them. This "fire-first" dilemma has always worried us and we have always hoped to impale the Russians on this horn. We must be ready for retaliatory action against Berlin [as well as for] pressure on the weaker parts of the Free World defense system.

President Kennedy phones MacMillan late that evening. During the crisis, the two leaders remain in close contact, speaking with each other over the telephone as often as three times a day. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 106–107; MacMillan, p. 94)

October 22, 1962—7:00 P.M.: President Kennedy addresses the nation in a televised seventeen-minute speech. Announcing that "unmistakable evidence" has established the presence of Soviet MRBM and IRBM sites and nuclear capable bombers in Cuba, he states that as one of his "initial steps," a "strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment" is being put into effect. Kennedy further warns the Soviet government that the United States will "regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response against the Soviet Union." According to dissident Soviet historian Roy Medvedev, Khrushchev responds to the speech by "issuing orders to the captains of Soviet ships...approaching the blockade zone to ignore it and to hold course for the Cuban ports." Khrushchev's order was reportedly reversed at the prompting of Anastas Mikoyan as the Soviet ships approached the quarantine line on the morning of October 24. (Document 28, *Text of President Kennedy's Radio/TV Address to the Nation, October 22, 1962*, 10/22/62; Blight, p. 306)

U.S. military forces worldwide, with the exception of the United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE), are placed on DEFCON 3. ICBM missile crews are alerted and Polaris nuclear submarines in port are dispatched to preassigned stations at sea. During the president's speech, twenty-two interceptor aircraft go airborne in the event the Cuban government reacted militarily. (*Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 11; *The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October–24 November 1962*, 1/9/63, pp. 6–7; *The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 108)

October 22, 1962—7:30 P.M.: Assistant Secretary of State Edwin Martin conducts a further closed-door

briefing for Latin American ambassadors at the State Department. At around 8:00 P.M., Secretary Rusk speaks to a meeting of all other ambassadors in Washington. Rusk reportedly tells the group, "I would not be candid and I would not be fair with you if I did not say that we are in as grave a crisis as mankind has been in." (*The Cuban Crisis, 1962*, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 108-109; Abel, p. 125)

*October 22, 1962:* The first U.S. Jupiter missile site is formally turned over to the Turkish Air Force for maintenance and operation. Although the move is publicized in Turkey and probably detected by Moscow, U.S. decision-makers apparently are not aware of the action. (*Historical Highlights: United States Air Force in Europe 1945-1979*, 11/28/80, p. 61; Garthoff 1, p. 60)

Soviet Colonel Oleg Penkovsky is arrested in the Soviet Union. From April 1961 to the end of August 1962, Penkovsky has been a spy for British and U.S. intelligence services, providing them with material on Soviet military capabilities, including important technical information on Soviet MRBM and ICBM programs. Penkovsky had been given a few telephonic coded signals for use in emergency situations, including one to be used if he is about to be arrested and one to be used in case of imminent war. When he learns he was about to be arrested, Penkovsky apparently chose to use the signal for an imminent Soviet attack. Western intelligence analysts decide, however, not to credit Penkovsky's final signal, and the ExComm is not informed of Penkovsky's arrest or its circumstances. (Garthoff 1, pp. 63-65; Penkovsky, pp. 4-5)

*October 23, 1962—8:00 A.M.:* TASS begins transmitting a Soviet government statement. At the same time, U.S. Ambassador Foy Kohler is called to the Soviet Foreign Office and given a copy of the statement with a letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy. Khrushchev writes:

I must say frankly that the measures indicated in your statement constitute a serious threat to peace and to the security of nations.... We reaffirm that the armaments which are in Cuba, re-

gardless of the classification to which they may belong, are intended solely for defensive purposes in order to secure [the] Republic of Cuba against the attack of an aggressor.

I hope that the United States Government will display wisdom and renounce the actions pursued by you, which may lead to catastrophic consequences for world peace.

In his transmittal of the letter, Kohler notes that both the statement and the letter "avoid specific threats and are relatively restrained in tone." (Document 30, *Premier Khrushchev's Message to President Kennedy, October 23, 1962*, 10/23/62)

*October 23, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* At a meeting of the ExComm, President Kennedy approves plans for signing an official quarantine proclamation. In anticipation of a possible reaction to the blockade from the Soviet government, Kennedy directs John McCone to prepare an analysis of the effects of a comparable blockade on Berlin. The ExComm then examines the question of how the United States will respond if a U-2 aircraft is shot down. If such an event occurs and "evidence of hostile Cuban action" has been established, the ExComm decides that the SAM site responsible for the downing will be attacked and destroyed. Continued harassment of U-2 flights, it is agreed, would probably result in attacks on all SAM sites in Cuba. Following the ExComm meeting, President Kennedy establishes three subcommittees: another on crisis communications, one on advance planning, and the third on Berlin contingencies. (Document 31, McGeorge Bundy, *Executive Committee Minutes, October 23, 1962, 10:00 A.M.*, 10/23/62; *The Cuban Crisis, 1962*, ca. 8/22/63, p. 124; *Notes from 10:00 A.M. ExComm Meeting*, 10/23/62)

*October 23, 1962—4:00 P.M.:* At a special meeting of the U.N. Security Council, Adlai Stevenson issues a sharply worded statement in which he characterizes Cuba as "an accomplice in the communist enterprise of world domination." Cuban representative Mario García Incháustegui responds by denouncing the quarantine as an "act of war," and Soviet representa-

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tive Valerian Zorin calls U.S. charges of missiles in Cuba "completely false." Zorin submits a draft resolution demanding an end to U.S. naval activity near Cuba and calling for negotiations to end the crisis. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 115-22)

October 23, 1962—5:40 P.M.: Fidel Castro announces a combat alarm, placing the Cuban armed forces on their highest alert. Cuban armed forces subsequently reach a size of 270,000 men, following a massive mobilization effort. (*Statement by Castro Rejecting the Possibility of Inspection and Noting That Cuba Has Taken Measures To Repel a United States Attack*, 10/23/62; Garthoff 1, p. 66)

October 23, 1962—6:00 P.M.: The ExComm holds a brief meeting prior to the president's signing of the quarantine proclamation. The group makes slight revisions to the proclamation and approves a new message to Premier Khrushchev. ExComm members are informed that an "extraordinary number" of coded messages have been sent to Soviet ships on their way to Cuba, although the contents of these messages are not known. In addition, John McCone states that Soviet submarines have unexpectedly been found moving into the Caribbean. According to Robert Kennedy, the president ordered the navy to give "the highest priority to tracking the submarines and to put into effect the greatest possible safety measures to protect our own aircraft carriers and other vessels." (Document 32, *McGeorge Bundy, Executive Committee Record of Action*, October 23, 1962, 6:00 P.M., 10/23/62; Kennedy, pp. 61-62)

October 23, 1962—6:51 P.M.: A new message from President Kennedy is transmitted to Premier Khrushchev via the U.S. embassy in Moscow. Kennedy, stressing that it is important that both sides "show prudence and do nothing to allow events to make the situation more difficult to control than it already is," asks the Soviet Premier to direct Soviet ships to observe the quarantine zone. (Document 33, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Krushchev*, 10/23/62)

October 23, 1962—7:06 P.M.: In a ceremony at the White House, the president signs Proclamation 3504, formally establishing the quarantine. CINCLANT is directed to enforce the blockade beginning at 10:00 the following morning. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 130)

October 23, 1962—8:35 P.M.: Fidel Castro tells the Cuban public in a ninety-minute television speech that Cuba will never disarm while the United States persists in its policy of aggression and hostility. Castro denies the presence of offensive missiles on Cuban soil but declares: "We will acquire the arms we feel like acquiring and we don't have to give an account to the imperialists." Castro also categorically refuses to allow inspection of Cuban territory, warning that potential inspectors "must come in battle array." (*Statement by Castro Rejecting the Possibility of Inspection and Noting That Cuba Has Taken Measures To Repel a United States Attack*, 10/23/62; OR 10/31/62)

October 23, 1962—evening: At a Soviet embassy reception in Washington, D.C., Lieutenant General Vladimir A. Dubovik appears to suggest that the captains of the Soviet ships heading for Cuba are under orders to defy the blockade. Ambassador Dobrynin, arriving late at the reception, declines to refute Dobovik's comments, saying, "he is a military man, I am not. He is the one who knows what the Navy is going to do, not I." U.S. intelligence also notes a statement by the president of TASS during the day warning that U.S. ships would be sunk if any Soviet ships are attacked. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 50; Abel, p. 134)

At a debriefing for State Department officials, Edwin Martin emphasizes to U. Alexis Johnson the importance of preventing exile groups from creating an incident in Cuba during the crisis. Martin suggests that Johnson raise the issue of halting covert activities with CIA Director of Plans Richard Helms as well as with the ExComm. The issue of ending OPERATION MONGOOSE activities and checking the action of independent Cuban émigré groups does not, however, appear to have been seriously discussed in the Ex-

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Comm. MONGOOSE activities are not in fact shut down until October 30, too late to prevent a sabotage mission against Cuba from being carried out by CIA agents on November 8 (see entries for those dates). (*U. Alexis Johnson's Agenda for the Morning ExComm Meeting*, 10/24/62)

*October 23, 1962—9:30 P.M.:* Robert Kennedy, at the suggestion of the president, meets with Anatoly Dobrynin in the latter's office at the Soviet embassy. According to his memorandum on the meeting, the attorney general calls the Soviet missile deployment "hypocritical, misleading, and false." Dobrynin tells Kennedy that, as far as he knows, there are still no missiles in Cuba, and said that he is not aware of any change in instructions to captains of Soviet ships steaming toward Cuba. (Kennedy, pp. 65-66; Schlesinger, p. 514)

*October 23, 1962—10:15 P.M.:* Robert Kennedy relates his conversation with Dobrynin to President Kennedy and British Ambassador David Ormsby-Gore, who is meeting with the president. Robert Kennedy recalled that his brother first talked about the possibility of arranging an immediate summit with Premier Khrushchev, but then dismissed the idea as useless until Khrushchev "first accepted... U.S. determination in this matter." Ambassador Ormsby-Gore then reportedly expressed concern that the naval quarantine line reportedly has been set at eight hundred miles from Cuba. Ormsby-Gore recommends drawing the interception line closer to the island in order to give the Soviet government more time to analyze their position. President Kennedy agrees and calls Secretary of Defense McNamara to shorten the line to five hundred miles. It is unclear whether the eight-hundred-mile line is ever actually planned; diaries from the quarantine commander, Admiral Alfred Ward, show that he considered even a five-hundred-nautical mile line "excessive." (*Personal History or Diary of Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, U.S. Navy; While Serving As Commander Second Fleet*, ca. 11/28/62; Kennedy, pp. 66-67)

*October 23, 1962:* Low-level reconnaissance flights over Cuba begin for the first time, supplementing high-altitude U-2 photoreconnaissance. Navy and air force F-8U and RF-101 aircraft fly some 158 low-level missions between October 23 and November 15. The Soviet Union responds to the low-altitude flights by employing camouflage where possible. (*Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara*, 2/28/63, p. H-1; *Interim Report by the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee on the Cuban Military Buildup*, 5/9/63)

Moscow places the armed forces of Warsaw Pact countries on alert. The Soviet government also defers the scheduled release of troops in the Strategic Rocket Forces, air defense units, and the submarine fleet, and it announces that "the battle readiness and vigilance of all troops" has been raised. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 52)

Gallup poll survey taken on October 23 shows that 84 percent of the U.S. public who know about the Cuban situation favor the blockade while only 4 percent oppose the action. At the same time, roughly one out of every five Americans believe the quarantine will lead to World War III. (Detzer, p. 192)

*October 24, 1962—6:00 A.M.:* A CIA report based on information as of 6:00 A.M. states that communist reaction to the U.S. quarantine against Cuba has "not gone beyond the highly critical but noncommittal statement" issued by the Soviet government on October 23. Official world reaction is reported to be generally favorable, particularly in Latin America. Surveillance of Cuba indicates continued rapid progress in completion of IRBM and MRBM missile sites. No new offensive missile sites have been discovered, but nuclear storage buildings are being assembled with great speed. (*The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600*, 10/25/62)

*October 24, 1962—early morning:* Soviet ships en route to Cuba capable of carrying military cargoes appear to have slowed down, altered, or reversed their courses. Sixteen of the nineteen Soviet ships en route to Cuba at the time the naval quarantine is an-

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nounced, including five large-hatch vessels, reverse course and are returning to the Soviet Union. Only the tanker *Bucharest* continues toward the quarantine line. (*Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara*, 2/28/63, p. K-1; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 4)

October 24, 1962—morning: William Knox, a U.S. businessman, has a 3 1/4-hour interview with Premier Khrushchev at Khrushchev's request. Khrushchev states that it is now too late for the United States to take over Cuba, and that he will eventually give orders to sink a U.S. vessel enforcing the blockade if Soviet ships are stopped. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63; *Khrushchev's Conversation with Mr. W. E. Knox, President Westinghouse Electric International, Moscow, October 24, 10/26/62*)

October 24, 1962—9:35 A.M.: President Kennedy has a brief conversation with his brother, Robert, during which the president reportedly expresses deep concern that Soviet ships appear ready to challenge the quarantine:

"It looks really mean, doesn't it? But then, really there was no other choice. If they get this mean in our part of the world, what will they do next?" "I just don't think there was any choice," [Robert Kennedy] said, "and not only that, if you hadn't acted, you would have been impeached." The President thought for a moment and said, "That's what I think—I would have been impeached." (Kennedy, p. 67)

October 24, 1962—10:00 A.M.: The U.S. naval quarantine of Cuba officially goes into effect. (*Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba*, 10/23/62)

October 24, 1962—10:00 A.M.: The ExComm meets to consider the situation in Cuba. According to Robert Kennedy's memoirs on the crisis, the meeting "seemed the most trying, the most difficult, and the most filled

with tension." Robert McNamara tells the group that Soviet ships approaching the quarantine line show no indications of stopping and that two Soviet ships, the *Gagarin* and the *Komiles*, are within a few miles of the line. Naval intelligence then reports that a Soviet submarine has moved into position between the two ships. McNamara states that the aircraft carrier USS *Essex* has been directed to make the first interception, and that antisubmarine tactics, including the use of small explosives, has been ordered to prevent the Soviet submarine from interfering with the blockade.

According to Robert Kennedy, the president asks, "Isn't there some way we can avoid our first exchange with a Russian submarine—almost anything but that?" McNamara replies, "No, there's too much danger to our ships.... Our commanders have been instructed to avoid hostilities if at all possible, but this is what we must be prepared for, and this is what we must expect." At 10:25 A.M., a new intelligence message arrives and John McCone announces: "We have a preliminary report which seems to indicate that some of the Russian ships have stopped dead in the water." Dean Rusk leans over to McGeorge Bundy and says, "We're eyeball to eyeball and I think the other fellow just blinked." President Kennedy directs that no ship be intercepted for at least another hour while clarifying information is sought. (Document 36, *McGeorge Bundy, Executive Committee Record of Action*, 10/25/62; Kennedy, pp. 67-72; Schlesinger, p. 514; Abel, p. 143)

October 24, 1962—11:24 A.M.: A cable drafted by George Ball is transmitted to U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Raymond Hare and U.S. Ambassador to NATO Thomas Finletter, notifying them that the United States is considering a Turkey-for-Cuba missile trade. The cable states that while the comparison of missiles in Turkey with those in Cuba was "refutable," it is nonetheless possible that a negotiated solution to the crisis might "involve dismantling and removal" of the Jupiters. Each diplomat is requested to assess the political consequences of the removal of the Jupiters in a variety of different circumstances. Finletter presents his recommendations on October 25 (see entry for October 25, 1962—6:41



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P.M.); Hare responds on October 26 (see entry for October 26, 1962—1:18 P.M.). (*Possible Soviet Reaction to Cuban Quarantine and Request for Assessments on the Possible Dismantling of Jupiter Missiles*, 10/24/62)

*October 24, 1962—2:00 P.M.:* In his first communication with President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev during the crisis, U.N. Acting Secretary General U Thant sends identical private appeals to the two leaders, urging that their government “refrain from any action which may aggravate the situation and bring with it the risk of war.” U Thant’s plea, made at the request of more than forty nonaligned states, calls for the voluntary suspension of arms shipments to Cuba together with the voluntary suspension of the naval quarantine for between two and three weeks. (*U Thant’s October 24 Letter to Kennedy Calling for a Temporary Suspension of the Quarantine and of Arms Shipments to Cuba*, 10/24/62)

*October 24, 1962—5:15 P.M.:* A Defense Department spokesperson announces publicly that some of the Soviet Bloc vessels proceeding toward Cuba appear to have altered their course. (Abel, p. 153)

*October 24, 1962—evening:* TASS releases an exchange of telegrams between British philosopher and passivist Bertrand Russell and Nikita Khrushchev. In his first public statement since the onset of the crisis, Khrushchev warns in his telegram that if the United States carries out its program of “pirate action,” the Soviet Union will have no alternative but to “make use of the means of defense against the aggressor.” Khrushchev also proposes a summit meeting with Kennedy to discuss how to end the conflict and “remove the threat of the unleashing of a thermonuclear war.” (*Text of Khrushchev’s October 24 Message to Bertrand Russell*, 10/24/62; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 139)

*October 24, 1962—9:24 P.M.:* The State Department receives a letter for President Kennedy from Premier Khrushchev. At 10:52 P.M., the message is read to Kennedy. Khrushchev writes, “if you coolly weigh the situation which has developed, not giving way to pas-

sions, you will understand that the Soviet Union cannot fail to reject the arbitrary demands of the United States.” Khrushchev warns that the Soviet Union views the blockade as “an act of aggression” and that, as a consequence, he will not instruct Soviet ships bound for Cuba to observe the quarantine. (Document 34, *Premier Krushchev’s Letter to President Kennedy*, 10/24/62; *The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, p. 139)

*October 24, 1962:* At the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, SAC increases its alert posture to DEFCON 2 for the first time in history. Thomas Powers, the commander-in-chief of SAC, believed, as he later wrote, that while discreet preparations had been appropriate before, it was now “important for [the Soviets] to know of SAC’s readiness.” Consequently, Powers decides on his own authority to transmit uncoded messages to SAC commanders noting that SAC plans are well prepared and that the alert process was going smoothly. (*The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October–24 November 1962*, ca. 1/63, pp. 7–8, Tab A2–A3; Garthoff 1, p. 62; Sagan, p. 108)

At the request of President Kennedy, the Defense Department drafts two separate plans to increase civil defense preparations during a possible military engagement with Cuba. The first outlines civil defense measures which could be taken in the vicinity of targets close to Cuba under attack with conventional weapons, while the second suggests measures which could be taken in response to possible nuclear attack within MRBM range.

*October 25, 1962—1:45 A.M.:* A message from President Kennedy for Premier Khrushchev is transmitted to the U.S. embassy in Moscow. Acknowledging Khrushchev’s letter of October 24, Kennedy writes, “I regret very much that you still do not appear to understand what it is that has moved us in this matter...” Kennedy notes that he had received “solemn assurances” that no missile bases would be established in Cuba. When these assurances proved false, the deployment of missiles in Cuba “required the responses I have announced.... I hope that your government will take the necessary action to permit a restoration of the

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earlier situation." (Document 39, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Khrushchev*, 10/25/62)

October 25, 1962—7:15 A.M.: The aircraft carrier USS *Essex* and the destroyer USS *Gearing* hail and attempt to intercept the Soviet tanker *Bucharest*. Since there is no reason to suspect the ship carries contraband, the *Bucharest* is allowed to continue its voyage to Cuba. (*Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 4)

October 25, 1962—morning: A syndicated column by the influential journalist Walter Lippman proposes a "face-saving" agreement whereby the United States would agree to remove Jupiters from Turkey in return for a Soviet withdrawal of missiles from Cuba. Many in the United States and the Soviet Union mistakenly interpret the proposal as a trial balloon floated by the Kennedy administration. (*Newspaper Column by Walter Lippman Suggesting That Both United States Bases in Turkey and Soviet Bases in Cuba Could Be Dismantled*, 10/25/62)

October 25, 1962—10:00 A.M.: During the morning ExComm meeting, President Kennedy authorizes the development of a program to drop propaganda leaflets over Cuba. Although leaflets are produced and approved by the ExComm, the program, later christened "Bugle Call," is never actually carried out. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 149–50)

October 25, 1962—2:19 P.M.: In his reply to U.N. Secretary General U Thant's letter of October 23, President Kennedy avoids responding directly to U Thant's proposal that Soviet arms shipments to Cuba and the U.S. quarantine be suspended for several weeks. Concerned that acceptance of the proposal would allow Soviet military personnel to continue work on the missiles already in Cuba, Kennedy writes only that he appreciated the "spirit" of U Thant's message, adding that Adlai Stevenson is prepared to begin preliminary negotiations regarding the crisis. Also, during the day, Premier Khrushchev writes to U Thant to say that he welcomes and agrees with his proposal. Khrushchev notes that, like U Thant, he considered the Cuban cri-

sis "highly dangerous and requiring...immediate interference by the United Nations." (*Letter from Khrushchev to U Thant Accepting U Thant's October 24 Proposal to Temporarily Suspend the Quarantine and Further Arms Shipments to Cuba*, 10/25/62; *Message from President Kennedy to U Thant Stating That United States Ships Will Avoid Confronting Soviet Vessels If the Quarantine Zone Is Respected*, 10/25/62)

October 25, 1962—2:26 P.M.: At the prompting of the United States, U Thant sends a second message to Premier Khrushchev and President Kennedy asking them to avoid direct confrontations between Soviet and U.S. ships while the quarantine remains in effect. U Thant asks that Soviet ships keep out of the quarantine zone for a limited time and that the United States instruct its vessels "to do everything possible to avoid a direct confrontation with Soviet ships in the next few days." (*Letter from U Thant to Khrushchev Requesting That Soviet Ships Avoid Challenging the United States Quarantine*, 10/25/62; Ball, p. 302)

October 25, 1962—5:00 P.M.: Dean Rusk reports on the political situation during an ExComm meeting. At the close of the meeting, CIA Director McCone indicates that some of the missiles deployed in Cuba are now operational. (Document 38, *McGeorge Bundy, Executive Committee Meeting Record of Action, October 25, 1962*, 5:00 P.M., 10/25/62; *Nuclear-Free or Missile-Free Zones*, 10/26/62)

October 25, 1962—5:43 P.M.: The commander of U.S. quarantine forces, Admiral Alfred Ward, orders the USS *Kennedy* to proceed toward a Lebanese freighter, the *Marucla*. During the day, the freighter has been selected by President Kennedy as the first ship to be boarded by quarantine forces. The USS *Kennedy* informs the *Marucla* that night by radio that the ship will be boarded the following morning. (Kennedy, p. 82; Detzer, p. 230)

October 25, 1962—6:41 P.M.: The State Department receives a cable from U.S. Ambassador to NATO Thomas Finletter relaying Ankara's position on the

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possible withdrawal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey. Finletter reports that the Turkish representative to NATO has made it clear that his government sets "great store" by the Jupiters, and that Turkey regards the missiles "as a symbol of the alliance's determination to use atomic weapons" against either a Soviet conventional or nuclear attack on Turkey. Finletter states his belief that any arrangement that fails to substitute some other form of nuclear capability in Turkey would be rejected by the Turkish government. He adds, "in my opinion we must be most careful in working out any horse trade of this type to be sure it does not set pattern for handling future Russian incursions in other parts of the world (perhaps in other Western Hemisphere countries)." (*Turkish Position with regard to Trading Jupiters for Soviet Missiles in Cuba*, 10/25/62)

*October 25, 1962*: President Kennedy issues National Security Action Memorandum 199 authorizing the loading of multistage nuclear weapons on aircraft under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR). (*The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October–24 November 1962*, ca. 1/63, p. 27; *Chronology of JCS Decisions Concerning the Cuban Crisis*, 12/21/62)

*October 25, 1962*: A CIA sabotage team, dispatched to Cuba to destroy facilities at the Matahambre copper mine in Cuba (see entry for October 15, 1962), is prevented from executing the sabotage attack by Cuban authorities. (Garthoff 1, p. 78)

*October 26, 1962—6:00 A.M.*: The CIA memorandum reporting information as of 6:00 A.M. notes that construction of IRBM and MRBM bases in Cuba is proceeding without interruption. (*The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600*, 10/26/62)

*October 26, 1962—10:00 A.M.*: President Kennedy tells the ExComm that he believes the quarantine by itself will not cause the Soviet government to remove the missiles from Cuba, and that only an invasion or a trade of some sort will succeed. After discussing the airstrike option again at some length, Kennedy agrees

to apply further pressure by increasing the frequency of low-level flights over Cuba from twice per day to once every two hours. The ExComm also decides not to undertake any emergency civil defense programs at this time, although preliminary measures have been initiated. (Document 42, Bromley Smith, *Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting, October 26, 1962, 10:00 A.M.*, 10/26/62; *The Cuban Crisis, 1962*, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 165–66; Kennedy, p. 83)

*October 26, 1962—morning*: President Kennedy orders the State Department to proceed with preparations for a crash program aimed at establishing a civil government in Cuba after an invasion and occupation of the country. During the meeting, Robert McNamara reports to the president that the military believes that heavy casualties should be expected in an invasion; several days later, CINCLANT estimates that up to 18,484 U.S. casualties might occur during the first ten days of fighting. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 56; Kennedy, p. 85)

*October 26, 1962—1:00 P.M.*: John Scali, State Department correspondent for ABC News, lunches with Aleksandr Fomin at the Occidental Restaurant in Washington at Fomin's urgent request. The two have met together on several previous occasions. Fomin, officially the Soviet embassy public affairs counselor, is known to be the KGB's Washington station chief. Noting that "war seems about to break out," he asks Scali to contact his "high-level friends" in the State Department to ascertain whether the United States would be interested in a possible solution to the crisis. According to Scali's notes, Fomin's proposal runs along the following lines: "[Soviet] bases would be dismantled under [U]nited [N]ations supervision and [C]astro would pledge not to accept offensive weapons of any kind, ever, in return for [a U.S.] pledge not to invade Cuba." Following the lunch, Scali goes directly to the State Department to report on the meeting to Roger Hilsman. (Document 43, *John Scali's Notes of First Meeting with Soviet Embassy Counselor Alexandr Fomin*, 10/26/62)

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*October 26, 1962—1:18 P.M.:* The State Department receives a cable from U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Raymond Hare warning that Turkish officials will “deeply resent” any Turkey-for-Cuba missile trade. Hare expresses his opinion that the most satisfactory resolution to the crisis would avoid the Jupiter issue altogether, but he suggests that if the missiles have to be removed it should be done gradually. Hare also acknowledges that an alternative solution could be the “dismantling of Jupiters...on [a] strictly secret basis with Soviets.” (*Assessment of Consequences for the NATO Alliance If the Jupiters Are Traded for the Cuban Missiles—In Three Sections*, 10/26/62)

*October 26, 1962—2:00 P.M.:* U.S. Ambassador to Brazil A. Lincoln Gordon is requested to ask the Brazilian government to have the Brazilian ambassador in Havana, Luis Batian Pinto, meet privately with Fidel Castro to relay a message from the U.S. government. The message that Pinto is to give to Castro includes reassurances that the United States is unlikely to invade Cuba if the missiles are removed. (*Instructions to Secure Assistance of Brazil in Approaching Castro*, 10/26/62)

*October 26, 1962—6:00 P.M.:* The State Department begins receiving a message from the U.S. embassy in Moscow containing a new, private letter from Premier Khrushchev. The message arrives in four sections, with the final portion arriving at 9:00 P.M., some twelve hours after the text has been delivered to the U.S. embassy. The letter, almost certainly composed by Khrushchev himself, is, in Robert Kennedy's words, “very long and emotional.” But it contains a proposal for a settlement: “I propose: we, for our part, will declare that our ships bound for Cuba are not carrying any armaments. You will declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its troops and will not support any other forces which might intend to invade Cuba. Then the necessity of the presence of our military specialists in Cuba will disappear.” (Document 44, *Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy, Offering a Settlement to the Crisis*, 10/26/62; Kennedy, p. 86)

*October 26, 1962—6:45 P.M.:* John Scali tells Dean Rusk and Roger Hilsman of Aleksandr Fomin's proposal (see entry for October 26, 1962—1:00 P.M.). U.S. officials assume that Fomin's message has been initiated by the Kremlin and interpret Khrushchev's newly arrived letter in light of Fomin's offer that the Soviet Union remove its missiles under U.N. inspection in return for a U.S. noninvasion pledge. Recent information from Soviet sources suggests that, contrary to U.S. assumptions at the time, Fomin's proposal was not in fact authorized by Moscow. (Hilsman, p. 218; Garthoff 2, p. 73)

*October 26, 1962—7:35 P.M.:* Meeting again with Aleksandr Fomin, John Scali recites a message given to him by Dean Rusk. Scali states, “I have reason to believe that the [U.S. government] sees real possibilities and supposes that the representatives of the two governments in New York could work this matter out with U Thant and with each other. My impression is, however, that time is very urgent.” Fomin assures Scali that his remarks would be communicated immediately to the “highest Soviet sources.” (*Report on Meeting between John Scali and Aleksandr Fomin on October 26, 1962, 7:35 P.M.*, 10/26/62; “John Scali, ABC News,” 8/13/64)

*October 26, 1962—10:00 P.M.:* The ExComm reconvenes in an extraordinary session to consider Premier Khrushchev's letter. Further textual analysis of the letter is ordered, and two Soviet specialists, Helmut Sonnenfeldt and Joseph Neupert, are directed to analyze the letter alongside the proposal from Aleksandr Fomin. (Abel, p. 184)

*October 26, 1962—night:* Unknown to any of the ExComm members, Robert Kennedy and Anatoly Dobrynin meet at the Soviet embassy, one of a series of secret meetings the two held during the crisis. (Dobrynin has since disclosed that when he defended the Soviet missile deployment by noting that the United States had stationed Jupiter missiles to Turkey, Robert Kennedy offered to introduce the Turkish missiles into a potential settlement.) The attorney general reportedly leaves the room to phone the president.

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When he returns, he tells Dobrynin, "the president said that we are ready to consider the question of Turkey, to examine favorably the question of Turkey." Dobrynin reports the conversation to the Kremlin. (Allyn, p. 158)

Around this time, according to Nikita Khrushchev, "we received information from our Cuban comrades and from other sources which directly stated that this attack [on Cuba] would be carried out within the next two or three days." Khrushchev's statement may refer to a cable from Fidel Castro that was transmitted on the evening of October 26. Fearing that a U.S. invasion is imminent, Castro reportedly composes the message—dictating in Spanish to Soviet Ambassador Alekseyev, who translates the letter into Russian—while spending the night in a bomb shelter in the Soviet embassy in Havana. Khrushchev apparently understood the cable both as a warning of an impending invasion and as an attempt to get Khrushchev to launch the missiles in Cuba against the United States. According to an unpublished portion of Khrushchev's memoirs, Khrushchev recalls Castro warning that "an American invasion would take place within a few hours. Therefore, he was proposing to preempt the invasion and inflict a nuclear strike on the U.S." At the Havana Conference in January 1992, Castro states that his letter was mistranslated; that he was suggesting that if Cuba was invaded, the Soviet Union would need to defend itself from attack by using nuclear weapons. (Document 45, *Prime Minister Fidel Castro's Letter to Premier Khrushchev*, 10/26/62; *The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63; Allyn, p. 167)

*October 26, 1962:* Fidel Castro orders Cuban anti-aircraft forces to open fire on all U.S. aircraft flying over the island. According to one source, Castro's order reportedly replaces his standing orders to fire only on groups of two or more low-altitude airplanes. When Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Alekseyev asks Castro to recind his order, he apparently is rebuffed. (*Interview with Sergo Mikoyan on Soviet Views on the Missile Crisis*, 10/13/87; Szulc, p. 647; Allyn, p. 161)

As a result of the increased frequency of low-level reconnaissance missions, additional military targets in

Cuba are identified. Military planners consequently revise air attack targeting and plans. The airstrike plan now includes three massive strikes per day until Cuban air capability is destroyed. Some 1,190 bombing sorties are planned for the first day of operations. (*The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October–24 November 1962*, ca. 1/63, p. 9)

*October 27, 1962—6:00 A.M.:* The CIA intelligence memorandum containing information compiled as of 6:00 A.M. reports that three of the four MRBM sites at San Cristóbal and the two sites at Sagua la Grande appear to be fully operational. The mobilization of Cuban military forces is reported to be continuing at a high rate, but the CIA advises that Cuban forces remain under orders not to engage in hostilities unless attacked. (Document 47, *CIA Daily Report, The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600 27 October 1962*, 10/27/62)

*October 27, 1962—9:00 A.M.:* Radio Moscow begins broadcasting a message from Premier Khrushchev. In contrast to the private message of the day before, the new message calls for the dismantling of U.S. missile bases in Turkey in return for the removal of the Soviet missiles in Cuba. While the broadcast is underway, the original copy of Khrushchev's last letter to President Kennedy is delivered to the U.S. embassy in Moscow. (*Report That Khrushchev's October 27 Letter to President Kennedy Was Delivered to Embassy at 5:00 P.M. Moscow Time*, 10/27/62)

*October 27, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* The ExComm meets in the Situation Room at the White House. After the usual intelligence briefing by John McCone, the minutes of the meeting record that

McNamara reported on the positions of Soviet Bloc ships moving toward Cuba.... He recommended that we be prepared to board the *Grozny*, which is now out about six-hundred miles.... Under Secretary Ball pointed out that the Soviets did not know the extent of our quarantine zone. The President agreed that we should ask U Thant to tell the Russians in New

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York where we are drawing the quarantine line. The Russians would then be in a position to decide whether to turn back their tanker or allow her to enter the quarantine zone sometime later today.

During the meeting, Premier Khrushchev's second message begins to be received. The full text of Khrushchev's formal letter came across a Foreign Broadcast Information Service ticker in the White House at 11:03 A.M. The message states in part:

You are disturbed over Cuba. You say that this disturbs you because it is ninety miles by sea from the coast of the United States of America. But...you have placed destructive missile weapons, which you call offensive, in Turkey, literally next to us.... I therefore make this proposal: We are willing to remove from Cuba the means which you regard as offensive.... Your representatives will make a declaration to the effect that the United States...will remove its analogous means from Turkey.... And after that, persons entrusted by the United Nations Security Council could inspect on the spot the fulfillment of the pledges made....

The new letter sets the stage for a protracted ExComm discussion, which continues throughout the day, about how to respond, with the president stating that to go to war with the Soviet Union instead of accepting a trade would be "an insupportable position." (Document 48, *Premier Khrushchev's Communiqué to President Kennedy, Calling for a Trade of Cuban Missiles for Turkish Missiles*, 10/27/62; Document 49, *Transcript of Executive Committee Meetings* [edited], 10/27/62; NSC *Executive Committee Record of Action*, October 27, 1962, 10:00 A.M.)

October 27, 1962—Around 10:15 to 11:00 A.M.: A U-2 from a SAC base in Alaska strays into Soviet airspace over the Chukotski Peninsula on what was reported to be a "routine air sampling mission." The U-2 pilot apparently enters Soviet airspace as a result of a navigational error. The pilot radios for assistance and a U.S. F-102 fighter aircraft in Alaska scrambles and heads toward the Bering Sea. At the same time, Soviet MiGs take off from a base near Wrangel Island to intercept

the U-2, which eventually manages to fly out of Soviet territory with no shots being fired. Alaskan Air Command records suggest that the U.S. fighter planes are armed with nuclear air-to-air missiles.

According to one account, when Secretary of Defense McNamara hears that a U-2 was in Soviet airspace, "he turned absolutely white, and yelled hysterically, 'This means war with the Soviet Union.'" President Kennedy's laconic reaction upon hearing of the incident is simply to laugh and remark that "there is always some [son of a bitch] who doesn't get the word." (*War Room Journal*, 10/27/62; *Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 14; *Interview of David A. Burchinal*, 4/11/75, pp. 114-15; Hilsman 1, p. 221; Sagan, pp. 117-18; *Air Defense Operations*, ca. 12/62)

October 27, 1962—Around 12:00 noon: A U-2 reconnaissance plane is shot down over Cuba and its pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson, killed. Anderson had flown one of the first U-2 missions responsible for detecting the Soviet missiles. The ExComm, when informed of the downing, assumes that the attack had been ordered by the Kremlin and speculates that the move is designed to escalate the crisis. In fact, as Soviet and Cuban officials have only recently revealed, the attack is the result of a decision made by local Soviet commanders. Although a Soviet major general, Igor I. Statsenko, claims responsibility for the decision in 1987, other Soviet sources have suggested that Lt. Gen. Stepan N. Grechko and Gen. Leonid S. Garbuz are the two officers in Cuba who authorized the firing of the SAM. After the incident, Marshal Malinovsky mildly reprimands the officers and orders that no other U-2s be attacked. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15-28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 14; *The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600 28 October 1962*, 10/28/62; Garthoff 1, p. 82-85; Allyn, pp. 160-62)

October 27, 1962—2:30 P.M.: Several ExComm members assemble in George Ball's conference room to consider possible options in light of the deteriorating crisis situation. (*The Cuban Crisis*, 1962, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 185-86)

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October 27, 1962:—3:41 P.M.: F8U-1P low-level reconnaissance planes take off for afternoon missions over Cuba. Two of the six planes are forced to abort their mission due to mechanical problems. As the remaining planes fly over San Cristóbal and Sagua la Grande, Cuban troops open fire with antiaircraft guns and small arms. One of the U.S. aircraft is hit by a 37mm antiaircraft shell but manages to return to its base. (*Transcript of October 27 Cuban Missile Crisis ExComm Meetings*, 10/27/62, p. 18; U.S. Plane Cuba, 10/27/62)

October 27, 1962—4:00 P.M.: The ExComm is called back to the White House. President Kennedy orders the immediate dispatch of a message to U Thant asking urgently whether he would ascertain if the Soviet government is willing to stop work on the bases while negotiations continue to find a solution to the crisis. In the middle of the meeting, Maxwell Taylor brings in a late report confirming that the missing U-2 had been shot down over Cuba, probably by a SAM site. President Kennedy, however, decides not to retaliate but agrees that if any more surveillance planes are fired on over Cuba, the SAM sites would be attacked. Kennedy's order to call off the planned reprisal is reportedly received with disbelief in the Pentagon.

Most of the long meeting, however, centers on formulating a response to Nikita Khrushchev's most recent proposal. President Kennedy, in deliberations throughout the day, continually favors trading away the missiles in Turkey for those in Cuba as Khrushchev has offered—possibly because he secretly has hinted to the Soviet government through Robert Kennedy and Anatoly Dobrynin on October 26 that the United States would agree to such a deal. However, most of the group argues that an open trade could fragment the NATO alliance. Alternative courses of action are suggested: McNamara argues that the Jupiters in Turkey should be removed, but only as a prelude to an invasion of Cuba; Maxwell Taylor forwards the JCS recommendation simply to initiate the airstrike and invasion plans; and the State Department drafts a letter flatly rejecting the Soviet proposal.

As the meeting progresses, the idea of ignoring Khrushchev's new proposal and responding only to

the October 26 letter (which did not mention the Jupiters) gradually begins to emerge. President Kennedy, initially hesitant to accept the idea because he does not believe Khrushchev would accept such a deal, finally agrees when Soviet specialist Llewellyn Thompson argues that Khrushchev might. Theodore Sorensen and Robert Kennedy leave the meeting to compose the proposed response. After forty-five minutes, they return to present the draft. The president refines the letter, has it typed, and signs it. The letter is sent that evening (see entry for October 27, 1962—8:05 P.M.).

After the ExComm meeting breaks up, a smaller group composed of President Kennedy, McNamara, Robert Kennedy, Bundy, Rusk, Llewellyn Thompson, and Theodore Sorensen meet in the Oval Office. The group agrees that the second letter to Khrushchev should be reinforced with an oral message passed through Ambassador Dobrynin. They further agree that Dobrynin should be informed that if the Soviet missiles are not withdrawn, there will be military action against Cuba. If they are removed, however, the United States will be willing to give a noninvasion pledge. Dean Rusk suggests one further component to the message: an assurance that, while there can be no public or explicit deal over the Turkish missiles, the Jupiters will in fact be removed once the Cuban crisis is resolved. The proposal quickly gains the approval of the group and the president. Concern is so acute that the assurance not be leaked to the public or to NATO that not even other ExComm members are told of the additional assurances regarding the Jupiters. (Document 49, *Transcript of the Executive Committee Meetings* [edited], 10/27/62, pp. 25–26, 39; Bundy, p. 431; Kennedy, pp. 98, 101–102; Allison, p. 225; Bundy, p. 432; *Recollection by Dean Rusk of Negotiating Channel through Andrew Cordier and Details of Negotiations To Remove Jupiters Prior to the Crisis*, 2/25/87; Bundy, p. 433)

October 27, 1962—4:15 P.M.: At Dean Rusk's request, ABC News correspondent John Scali and Soviet embassy official Fomin meet once again. When Scali asks Fomin why the October 26 proposal has been scrapped and the Jupiters introduced into the deal,

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Fomin explains that the change is a result of "poor communications." He states that Premier Khrushchev's new message had been drafted before his report on the favorable U.S. reaction to the October 26 proposal had arrived. Furious at Fomin's response, Scali shouts that Fomin's explanation is not credible and that he thought it is simply a "stinking double cross." An invasion of Cuba, Scali warns, is now "only a matter of hours away." Fomin says that he and Ambassador Dobrynin are expecting a reply from Khrushchev at any moment and urges Scali to report to U.S. officials that there is no treachery. Scali replies that he does not think anyone will believe Fomin's assurances but that he will convey the message in any case. The two part ways, and Scali immediately types out a memo on the meeting which is sent to the ExComm. ("*John Scali, ABC News*," 8/13/64; Hilsman, p. 222; Bundy, p. 439)

October 27, 1962—7:45 P.M.: Dobrynin and Robert Kennedy meet at the Justice Department. In his memoirs on the crisis, the latter recalls telling Dobrynin:

[W]e had to have a commitment by tomorrow that [the missile] bases would be removed. I was not giving them an ultimatum but a statement of fact. He should understand that if they did not remove those bases, we would remove them....

He asked me what offer the United States was making, and I told him of the letter that President Kennedy had just transmitted to Khrushchev. He raised the question of our removing the missiles from Turkey. I said that there could be no quid pro quo or any arrangement made under this kind of threat or pressure, and that in the last analysis that was a decision that would have to be made by NATO. However, I said, President Kennedy had been anxious to remove those missiles from Turkey and Italy for a long period of time. He had ordered their removal some time ago, and it was our judgment that, within a short time after this crisis was over, those missiles would be gone.... Time was running out. We had only a few more hours—we needed an answer immediately from the Soviet Union. I said we must have it the next day.

Anatoly Dobrynin has recently contradicted Robert Kennedy's account of the meeting in several ways. According to Dobrynin, Kennedy did not in fact threaten military action against the missiles sites if the Soviet government did not remove the missiles. Second, Kennedy reportedly did not say that the Jupiters had been ordered removed earlier; instead, he suggested that an explicit deal on the Turkish missiles could be struck.

After the meeting with Dobrynin, the attorney general returns to the White House. At President Kennedy's direction, McNamara instructs Secretary of the Air Force Eugene Zuckert to order to active duty twenty-four Air Force Reserve units totaling 14,200 personnel. Robert Kennedy later recalls the mood at the White House: "We had not abandoned hope, but what hope there was now rested with Khrushchev's revising his course within the next few hours. It was a hope, not an expectation. The expectation was a military confrontation by Tuesday [October 29] and possibly tomorrow...." (Allyn, p. 164; Kennedy, pp. 108-109; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, p. 19; Kennedy, p. 109)

October 27, 1962—8:05 P.M.: President Kennedy's letter to Premier Khrushchev drafted earlier in the day is transmitted to Moscow. The final text reads in part:

As I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals—which seem generally acceptable as I understand them—are as follows: 1) You would agree to remove these weapon systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safe-guards, to halt the further introduction of such weapon systems into Cuba. 2) We, on our part, would agree—upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations, to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments (a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and (b) to give assurances against the invasion of Cuba.

The letter is also released directly to the press to avoid



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any communications delays. (Document 51, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Krushchev, Responding to Proposal to End the Crisis*, 10/27/62; Salinger, p. 272)

*October 27, 1962—8:50 P.M.:* In response to U Thant's request that Cuba stop work on the missile sites while negotiations continue, Fidel Castro indicates in a letter to the U.N. acting secretary general that he would order work to cease, provided the United States lifted the blockade. Castro also extends an invitation to U Thant to visit Cuba. U Thant accepts the invitation on October 28 and travels to Havana on October 30. (*Transmittal of Message from Fidel Castro Welcoming U Thant's Visit and Responding to U Thant's Request to Suspend Missile Base Construction*, 10/27/62)

*October 27, 1962—9:00 P.M.:* U Thant informs Adlai Stevenson that Soviet representative Zorin has refused to accept information about the exact location of the quarantine interception area that the United States passed on earlier in the day. (*Chronology of the Cuban Crisis October 15–28, 1962*, 11/2/62, p. 15)

*October 27, 1962—9:00 P.M.:* The ExComm again reviews various options for the following day, including ordering an airstrike on the missile sites in Cuba and extending the blockade to include petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL). As the meeting comes to a close, Robert McNamara turns to Robert Kennedy. The United States had better be "damned sure," McNamara states, that we "have two things ready, a government for Cuba, because we're going to need one...and secondly, plans for how to respond to the Soviet Union in Europe, because sure as hell they're going to do something there." (Document 49, *Transcript of October 27, 1962 Executive Committee Meetings* [edited], 10/27/62, p. 82; *The Cuban Crisis, 1962*, ca. 8/22/63, pp. 189–90; *Possible Role of a Progressive Economic Blockade against Cuba*, 10/25/62)

*October 27, 1962—evening:* Unknown to other members of the ExComm, President Kennedy and Dean Rusk prepare a contingency plan to facilitate a public Turkey-for-Cuba missile trade. At Kennedy's instruction, Rusk phones Andrew Cordier, a former U.N. un-

dersecretary, and dictates a statement that Cordier is to give to U Thant upon further instructions from Washington. The statement is a proposal to be made by U Thant calling for the removal of both the Jupiters in Turkey and the Soviet missiles in Cuba. During the day, Kennedy also asks Roswell Gilpatric to draw up a scenario for the early removal of the missiles from Turkey. (*Recollection by Dean Rusk of Negotiating Channel through Andrew Cordier and Details of Negotiations To Remove Jupiters Prior to the Crisis*, 2/25/87; Schlesinger, p. 520)

*October 27, 1962—night:* Fidel Castro meets with Soviet Ambassador Alekseyev for lengthy discussions in the Soviet embassy in Havana. Castro, Alekseyev later reports, had been briefed by him on each of the messages sent back and forth between Moscow and Washington during the crisis. Alekseyev recalls that despite Castro's "characteristic restraint, he [Castro] also evaluated the situation as highly alarming." (Alekseyev, p. 16)

*October 28, 1962—12:12 A.M.:* Instructions are sent to Ambassador Finletter to review the deepening crisis with the NATO allies. The cable notifies Finletter that "the situation as we see it is increasingly serious and time is growing shorter.... [T]he United States may find it necessary within a very short time in its interest and that of its fellow nations in the Western Hemisphere to take whatever military action may be necessary." (*Instructions for Briefing to NATO on Possible U.S. Action against Missile Sites and on Soviet Jupiter Trade Proposal*, 10/28/62)

*October 28, 1962—6:00 A.M.:* The CIA's daily update as of 6:00 A.M. reports that Soviet technicians have succeeded in making fully operational all twenty-four MRBM sites in Cuba. Construction of one nuclear bunker reportedly has been completed but none are believed to be in operation. (*The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600 28 October 1962*, 10/28/62)

*October 28, 1962—9:00 A.M.:* A new message from Nikita Khrushchev, which effectively terminates the missile crisis, is broadcast on Radio Moscow.

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Khrushchev declares: "the Soviet government, in addition to previously issued instructions on the cessation of further work at the building sites for the weapons, has issued a new order on the dismantling of the weapons which you describe as 'offensive,' and their crating and return to the Soviet Union." Upon receiving Khrushchev's message, President Kennedy issues a statement calling the decision "an important and constructive contribution to peace." In a separate letter to Khrushchev, written almost immediately after the broadcast, Kennedy states, "I consider my letter to you of October twenty-seventh and your reply of today as firm undertakings on the part of both our governments which should be promptly carried out."

Although there is a sense of relief and exultation among most of the ExComm members after word of Khrushchev's decision is received, several members of the JCS are less enthusiastic. Admiral George Anderson reportedly complains, "we have been had," while General Curtis LeMay suggests that the United States "go in and make a strike on Monday anyway." In the afternoon, the Joint Chiefs instruct military commanders not to relax their alert procedures, warning that the Soviet Union's offer to dismantle the missile sites could be an "insincere proposal meant to gain time."

In Havana, Fidel Castro, who was not consulted or informed of the decision beforehand, reportedly goes into a rage upon hearing of the Soviet move, cursing Khrushchev as "son of a bitch, bastard, asshole." A few days later, Castro will publicly state in a speech at the University of Havana that Khrushchev lacked "cojones" (balls). After meeting with high military leaders during the morning, Castro apparently goes to San Antonio Air Force Base himself in order to shoot down a U.S. low-altitude aircraft. However, U.S. planes do not pass over the base. (Document 53, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Khrushchev, Confirming Terms To Settle the Missile Crisis*, 10/28/62; *Statement by President Kennedy Welcoming Khrushchev's Decision to Withdraw Soviet Missiles from Cuba—Includes Text as Carried by UPI*, 10/28/62; *Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 280701-290700 October 1962*, 10/29/62; Schlesinger, p. 524; RN 10/28/62; Bourne, p. 239; Szulc, pp. 649-50)

October 28, 1962—11:00 A.M.: Robert Kennedy meets

with Anatoly Dobrynin at the Soviet ambassador's request. Dobrynin notes that Premier Khrushchev has agreed to withdraw the missiles, and he tells Kennedy that the Soviet leader wants to send his best wishes to him and the president. (Kennedy, p. 110)

The ExComm meets. By this time, the full text of Premier Khrushchev's message announcing the decision to dismantle the missiles in Cuba is available. Secretary of Defense McNamara reports that the Soviet ship *Grozny* is standing still and that no other Soviet Bloc ships will be entering the quarantine zone during the day. President Kennedy directs that no air reconnaissance missions be flown during the day, and that no action be taken against any Soviet Bloc ships with regard to the unresolved question of the IL-28 bombers in Cuba. Kennedy agrees that the United States should consider the IL-28s "offensive weapons" and press for their removal, but he also suggests that the United States should not "get hung up" on this issue. (Document 59, *Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting*, 10/28/62; *Statement of Soviet Government of October 23, 1962 on Cuba*, 10/23/62)

October 28, 1962—around noon: Fidel Castro declares that the U.S. assurance of nonaggression against Cuba is unsatisfactory unless it includes additional measures. He outlines several specific demands, later to be known as his "five points." They include an end to the economic blockade against Cuba; an end to all subversive activities carried out from the United States against Cuba; a halt to all attacks on Cuba carried out from the U.S. military bases on the island of Puerto Rico; the cessation of aerial and naval reconnaissance flights in Cuban airspace and waters; and the return of Guantánamo naval base to Cuba. (Document 56, *Prime Minister Castro's "Five Points" Letter to U.N. Secretary General U Thant*, 10/28/62)

October 28, 1962—1:00 P.M.—3:00 P.M.: According to information given to U Thant by a Soviet commander several days afterward, instructions to dismantle the missiles in Cuba are received by the Soviet military in Cuba between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M. Actual dismantling of the sites reportedly begins at 5:00 P.M. (Document

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61, *State Department Cable on UN Secretary General U Thant's Meetings with Castro*, 11/1/62)

October 28, 1962—1:04 P.M.: At a background press briefing, Dean Rusk cautions against any gloating at the Soviet decision, explaining that "if there is a debate, a rivalry, a contest going on in the Kremlin over how to play this situation, we don't want...to strengthen the hands of those in Moscow who wanted to play this another way." Rusk also asserts, in a reference to inspection issues and the IL-28s still in Cuba, "it is not yet the time to say this is over." (*Transcript of Background Press and Radio News Briefing, Sunday, October 28, 1962*, 10/28/62)

October 28, 1962—4:07 P.M.: The JCS asks CINCLANT to reevaluate Oplan 316, the invasion plan of Cuba, and determine what modifications should be made to the plan in light of the most recent intelligence estimates on military equipment in Cuba. CINCLANT is specifically directed to consider whether tactical nuclear weapons, both air and ground, should be included in the arsenal of U.S. forces invading Cuba. (*Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 280701-290700 October 1962*, 10/29/62)

October 28, 1962—evening: John Scali meets with Soviet embassy official Fomin for the fourth time during the crisis. Fomin tells Scali, "I am under instructions to thank you. The information you provided Chairman Khrushchev was most helpful to him in making up his mind quickly." Fomin then adds, "And that includes your explosion of Saturday"—indicating that U.S. anger, as conveyed by Scali, toward the broadening of Soviet demands had reinforced Khrushchev's decision to accept the U.S. proposal for ending the crisis. (*John Scali, ABC News*, 8/13/64)

The Soviet embassy in Havana receives a lengthy telegram from the Kremlin explaining the decision to withdraw the missiles. Any other move, the message argues, would have meant "global conflagration and consequently the destruction of the Cuban revolution." The cable also stresses that "the Soviet government under no circumstances would refuse to fulfill its international duty to defend Cuba." Soviet Ambassador Alekseyev passes on the telegram to Cuban

President Dorticós, who is reportedly somewhat reassured by it. (Alekseyev, p. 17)

October 29, 1962—morning: Soviet First Deputy Premier Vasily V. Kuznetsov meets with U Thant. Kuznetsov, sent by Premier Khrushchev to New York to work out the details of a settlement to the crisis, tells U Thant that the Soviet missiles are in the process of being dismantled and shipped out of Cuba. Kuznetsov proposes that when the dismantling is completed, the Soviet Union report to the Security Council, which would then authorize a U.N. team to visit Cuba for "on-site" verification. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July-November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 78)

As a result of an order from Robert McNamara to begin the process of removing Jupiter missiles from Turkey, an interdepartmental task force convenes under Defense Department General Counsel John McNaughton. McNaughton reportedly opens the meeting by declaring, "those missiles are going to be out of there by April 1 if we have to shoot them out." (*A Transcript of a Discussion about the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1983*; Chayes, p. 98)

October 29, 1962—10:00 A.M.: At the morning Ex-Comm meeting, President Kennedy orders that U.S. Navy ships maintain their quarantine stations. Low-level reconnaissance flights are directed to resume, but no U-2 missions are authorized. (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, October 29, 1962*, 6:30 P.M., Meeting No. 12, 10/29/62)

October 29, 1962—3:30 P.M.: U Thant briefs Adlai Stevenson, John McCloy, and Charles Yost on his meeting with Vasily Kuznetsov earlier in the day. U Thant tries to convince the Americans that the quarantine should now be suspended, but McCloy and Stevenson disagree, linking the end of the quarantine to the actual removal of offensive weapons from Cuba. They do agree, however, that the quarantine could be suspended for the duration of U Thant's visit to Cuba, scheduled to begin on October 30. (*Summary of Meeting between U.S. Negotiators and U Thant on U Thant's Meeting with Kuznetsov*, 10/29/62)

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October 29, 1962—10:48 P.M.: CINCLANT informs the JCS that, in view of reports that Cuban forces have nuclear-capable FROG short-range missiles, he intends to modify invasion plans so that U.S. air and ground forces engaged in operations against Cuba would also be armed with tactical nuclear weapons. CINCLANT assures the JCS that the nuclear weapons would be employed only if Cuban or Soviet forces initiated the use of nuclear weapons. The JCS agrees to allow U.S. invasion forces to be armed with nuclear-capable weapons but specifies that the actual nuclear warheads should not be introduced into Cuba without further JCS authorization. (*Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 300701-310700 October 1962*, 10/31/62; *CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 95; *The Air Force Response to the Cuban Crisis 14 October-24 November 1962*, ca. 1/63, p. 11; *Secretary of Defense's Report for the Congress*, 12/29/62)

October 29, 1962: The Soviet Union attempts to hammer out a formal agreement with the United States on the settlement of the missile crisis. Anatoly Dobrynin brings Robert Kennedy an unsigned letter from Premier Khrushchev explicitly spelling out the terms of the arrangement, including Robert Kennedy's pledge that the Jupiter IRBMs will be removed from Turkey. The attorney general makes no immediate response but takes the letter with him to consider the proposal. When he meets Dobrynin the following day, Kennedy rejects the idea of a written agreement involving the Jupiter missiles. (Schlesinger, pp. 522-23)

Following the ExComm's discussion of the IL-28 question on October 28, State Department analyst Raymond Garthoff recommends in a memo that "in addition to the MRBMs and IRBMs, the IL-28s should definitely be included in the items the United States wanted withdrawn from Cuba." Garthoff writes, however, that the United States can not "reasonably insist" on the withdrawal of MiG aircraft, SAMs, or nonmissile ground force weapons. Nikita Khrushchev has inadvertently opened the door to U.S. demands that additional weapon systems be removed by telling Kennedy in his October 28 letter that he would remove "those weapons you describe as

offensive." Although the crisis has centered around the deployment of Soviet missiles, the United States uses several arguments to support its contention that the bombers are also "offensive." U.S. negotiators note that the quarantine proclamation explicitly included bomber aircraft, and they point to President Kennedy's letter of October 22, which objected to the "long-range missile bases" as well as "other offensive systems in Cuba." (Document 60, *State Department Memorandum Defining Weapons That Must Be Removed from Cuba*, 10/29/62)

October 30, 1962—3:00 P.M.: Shortly after his arrival in Havana, U Thant and his aides meet with Fidel Castro, Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós and Foreign Minister Raúl Roa. U Thant presents several verification proposals to ensure that the dismantling of the missiles is proceeding, including on-site inspection by a U.N. team, aerial inspection by U.N. reconnaissance planes, or verification by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Castro rejects each of these proposals, saying they are "intended to humiliate the Cuban State." (*Summary of U Thant's Meeting with President Dorticos, Premier Castro and Foreign Minister Roa in Havana, October 30, 1962*, 10/30/62)

October 30, 1962: Premier Khrushchev sends President Kennedy a sixteen-page message covering the missile crisis, the naval quarantine, a nuclear test-ban treaty, and the Berlin question. The Kremlin leader requests that the United States lift the quarantine immediately, as well as the economic blockade of Cuba. He also suggests that the United States withdraw from its base in Guantánamo, Cuba. On the issue of a test-ban treaty, Khrushchev proclaims, "we now have conditions ripe for finalizing the agreement on signing a treaty on cessation of tests of thermonuclear weapons." Khrushchev also attempts to garner an agreement on Berlin that would exclude German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, because "the next crisis...can be caused by the German question." (*Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy*, 10/30/62)

Robert Kennedy calls Ambassador Dobrynin back to his office to discuss the letter Dobrynin had given

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him the day before spelling out the terms of the U.S.-Soviet agreement resolving the Cuban missile crisis. Notes he prepared for the meeting reflect his position:

Read letter—Studied it over night. No quid pro quo as I told you. The letter makes it appear that there was. You asked me about missile bases in Turkey. I told you we would be out of them—four to five months. That still holds... You have my word on this & that is sufficient. Take back your letter—Reconsider it & if you feel it is necessary to write letters then we will also write one which you cannot enjoy. Also if you should publish any document indicating a deal then it is off & also if done afterward will further affect the relationship.

Dobrynin acquiesces to Kennedy's demand and withdraws the letter. (Schlesinger, p. 523)

In Moscow, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko informs Foy Kohler that the Soviet Union wishes to reach an agreement as quickly as possible on the basis of the Kennedy-Khrushchev exchange of letters. Gromyko also suggests that some type of formal agreement should "codify" obligations on both sides. (*Meeting between Andrei Gromyko and Ambassador Foy Kohler, 4:00 P.M., October 30, 1962, 10/30/62*)

All operations by Task Force W, the CIA's action arm for OPERATION MONGOOSE activities, are called to an immediate halt. However, during the crisis, Director of Task Force W William Harvey ordered teams of covert agents into Cuba on his own authority to support any conventional U.S. military operation that might occur. At the end of October, a new mission is about to be dispatched. One of the operatives, concerned about a covert operation so soon after a settlement to the missile crisis has been reached, sends a message to Attorney General Robert Kennedy to verify that the mission is in order. Kennedy, angered to learn that CIA missions are continuing, chastises Harvey and asks CIA Director McCone to terminate the operations. Edward Lansdale is subsequently sent to Miami to oversee the end of MONGOOSE. However, three of ten scheduled six-man sabotage teams have already been dispatched to Cuba. On November 8, one of the teams carries out its assigned sabotage mis-

sion. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders, 11/20/75, pp. 147-48*)

*October 31, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* The ExComm reviews the lack of progress in the talks between U Thant and Fidel Castro. President Kennedy directs reconnaissance missions to resume the next day unless significant progress is made in the discussions. (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, October 31, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 14, 10/31/62*)

U Thant meets with Fidel Castro, Dorticos, and Roa for the second time during his stay in Cuba. Castro agrees to send the body of Rudolf Anderson, the pilot of the downed U-2, back to the United States. Castro claims that Anderson's plane "was brought down by Cuban anti-aircraft guns, manned only by Cubans, inside Cuban territory." Complaining about continued U.S. aerial reconnaissance, he warns that "the Cuban people can no longer tolerate such daily provocations," and that Cuba will "destroy any plane any time which intruded into Cuban airspace." U Thant is unable to obtain Castro's approval for any form of inspection of the Soviet missile withdrawal. (*Summary of U Thant's Meeting with President Dorticos, Premier Castro and Foreign Minister Roa of Cuba, 10:00 A.M., October 31, 1962, 10/31/62*)

*October 31, 1962—6:00 P.M.:* After hearing an update on U Thant's mission to Cuba, President Kennedy orders the resumption of low-level reconnaissance and quarantine operations but continues the suspension of U-2 flights (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, October 31, 1962, 6:00 P.M., Meeting No. 15, 10/31/62*)

*November 1, 1962—1:00 A.M.:* Adlai Stevenson reports to Washington that he has received preliminary reports from U Thant and Indarjit Rikhye on their visit to Cuba. The U.N. officials report that relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union are, in Rikhye's words, "unbelievably bad." Rikhye states that although they have not had "definitive" discussions about the IL-28 bombers, "the Russians repeated... that they were determined to take out all equipment which the president has regarded as offensive and this

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would include the IL-28's..." (Document 61, *State Department Cable on Secretary General U Thant's Meetings with Castro*, 11/1/62; *Report by Rikhye on Impressions from United Nations Visit to Cuba*, 11/1/62)

*November 1, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* President Kennedy authorizes continued low-level reconnaissance flights over IL-28 airfields and missile bases but decides that no immediate retaliatory measures will be carried out if any U.S. aircraft are shot down. (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, November 1, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 16, 11/1/62*)

*November 1, 1962—2:59 P.M.:* Instructions approved by President Kennedy are issued to U.S. negotiators in New York for use in upcoming meetings with Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan. Kennedy directs U.S. negotiators to stress the importance of obtaining verification, which he describes as "essential" in "view of the history of the affair." With regard to the Soviet bombers stationed in Cuba, the negotiators are told to try to "elicit a clear confirmation that the IL-28's are included [in the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding] and are being dismantled for removal from Cuba." (*Points President Kennedy Wishes Made in Conversation with Anastas Mikoyan and Vasily Kuznetsov, 11/1/62*)

*November 1, 1962—7:30 P.M.:* Anastas Mikoyan meets with John McCloy and Adlai Stevenson shortly after arriving in New York. Stevenson has been instructed to provide Mikoyan with a list of weapons that the United States considers "offensive" and expects the Soviet government to withdraw. However, engrossed in discussions dealing with many matters, Stevenson and McCloy apparently forget to give the list to Mikoyan. The U.S. negotiators remedy this oversight the next day by sending Mikoyan a letter with the list attached (see entry for November 2, 1962—morning). (*Meeting between Adlai Stevenson, John McCloy and U Thant on Inspection Issues, 11/2/62; Garthoff 3, pp. 432-33*)

*November 1, 1962—8:30 P.M.:* Fidel Castro reports on his meetings with U Thant in a speech carried by Cuban radio and television. Castro also discusses the differences that had arisen between the Soviet Union and Cuba over the resolution of the missile crisis. Adopting a conciliatory tone, he states, "we have confidence in the leadership of the Soviet Union...more than ever, we should remember the generosity and friendship that the Soviets have shown us." Castro and Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Alekseyev meet during the day for the first time since October 27. (*Transcript of Interview with Castro on his Meeting with U Thant—in Spanish, 11/1/62; Alekseyev, p. 19*)

*November 1, 1962:* Photoreconnaissance shows that all MRBM sites in Cuba have been bulldozed and that the missiles and associated launch equipment have been removed. Construction at the IRBM sites appears to have stopped, and the installations are partially dismantled. U.S. intelligence further reports that work is continuing on IL-28s at San Julián airfield but that it is unclear whether the bombers are being assembled or dismantled. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962, 6/18/63, p. 86*)

*November 2, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* At a meeting of the ExComm, Kennedy confirms that the United States will press for the removal of the IL-28 bombers currently stationed in Cuba. In other matters, Kennedy states that the quarantine must continue to be maintained but only by hailing all vessels entering the quarantine zone. He reconfirms orders to U.S. Navy vessels not to board Soviet Bloc ships. (Document 63, *Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee, November 2, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 17, 11/2/62*)

*November 2, 1962—morning:* In a letter to Anastas Mikoyan, Adlai Stevenson lists those items the United States considers to be "offensive weapons," adding, "we trust that the weapons you plan to remove include all those on this list." The complete list includes:

- 1) surface-to-surface missiles including those designed for use at sea and including propellants and chemical compounds capable of being used

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- to power missiles;
- 2) bomber aircraft;
- 3) bombs, air-to-surface rockets, and guided missiles;
- 4) warheads for any of the above weapons;
- 5) mechanical or electronic equipment to support or operate the above items such as communications, supply and missile launching equipment, including Komar-class motor torpedo boats.

*(List of Weapons Deemed Offensive by the United States in Accordance with the Exchange of Letters between President Kennedy and Chairman Khrushchev, 11/2/62)*

*November 2, 1962—5:30 P.M.:* In a brief televised address, President Kennedy informs the nation that the U.S. government has concluded "on the basis of yesterday's aerial photographs...that the Soviet missile bases in Cuba are being dismantled, their missiles and related equipment are being crated, and the fixed installations at these sites are being destroyed." (*Statement of the President, November 2, 1962, the White House, 11/2/62*)

*November 2, 1962:* Anastas Mikoyan arrives in Havana and immediately announces his support of Fidel Castro's "five points." Castro, still angry with the Soviet decision to remove the missiles, reportedly does not want to meet Mikoyan but is persuaded to do so by Ambassador Alekseyev. Castro's anger and concern revolve around not only the lack of consultation before the Soviet decision to remove the missiles but a belief that the United States will invade Cuba despite pledges to the contrary resulting from the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement. Because of his distrust of any agreement, Castro agrees to the missile withdrawal only after receiving assurances from the Soviet government, including a pledge to maintain one Soviet combat brigade on the island. (Blight, pp. 267-68; Khrushchev 1, p. 500)

*November 3, 1962—9:00 A.M.:* Anastas Mikoyan holds his first formal meeting with Fidel Castro at Castro's apartment in Havana. Castro meets alone with Mikoyan, Ambassador Alekseyev, and a Soviet

interpreter. However, the talks are immediately interrupted by the news that Mikoyan's wife in the Soviet Union has died unexpectedly. Mikoyan later decides to have his son Sergo, who was accompanying him, return to Moscow while he remains in Cuba. (Alekseyev, p. 23)

*November 3, 1962—4:30 P.M.:* The nineteenth meeting of the ExComm focuses on inspection questions and the issue of the IL-28 bombers. Adlai Stevenson, who attends the meeting with John McCloy and Charles Yost, brings the group up to date on the slow-moving talks in New York. President Kennedy states his belief that the United States should announce that it considers the IL-28s to be offensive weapons to be withdrawn from Cuba, but he agrees that the public announcement of this position should be delayed until the next day. (*Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 19, November 3, 1962, 4:30 P.M., 11/3/62*)

*November 3, 1962—8:44 p.m.:* President Kennedy issues additional directions to "all concerned with the present negotiations in Cuba." The formal instructions state: "We have good evidence that the Russians are dismantling the missile bases.... [But] the assembly of IL-28's continues. There is some evidence of an intent to establish a submarine-tending facility. The future of the SAM sites is unclear. We have no satisfactory assurances on verification...." Kennedy concludes, "in blunt summary, we want no offensive weapons and no Soviet military base in Cuba, and that is how we understand the agreements of October 27 and 28." (*Instructions from the President to All Concerned with Present Negotiations in Cuba, 11/3/62; Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 19, November 3, 1962, 4:30 P.M., 11/3/62*)

*November 3, 1962:* President Kennedy replies to Premier Khrushchev's letter of October 30 addressing the issue of inspection and verification before the naval quarantine can be lifted. Kennedy cites "very serious problems" if Fidel Castro cannot be convinced to allow on-site verification, and he suggests that sustaining quarantine "can be of assistance to Mr. Mikoy-

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an in his negotiations with Premier Castro." (*Kennedy-Khrushchev Messages Exchanged on the Cuban Crisis*, 11/3/62)

*November 4, 1962:* John McCloy lunches with Soviet negotiators at his Stamford, Connecticut, home. Vasily Kuznetsov says all missile sites constructed by the Soviet Union were dismantled as of November 2. Kuznetsov proposes that the United States conduct at-sea inspections: the Soviet Union would give the United States a schedule for the removal of the missiles and allow the United States to bring ships alongside Soviet vessels to examine the cargo on deck. In return, the Soviet government wants the quarantine lifted and a formal protocol of U.S. guarantees, including a pledge that the United States will not invade Cuba or induce other Latin American countries to attempt an invasion. Kuznetsov also seeks a guarantee that no subversive activity will be undertaken against Fidel Castro and suggests U.N. observation in the United States as well as in Cuba. (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology July–November 1962*, 6/18/63, p. 89)

*November 5, 1962—3:15 P.M.:* President Kennedy dispatches a brief memo to Robert McNamara warning that "the Russians may try again. This time they may prepare themselves for action on the sea in the Cuban area. Does Admiral Anderson think they could build up a secret naval base which will put them on a near parity with us if we should once again blockade?" Admiral Anderson later advises McNamara that the Soviet Union could base naval forces in Cuba in several ways, but he believes that U.S. intelligence would detect all but the most "austere" buildup. Anderson repeats his earlier recommendation that submarines operating out of, or supported from, Cuban bases should be declared offensive weapons and placed on the list of prohibited materials. (*Concern over the Possible Establishment of a Soviet Submarine Base in Cuba*, 11/5/62; Johns, p. 259)

*November 5, 1962:* In a three-page letter to President Kennedy, Premier Khrushchev writes that he is "seriously worried" about the way in which the United

States has defined "offensive weapons" that the Soviet Union is to remove from Cuba, that is, as including the IL-28s and Komar-class missile boats. Khrushchev asks Kennedy to withdraw his "additional demands," saying that the Soviet Union views them as "a wish to bring our relations back again into a heated state in which they were but several days ago." (Document 66, *Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy, Regarding U.S. List of Offensive Weapons in Cuba*, 11/5/62)

Soviet ships begin to return the first MRBMs and associated launch equipment to the Soviet Union. The process of removing the equipment is completed on November 9. (*Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara*, 2/28/63, p. M-1)

President Kennedy hands Secretary of Defense McNamara a short memorandum expressing his concern that U.S. plans for an invasion of Cuba seem "thin." Warning that using too few troops could result in the United States becoming "bogged down," Kennedy recommends calling up three Army Reserve divisions and, if necessary, building additional divisions. As a result of the memo, McNamara tells military planners later that day that additional Army divisions might be needed for a successful invasion. The JCS meet on November 7 with CINCLANT to rectify the problem. (*U.S. Army in the Cuban Crisis*, 1/1/63)

Robert Kennedy continues to exert pressure on the IL-28 question in a meeting with Anatoly Dobrynin, telling the Soviet ambassador that "it was very clear that the...IL-28's had to go." Further pressure to remove the bombers is brought to bear by U Thant, who, at the request of the United States, raises the issue with Vasily Kuznetsov. Kuznetsov replies that the bomber question is "a new issue" and not "covered" in the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding. (*Meeting with Soviet Representatives on On-Site and ICRC Inspection*, 11/5/62; Garthoff 1, p. 110)

An aerial encounter between a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft and Cuban-based MiG fighters occurs. Although no shots are known to have been fired, U.S. policymakers express concern that the incident suggests that more attempts to intercept reconnaissance aircraft would be made in the future. Robert McNamara, with the concurrence of the JCS, proposes that



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the public not be informed of the incident, but that a diplomatic protest be made to the Soviet Union. Both high- and low-altitude reconnaissance flights continue as scheduled the following day. (*Chronology of JCS Decisions Concerning the Cuban Crisis*, 12/21/62, p. 70; *Highlights of World Activities and Situations*, 11/5/62)

*November 6, 1962:* President Kennedy sends another letter to Premier Khrushchev regarding the U.S. definition of "offensive weapons." In it he responds to Khrushchev's accusation that the United States is trying to complicate the Cuban situation. The IL-28s are not "minor things" for the United States, Kennedy writes, asserting that the weapons are definitely capable of carrying out "offensive" missions. The president raises the issue of the four reinforced Soviet troop regiments in Cuba for the first time. He also expresses concern over possible Soviet submarine facilities, telling Khrushchev that he attaches "the greatest importance to the personal assurances you have given that submarine bases will not be established in Cuba." (*President Kennedy's Letter to Khrushchev Stressing the Importance of Removing the IL-28s and Obtaining Verification*, 11/6/62)

*November 7, 1962—4:02 P.M.:* A cable from U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Foy Kohler reports, "there seems to me no doubt that events of [the] past ten days have really shaken [the] Soviet leadership." One Soviet military official, Kohler recounts, "told my wife he was now willing to believe in God." Kohler reports seeing no evidence of any split within the ruling elite at a Kremlin reception held during the evening, and he states that Premier Khrushchev has privately discouraged an immediate summit with President Kennedy, saying that the two sides should not "rush" into such a meeting. (*Some Footnotes to Kremlin Reception*, 11/7/62)

*November 7, 1962—5:00 P.M.:* After being informed that the Soviet missiles withdrawal was continuing, President Kennedy tells the ExComm that the United States "wouldn't invade with the Soviet missiles out of Cuba." Kennedy suggests that a formal noninvasion

commitment might be issued once the Soviet Union remove the IL-28 bombers and the U.S. receives "assurances that there will be no reintroduction of strategic missiles." Apparently, some uncertainty still exists on how to handle the IL-28s, for Kennedy requests that the ExComm reconvene the next day to "decide whether we should go to the mat on the IL-28 bombers or whether we should say that the Soviets have now completed their agreement to remove the missiles and move on to other problems." (Document 65, *Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting, November 5, 1962, 11/5/62; Washington Embassy Reports Re Events in Cuba*, ca. 11/5/62)

*November 7, 1962—9:32 P.M.:* In a cable to Adlai Stevenson, Secretary of State Rusk advises, "our primary purpose is to get the MRBMs and IL-28 bombers out [of Cuba], and we would go far in reducing our list of offensive weapons in order to achieve this purpose." The United States eventually drops its demands for the removal of Komar-class missile boats in order to focus on the IL-28 bombers. (*Instructions for Negotiations Using a Minimum List of Offensive Weapons*, 11/7/62)

*November 8, 1962—4:30 P.M.:* The ExComm discusses the ways in which the United States can pressure Cuba into removing the IL-28 bombers. According to minutes of the meeting, President Kennedy "was inclined not to reimpose the quarantine, but he did favor pressure on our allies to keep their ships out of Cuba." Various other ideas are offered, including tightening the quarantine, initiating new covert action against Castro, and launching air attacks on the IL-28 aircraft. (*Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 23, November 8, 1962, 4:30 P.M., 11/8/62; Notes on 4:30 P.M. ExComm Meeting, 11/8/62*)

*November 8, 1962:* A six-man CIA sabotage team dispatched as part of Task Force W blows up a Cuban industrial facility (see entry for October 30, 1962). The incident is never raised in U.S.-Soviet talks and remains unknown to most if not all members of the ExComm. (Garthoff 1, p. 122)

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The Defense Department announces that "all known" MRBM and IRBM Soviet bases in Cuba have been dismantled, and that a "substantial" number of missiles have been loaded aboard Soviet ships or are being moved to port areas. (*Defense Department Statement on Evidence That All MRBM and IRBM Bases Have Been Dismantled*, 11/8/62)

U Thant offers a new on-site inspection proposal in which five ambassadors to Cuba from Asian, African, European, and Latin American countries would verify the withdrawal of the missiles. Cuba rejects this proposal, as it does all other unilateral inspection formulas, on November 11. (*Discussion of Draft Letter from U Thant to Castro on Verification by Latin American Ambassadors*, 11/9/62; *U Thant's Proposal for On-Site Verification by a Group of Ambassadors in Havana—Includes Revised Copy*, 11/8/62)

*November 9, 1962*: The last of the ships removing Soviet MRBM missiles from Cuba leave the island. Six vessels, the *Bratsk*, *Dvinogorsk*, *I. Polzunov*, *Labinsk*, *M. Anosov*, and *Volgoles*, have left Mariel since November 5, and two ships, the *F. Kurchatov* and the *L. Komsomol* depart from Casilda during this period. During the day, five of the ships are inspected at sea, with the Soviet ships pulling canvas covers off the missile transporters to allow U.S. ships to observe and photograph their contents. Assistant Secretary of Defense Arthur Sylvester later tells reporters that the "responsible people of this government are satisfied" that the ships are in fact carrying missiles. (*Department of Defense Press Conference of Robert McNamara*, 2/28/63, p. M-1; *The Missiles Leave Cuba*, ca. 12/62; *NYT*, 11/10/62)

*November 12, 1962—11:00 A.M.*: Adlai Stevenson reports to the ExComm that negotiations in New York on the IL-28 issue are deadlocked. At President Kennedy's prompting, the group discusses various ways in which the United States might strike a deal with the Soviet Union over the bomber issue. The possibility of offering further noninvasion assurances, ending the quarantine, and lifting on-site inspection demands are raised as possible inducements, but the meeting ends without a firm decision on how to pro-

ceed in the negotiations. President Kennedy decides not to lower SAC alert levels at the time, with Robert McNamara noting that such a decision could send the wrong "signals" to the Soviet Union. (*Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 24*, November 12, 1962, 11:00 A.M., 11/12/62)

*November 12, 1962*: Premier Khrushchev sends President Kennedy a message confirming the removal of the missiles. The letter adopts a friendly tone, commenting on the outcome of the November 6, 1962 elections in the United States: "You managed to pin your political rival, Mr. Nixon, to the mat," the letter comments on the fact that Nixon lost his bid to become governor of California. "This did not draw tears from our eyes either." (Document 69, *Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy*, 11/12/62)

*November 12, 1962—night*: President Kennedy instructs his brother Robert to inform Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin that Khrushchev's "word" on the IL-28s will "suffice" and the U.S. will not insist on an immediate withdrawal of the bomber planes. Robert Kennedy tells the Soviet Ambassador that the U.S. would hope the planes are removed "within, say, 30 days." (Document 70, *President Kennedy's Oral Message to Premier Khrushchev, On the Subject of the IL-28 Aircraft*, 11/12/62)

*November 13, 1962—morning*: ExComm members continue to discuss the IL-28 issue. The group's recommendations, incorporated into a paper by U. Alexis Johnson, include a proposed sequence of actions designed to end the deadlock. To begin with, the group recommends a "last chance" private message to Premier Khrushchev, warning that further actions could be taken shortly. If the message fails to produce the desired outcome, the group suggests tightening the blockade, arranging for other countries in Latin America and elsewhere to apply diplomatic pressure on Fidel Castro, and using intense low-altitude reconnaissance as a form of psychological warfare. The ExComm also notes that one other option exists but recommends that it only be used as a last-ditch measure: "provoking" an attack on U.S. reconnaissance planes

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and responding by striking a variety of Cuban targets, including the IL-28 bombers. (*Cuban Contingency Paper: Next Steps on the IL-28's*, 11/14/62)

*November 14, 1962*: Premier Khrushchev sends another message to President Kennedy on the IL-28 issue. Khrushchev hedges on when the Soviet Union will remove the bombers, but states that "it can be done in 2-3 months." He also complains that the United States is "not carrying out its commitments" to end overflights and quarantine, nor has it agreed to "register" the noninvasion pledge. (Document 71, *Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy, Regarding Removal of the IL-28 Aircraft*, 11/14/62)

President Kennedy discusses the Cuban situation with Harold MacMillan over the telephone. Kennedy admits that no firm strategy for ironing out the remaining issues has been decided upon: "We do not want to crank up the quarantine again over the bombers. The only question is whether we should do that or take some other action. For example, we might say the whole deal is off and withdraw our no invasion pledge and harass them generally." (MacMillan, p. 215)

*November 15, 1962—7:00 P.M.*: In a five-page letter to U Thant, Fidel Castro warns that Cuba will fire on U.S. reconnaissance planes: any aircraft flying over Cuban airspace, he says, do so "at the risk of being destroyed." Noting that the United States has already inspected Soviet ships at sea, he also declares that Cuba will continue to reject "unilateral inspection by any body, national or international, on Cuban territory." U.S. intelligence has reported during the day that Soviet control of the Cuban air defense system has tightened sharply. Cuban fighter aircraft are detected practicing low-level flight tactics in the Havana area. (*Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 160701-170700 November 1962*, 11/17/62)

*November 15, 1962*: President Kennedy writes to Premier Khrushchev on the continuing IL-28 issue. His letter complains that the "three major parts of the undertakings on your side—the removal of the IL-28's, the arrangements for verification, and safeguards against introduction—have not yet been carried out." During the day, Anatoly Dobrynin is informed that

the IL-28 issue has "reached a turning point," and that unless the matter is resolved, the United States and Soviet Union will "soon find ourselves back in a position of increasing tension." (Document 72, *President Kennedy's Letter to Premier Krushchev*, 11/15/62; *Status of the Negotiations on Removal of IL-28's*, 11/16/62)

*November 16, 1962—7:00 A.M.*: The largest amphibious landing since World War II begins as part of an exercise at Onslow Beach, North Carolina. The two-day exercise, a full-scale rehearsal for an invasion of Cuba, includes six marine battalion landing teams, four by assault boats and two by helicopter assault carriers. (*CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis*, 4/29/63, p. 151; *Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 090701-100700 November 1962*, 11/10/62)

*November 16, 1962—4:05 P.M.*: The JCS meets with President Kennedy to report on the readiness status of forces that would be involved in any military action against Cuba. U.S. forces massed for a Cuban invasion have reached their peak strength, the JCS reports: some 100,000 Army troops, 40,000 Marines and 14,500 paratroopers stand ready, with 550 combat aircraft and over 180 ships available to support an invasion. Kennedy is advised that this advanced state of readiness can be maintained for about thirty days. The talking paper prepared for Maxwell Taylor for this meeting spells out the JCS position on the IL-28 deadlock: they recommend that the United States continue to press the Soviet Union to remove the bombers, suggesting that the quarantine be extended to POL (petroleum, oil, and lubricants) if no progress is made. If the quarantine does not succeed in having the aircraft removed, the Joint Chiefs warn that the United States "should be prepared to take them out by air attack." (Document 73, *General Maxwell Taylor, "Talking Paper for Meeting with the President,"* 11/16/62; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, pp. 8, 12-14; *Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 180701-190700 November 1962*, 11/19/62)

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*November 18, 1962:* John McCloy and Adlai Stevenson have a long meeting with Vasily Kuznetsov and Valerian Zorin to try to force the dispute over the IL-28s to a head. McCloy repeatedly warns Kuznetsov that President Kennedy is scheduling a press conference for 6:00 P.M. on November 20, and that the United States must have a pledge that the bombers will be removed by that time. McCloy also continues to raise U.S. concerns over the lack of on-site verification, the possibility that new "offensive weapons" might be introduced into Cuba and the continued presence of four reinforced Soviet troop regiments in Cuba. Stevenson reports to the ExComm that the negotiations ended with "no indication from Kuznetsov that they would give way in regard to [the] IL-28's." (*Cuba-Meeting between McCloy and Kuznetsov, Sunday, November 18, 1962, 11/19/62*)

*November 19, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* At a morning ExComm session, President Kennedy authorizes high-level reconnaissance flights but again suspends low-level sorties. Robert Kennedy scrawls notes on the back of an envelope during the meeting: "President reluctant to send in low-level flights... How far can we push K[hrushchev?]." During the day, the attorney general meets with Georgi Bolshakov and warns him that low-level reconnaissance will begin again unless the Soviet Union promises to remove the bombers. Robert Kennedy states that he needs a response to the IL-28 issue before the president's press conference the next day. (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, November 19, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 27, 11/19/62; Schlesinger, p. 526*)

*November 19, 1962—8:25 P.M.:* Letters from President Kennedy to Charles de Gaulle, Konrad Adenauer, and Harold Macmillan are transmitted by the State Department. Kennedy warns the European leaders that if the IL-28s are not withdrawn, further U.S. action might result, including the extension of the quarantine to include POL and the possibility of an air attack against Cuba in response to attacks on U.S. reconnaissance planes. Although the overall situation is said to be "somewhat less dangerous than it was in October," Kennedy warns that getting Premier

Khrushchev to back down again in some ways might be more difficult than it was during the missile crisis. Similar messages for Latin American heads of state are also sent during the evening. (*Text of Personal Message from President Kennedy to Charles de Gaulle, Konrad Adenauer and Harold Macmillan on the IL-28 Situation, 11/19/62*)

*November 19, 1962:* Fidel Castro informs U Thant that the Cuban government will not object if the Soviet Union removes the IL-28s from Cuba, thereby ending the crisis over the Soviet bombers. In a letter announcing his new position, Castro renounces any claim to the aircraft, stating that the IL-28 aircraft are "the property of the Soviet Government." However, the letter warns again that any "warplane invading Cuban airspace could do so only at the risk of being destroyed" and again rejects any unilateral inspection of Cuban territory. The Cuban government apparently had been persuaded to allow the bombers to be removed by the signing of a new Cuban-Soviet agreement under which the Soviet Union would leave an instruction center on the island where Cuban troops could be trained in the use of Soviet military equipment. (Document 75, *Prime Minister Castro's Letter to Secretary General U Thant, Withdrawing Opposition to Removal of IL-28 Aircraft, 11/19/62; Alekseyev, p. 26*)

*November 20, 1962:* President Kennedy directs an oral message through the Soviet ambassador for Chairman Khrushchev stating that he will announce a lower state of alert for U.S. forces at his press conference. (*Kennedy Message, 11/20/62*)

Premier Khrushchev formally agrees to remove the IL-28s from Cuba in a fourteen-page letter to President Kennedy. In his letter, Khrushchev complains that during their exchange of correspondence in October, Kennedy had not made "a single mention of bomber planes.... I informed you that the IL-28 planes are twelve years old and by their combat characteristics they at present cannot be classified as offensive types of weapons." Nonetheless, he added that "we intend to remove them within a month." In a separate transmission, Khrushchev urges that

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Kennedy refrain from "hurting the national feelings of the Cubans" during his upcoming press conference. (Document 76, *Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy, Announcing Withdrawal of IL-28 Aircraft from Cuba*, 11/20/62; Khrushchev Transmission, 11/20/62)

*November 20, 1962—3:30 P.M.:* After discussing Premier Khrushchev's letter agreeing to remove the IL-28s, the ExComm agrees to lift the quarantine. In addition, the SAC alert is ordered canceled and no low-altitude flights are authorized for November 21. U-2 missions are scheduled to verify the dismantling and withdrawal of the bomber aircraft. (Document 77, *Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee, November 20, 1962, 3:30 P.M., Meeting No. 28*, 11/20/62)

*November 20, 1962—6:00 P.M.:* President Kennedy announces at a press conference, "I have today been informed by Chairman Khrushchev that all of the IL-28 bombers in Cuba will be withdrawn in thirty days.... I have this afternoon instructed the Secretary of Defense to lift our naval quarantine." Kennedy suggests that because no on-site inspection has occurred, the preconditions for a U.S. noninvasion guarantee has not been met. Nonetheless, he states, "If all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and kept out of the hemisphere in the future...and if Cuba is not used for the export of aggressive Communist purposes, there will be peace in the Caribbean." (*The President's News Conference of November 20, 1962*, 11/20/62)

*November 20, 1962—11:21 P.M.:* The JCS orders SAC to return to its normal airborne alert status, effective immediately. During the day, SAC forces lower their alert status from DEFCON 2, and other U.S. military commands reduced their alert status from DEFCON 3 to DEFCON 4. (*Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 200701-210700 November 1962*, 11/21/62; Sagan, p. 101)

*November 21, 1962—9:49 P.M.:* In a cable to Adlai Stevenson and John McCloy, Dean Rusk summarizes the status of crisis following the IL-28 agreement:

The loose ends still remaining unfulfilled...are these: On [the] Soviet side, on-site U.N.-supervised verification of removal of offensive weapons, and longer-term safeguards against their reintroduction. On our side, formal assurances against invasion of Cuba.

Rusk notes that the United States favors settling the issue by having the U.S. and Soviet Union issue parallel declarations before the U.N. Security Council. The U.S. declaration, he writes, will state "our noninvasion assurances, contingent on Cuban behavior." (*Next Steps in New York Negotiations*, 11/21/62)

*November 21, 1962:* President Kennedy sends a brief letter to Premier Khrushchev welcoming the Soviet leader's decision to remove the IL-28s. Kennedy writes, "I have been glad to get your letter of November 20, which arrived in good time yesterday. As you will have seen, I was able to announce the lifting of our quarantine promptly at my press conference, on the basis of your welcome assurance that the IL-28 bombers will be removed within a month." Kennedy also reassures Khrushchev that "there need be no fear of any invasion of Cuba while matters take their present favorable course." (*Message for Chairman Khrushchev*, 11/21/62)

The president officially lifts the naval quarantine of Cuba, and measures are taken promptly by the U.S. Navy to return to a normal readiness posture. Secretary McNamara authorizes the secretary of the air force to release 14,200 air reservists, and the Defense Department removes involuntary extensions for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel. Almost simultaneously, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations announce the cancellation of the special military preparedness measures that had been put into effect on October 23. (*Khrushchev's Cuban Venture in Retrospect*, 12/7/62; *Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2/12/63, pp. 14, 19; Garthoff 1, p. 114)

*November 22, 1962:* Premier Khrushchev sends a five-page letter to Kennedy regarding the Soviet leader's views on Cuba and opinions on Fidel Castro.

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Cuban leaders, he observes, are "young, expansive people—Spaniards in a word, to use it far from the pejorative sense." Given nationalist sensitivities in Cuba, Khrushchev asks Kennedy to avoid steps "capable of causing scratches to national pride and prestige" of the Cuban leadership. (*Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy*, 11/22/62)

*November 29, 1962—10:00 A.M.:* The ExComm meets with President Kennedy to discuss intelligence and diplomatic reports on Cuba, U.S. declaratory policy on the IL-28 issue, the future of OPERATION MONGOOSE and "post mortems of Oct. 15-28." Kennedy directs the State Department to prepare a long-range plan to "keep pressure on Castro." (*NSC Executive Committee Record of Action, November 29, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 31, 11/29/62; Executive Committee Meeting, November 29, 1962, 10 A.M. Agenda, 11/28/62*)

*November 29, 1962—4:30 P.M.:* In a three-hour meeting with President Kennedy and Secretary of State Rusk, Anastas Mikoyan repeatedly presses for a clarification and a confirmation of a U.S. guarantee not to invade Cuba. Kennedy reassures Mikoyan that the United States has no intention of invading Cuba, but he backs away from the idea of issuing further formal guarantees, stressing that other conditions set out in his exchange of letters with Nikita Khrushchev have not been met (in particular, international on-site verification and safeguards on the reintroduction of strategic weapons into Cuba). However, Kennedy does state that if the Soviet Union abides by the exchange of correspondence, the United States will as well. (*U.S. Policy toward Cuba and Related Events 1 November 1961 - 15 March 1963, ca. 3/16/63, pt. 3, p. 11; Garthoff 1, pp. 126-27*)

*December 3, 1962—11:00 A.M.:* John McCloy meets with Soviet negotiators at the Waldorf Suite in New York City. Earlier, in one of the final sessions between the U.S. and Soviet negotiators, Vasily Kuznetsov met with McCloy at the McCloy's home in Connecticut. As their talk ended, Kuznetsov reportedly said, "all right, Mr. McCloy, we will get the IL-28's out as we

have taken the missiles out. But I want to tell you something, Mr. McCloy. The Soviet Union is not going to find itself in a position like this ever again." (*Chronology of Negotiations Re: Cuban Crisis, 12/6/62; Bohlen, pp. 495-96*)

*December 4, 1962—5:30 P.M.:* ExComm members discuss future policy toward Cuba at a working meeting held without President Kennedy. The group reviews U.S. planning for future overflights of Cuba, apparently agreeing that continued aerial reconnaissance is necessary to verify the removal of the IL-28s and to ensure offensive weapons are not reintroduced into Cuba. When John McCone raises the possibility that another U-2 might be shot down, the ExComm decides that the United States should respond by attacking one or more SAM sites. Troubled by the potential for a new crisis arising over another attack on U.S. reconnaissance, McCone writes to McGeorge Bundy the following morning to recommend that "diplomatic measures be taken" to assure that the United States does not find itself in the position of having to attack Soviet-controlled bases in Cuba. (*Warning That the United States May Soon Face the Contingency of Responding to a Shootdown of Another U-2, 12/5/62; Guidelines for Planning of Cuban Overflights, 11/30/62*)

*December 5, 1962:* Stevenson and McCloy send an eyes-only cable to Secretary Rusk and the president protesting their instructions to achieve and agreement on on-site verification even though all the missiles and planes have already been removed from Cuba. The cable states that they

have the growing impression that effects of victory in public mind are being gradually effaced by prolonged and inconclusive negotiation which gives impression we are still seeking vital objective we have not achieved. If public presumes this objective is on-site verification, more and more importance will be attached to such inspection as negotiation continues. If and when we emerge from negotiation without achieving that objective, even though it may have been otherwise suc-

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cessful, we will risk seeming to have failed rather than to have succeeded. (Bird, p. 538)

*December 10, 1962:* Khrushchev sends a nine-page letter to Kennedy on the situation in both Cuba and Berlin. He indicates that the United States and the Soviet Union have come to the final stage of the Cuban affair. The Soviet premier then raises the issue of Berlin and attempts to drive a wedge between the United States and German leader Konrad Adenauer. "Should really you and we—two great states—submit, willingly or unwillingly, to the old-aged man who both morally and physically is with one foot in [the] grave? Should we really become toys in his hands?" (*Premier Khrushchev's Letter to President Kennedy*, 12/10/62)

*December 12, 1962:* In a major 2 1/2-hour speech to the Supreme Soviet—his first major address since the Cuban crisis—Premier Khrushchev asserts that a U.S. "pledge" not to invade Cuba exists. He warns, however, that if the United States carries out an invasion, Cuba would not be left "defenseless." (*The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology*, 6/18/63, pp. 115, 121–22)

At a press conference, President Kennedy tells reporters that, in the best judgment of the United States, all strategic missiles and IL-28 bombers have been removed from Cuba. (*The President's News Conference of December 12, 1962*, 12/12/62)

*December 14, 1962:* President Kennedy writes to Premier Khrushchev in response to Khrushchev's December 11 message. The letter thanks Khrushchev "for [his] expression of appreciation of the understanding and flexibility we have tried to display" and expresses hope that a final settlement to the "Cuban question" could be found quickly. Kennedy also discusses communications between the two leaders during the missile crisis: he suggests that the use of reporters such as John Scali is not a satisfactory method of transmitting messages and expresses disappointment that Georgi Bolshakov, the channel for many exchanges between Kennedy and Khrushchev, is being called back to the Soviet Union. (*President Kennedy's Response to Khrushchev's December 11 Letter*, 12/14/62)

*December 17, 1962:* In a television and radio interview, President Kennedy offers some of his thoughts on the crisis. He observes that "if we had to act on Wednesday [October 17] in the first twenty-four hours, I don't think we would have chosen as prudently as we finally did." He characterizes the Soviet attempt to install missiles in Cuba as "an effort to materially change the balance of power.... It would have appeared to, and appearances contribute to reality." Kennedy compares the miscalculations leading to the Cuban missile crisis with those misjudgments that had led to World Wars I and II. When "you see the Soviet Union and the United States, so far separated in their beliefs...and you put the nuclear equation into that struggle; that is what makes this...such a dangerous time.... One mistake can make this whole thing blow up." (*Television and Radio Interview: "After Two Years—A Conversation with the President,"* 12/17/62)

*December 19, 1962:* Premier Khrushchev sends a letter to President Kennedy suggesting that the "time has come now to put an end once and for all to nuclear tests." He writes, "with the elimination of the Cuban crisis we relieved mankind of the direct menace of combat use of lethal nuclear weapons that impended over the world. Can't we solve a far simpler question—that of cessation of experimental explosions of nuclear weapons in the peaceful conditions?" Kennedy responds to Khrushchev's letter on December 28. Continued negotiations subsequently lead to the eventual signing of a limited test-ban treaty on August 5, 1963. (*Khrushchev's Letter*, 12/19/62; Garthoff 1, pp. 131, 134)

*January 1963:* Italy and Turkey announce that the IRBMs stationed in their countries will be phased out. In addition to the fifteen Turkish Jupiter missiles, thirty Jupiters deployed in Italy are affected by the decisions. (*Annual Report of the Secretary of the Army, July 1, 1962 to June 30, 1962*, 5/20/64, p. 248)

*January 4, 1963:* The Standing Group, an NSC group that eventually replaces the ExComm in reviewing U.S. policy toward Cuba, discusses McGeorge Bundy's proposal of opening communications with

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Fidel Castro. Bundy later notes that the "gradual development of some form of accommodation with Castro" became a standard item in lists of policy alternatives considered by the Kennedy administration. Nonetheless, U.S. policy toward Castro vacillates considerably in the months after the missile crisis. Even as secret approaches to Castro are being weighed, the Kennedy administration also contemplates Pentagon proposals for military action against Castro, as well as a wide range of economic and covert programs to weaken the Castro government. (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 173; Schlesinger, p. 538)

*January 7, 1963:* The United States and the Soviet Union agree to terminate U.N. consideration of the missile crisis. In a joint letter to U Thant, Adlai Stevenson and Vasily Kuznetsov note that while the two governments have not been able to "resolve all the problems" resulting from the crisis, sufficient progress has been made in implementing the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding to warrant the end of negotiations at the United Nations. Carlos Lechuga, the Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, sends a letter to U Thant two hours prior to the delivery of the U.S.-Soviet letter. Lechuga objects to the settlement, insisting that Cuba cannot regard any agreement ending crisis negotiations as "effective" unless it meets the "five points" Castro had articulated on October 28, 1962. (*Reiteration of Castro's "Five Points" and Cuban Perspective on United Nations Negotiations*, 1/7/63; Document 79, *Adlai Stevenson and Vasily Kuznetov, Letter to the United Nations*, 1/7/63)

*January 11, 1963:* Dean Rusk, testifying at a closed hearing before the Senate foreign relations committee, clarifies the U.S. noninvasion assurance. The United States "never made an unadorned commitment not to invade Cuba in the first place," Rusk declared. In any case, Rusk adds that "a crucial element" in the Kennedy-Khrushchev understandings—on-site inspection and assurances against the reintroduction of strategic weapons into Cuba—was not fulfilled by the Cuban and Soviet governments. "If Castro

were to do the kind of things which would from our point of view justify invasion," Rusk stresses, the United States would not consider any non-invasion assurance binding. (*Briefing of the World Situation*, 1/11/63)

*January 15, 1963:* The Soviet Union makes a final attempt to obtain a firm U.S. noninvasion pledge during a meeting between Vasily Kuznetsov and President Kennedy just prior to Kuznetsov's departure for Moscow. The president declines to extend any further assurances. (Garthoff 1, p. 128)

*January 15, 1963:* In a lengthy televised speech, Fidel Castro declares, "for us, the Caribbean crisis has not been resolved. A war was avoided but the peace was not won." Regarding a U.S. non-invasion guarantee, Castro says, "we don't believe in Kennedy's words. But Kennedy has given no pledge and if he did give it he has already withdrawn it." (*CR*, 3/12/63)

*January 25, 1963:* At its first meeting in over a month and during subsequent sessions, the ExComm considers various long-range plans to pressure Fidel Castro. The United States wants Castro removed from power but it recognizes that if this proves impossible, then it wants him to be independent of the Soviet Union. Policy papers suggest that the ultimate objective is replacement of the government by "one fully compatible with the goals of the United States." (*Participation in Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings, October 1962*, 10/5/68; Garthoff 1, p. 139)

*Late January 1963:* OPERATION MONGOOSE begins to be phased out. The Special Group Augmented is replaced by a different oversight organization, the Special Group, chaired by McGeorge Bundy. Although Mongoose is abolished, the CIA arm, Task Force W, continues to exist as the Special Affairs Staff, located at the CIA's Miami station. William Harvey, the head of Task Force W, is replaced by Desmond FitzGerald as head of the Special Affairs Staff. Covert operations against Fidel Castro continue during 1963 under FitzGerald. In addition to continuing attempts on Castro's life over the course of the year, CIA teams



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carry out at least six major operations in Cuba aimed at disrupting the Cuban government and economy. (*Cuba, operation mongoose*, 1/28/63; *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 170; Ranelagh, p. 388)

*February 18, 1963*: At Premier Khrushchev's direction, Anatoly Dobrynin delivers an aide-memoire to president Kennedy informing the president that "several thousand" Soviet troops still in Cuba would be withdrawn by March 15. No commitment to withdraw all Soviet military personnel is given, however. Unknown to the United States at the time, Khrushchev had agreed to Cuban demands to keep one of the four Soviet combat regiments in Cuba to act as a "tripwire" against a U.S. invasion. (*Informal Translation of Soviet Aide Memoire on the Soviet Decision to Withdraw Military Personnel From Cuba*, 2/18/63; Garthoff 1, p. 120)

*February 21, 1963*: The JCS are asked to undertake a comprehensive study of actions that might be taken in the event of a revolt in Cuba. The JCS in turn requests CINCLANT's view on several questions:

- 1) Possible military and para-military responses by the United States to a Cuban revolt...
- 3) How could we get arms and equipment to the rebels?
- 4) Under which circumstances should we consider invasion?
- 5) If the revolt were widespread and apparently successful, might we decide on a curtailed, rapid execution of CINCLANT Oplan 316 [the invasion plan of Cuba] in order to exploit in time the effects of the revolt on the Castro force? (*Addendum #1 Summary of Items of Significant Interest Period 200701-210700 February 1963*, 2/21/63)

*March 21, 1963*: President Kennedy criticizes recent attacks on Cuba by Cuban "exiles," saying that the raids only "strengthened the Russian position in Cuba." (*NYT*, 3/22/63)

*March 26, 1963*: The anti-Castro group L-66 attacks and sinks the Soviet ship *Baku* as it loads Cuban sugar at the harbor of Caibarien, Cuba. The assault on the *Baku*, as well as the one on the *L'Gov* a week earlier, are among the most serious attacks that have taken place during the year, and both incidents were strenuously protested by the Soviet Union and Cuba. (*Summary of Major Raids Carried Out by Anti-Castro Groups*, ca. 4/63; *NYT*, 3/28/63)

*April 3, 1963*: Sabotage operations against Cuba have been discontinued, McGeorge Bundy tells participants in a high-level administration meeting on Cuba, because the Special Group "had decided...that such activity is not worth the effort expended on it." This cessation of sabotage operations is short-lived however; President Kennedy approves a new set of operations on June 19 (see entry for June 19, 1963). (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 173; Schlesinger 1, p. 544)

*April 21, 1963*: McGeorge Bundy submits to the NSC's Standing Group a memo on "Cuba Alternatives" discussing "possible new directions" for U.S. policy toward Cuba. Three possible alternatives are identified: forcing "a non-Communist solution in Cuba by all necessary means," insisting on "major but limited ends," or moving "in the direction of a gradual development of some form of accommodation with Castro." (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75, p. 171)

*April 25, 1963*: Robert McNamara sends a handwritten note to President Kennedy informing him that "The last Jupiter missile in Turkey came down yesterday. The last Jupiter warhead will be flown out of Turkey on Saturday." On April 1, before the Jupiters are withdrawn, the first Polaris submarine is deployed in the Mediterranean Sea. No public announcement accompanied the withdrawal of the missiles, but reports that the missiles are to be dismantled are confirmed by the State Department on March 25. (*Interview with Raymond Hare by Dennis O'Brien: Jupiter Missiles in Turkey and the Missile Crisis*, 9/19/69; *Transcript of Press and Radio News Briefing*, 3/25/63;

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*Handwritten Note Informing President Kennedy That the Last Jupiter Missile in Turkey Was Dismantled, 4/25/63)*

*April 27–May 23, 1963:* Fidel Castro and a large entourage begin a five-week, fourteen-city visit to the Soviet Union. Castro negotiates renewed pledges of Soviet aid in the event of a U.S. attack as well as changes in Soviet-Cuban sugar agreements. During the visit, Castro and Premier Khrushchev review all of the documents that have been exchanged between the Soviet Union and the United States as a result of the missile crisis. Castro later reveals that it is only at this time that he learned that the withdrawal of nuclear missiles from Turkey had been part of the agreement settling the crisis. (Szulc, p. 650; Sobel, pp. 124–25)

*June 19, 1963:* Following a Special Group meeting, President Kennedy approves a new sabotage program against Cuba. Whereas OPERATION MONGOOSE was aimed at eventually sparking an internal revolt, the new program seeks a more limited objective: “to nourish a spirit of resistance and disaffection which could lead to significant defections and other by-products of unrest.” Numerous sabotage efforts against important economic targets are authorized by the Special Group during the autumn of 1963, and U.S.-assisted raids and assassination plots are not completely terminated until 1965 (see entries for October 3 and 24, 1963). (*Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 11/20/75)

*June 20, 1963:* A memorandum of understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union establishing a “hot line” between Washington and Moscow is signed. The agreement establishes a direct teletype communication link to be used “in time of emergency” in order to clarify intentions and prevent accident, miscalculation, or misunderstanding from leading to unintentional war. (ACDA, pp. 28–33)

*October 13, 1964:* Nikita Khrushchev is ousted from power. Former KGB chief Alexander Shelpin and his

protégé, Vladamir Semichastny, reportedly instigate the action against Khrushchev. Although the Cuban missile crisis is not a major cause of Khrushchev’s fall—the majority of the formal charges leveled against Khrushchev reportedly deal with domestic affairs—his handling of the Cuban crisis may have contributed indirectly to his loss of support among the other high-level Soviet officials. (WP, 9/15/88; Time, 11/14/88)

*August 4, 1970:* Apparently prompted by Cuban fears of an invasion by the United States, Soviet Chargé Yuli M. Vorontsov meets with National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger some eight years after the Cuban missile crisis in an attempt to reconfirm the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding on Cuba. Without consulting others within the administration, President Nixon and Henry Kissinger decide to “reaffirm” the understanding. On August 7, Kissinger meets with Vorontsov, and both give their word that the understanding is “still in full force.” This is the first time that U.S. leaders have unequivocally accepted the mutual commitments proposed in 1962. (Garthoff 1, pp. 141–42; Nixon, p. 486)

*September 9, 1970:* A Soviet flotilla, including special vessels used to support the operations of Soviet nuclear submarines, arrives at the port of Cienfuegos, Cuba. (Garthoff 1, pp. 145–48)

*October 6, 1970:* In an attempt to defuse increasing diplomatic tensions over the Cienfuegos “submarine port,” Anatoly Dobrynin meets with Henry Kissinger. The Soviet ambassador hands Kissinger a note reaffirming the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding; it states that “in the Cuban question, the Soviet government continues to proceed from the understanding reached on this question in 1962.” Dobrynin also states that “he was prepared on behalf of his government to affirm that ballistic missile submarines would never call there [Cuba] in an operational capacity.” (*United States–Soviet Understanding on Offensive Weapons in Cuba*, 11/22/78; Hersh, p. 255; Nixon, p. 489)

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*October 9, 1970:* Henry Kissinger gives Anatoly Dobrynin a formal message from President Nixon welcoming the Soviet assurances but offering the U.S. interpretation of the 1962 understanding that settled the Cuban missile crisis:

The U.S. government understands that the U.S.S.R. will not establish, utilize, or permit the establishment of any facility in Cuba that can be employed to support or repair Soviet naval ships capable of carrying offensive weapons, i.e. submarines or surface ships armed with nuclear capable, surface-to-surface missiles.

The note lists five specific actions that the U.S. government would consider violations of the 1962 agreement. Dobrynin reportedly objects to the bluntness of the language but hints that the issue will soon be resolved. (*United States-Soviet Understanding on Offensive Weapons in Cuba*, 11/22/78; Hersh, p. 255; Nixon, p. 489)

*October 23, 1970:* Anatoly Dobrynin reassures Henry Kissinger that the Soviet Union does not have a military facility in Cuba and confirms that it will continue to abide by the 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement. Dobrynin also states that the Soviet Union will from August onward make diplomatic exchanges a part of the U.S.-Soviet understanding on Cuba. (*Declassification of David Newsom's Testimony on the U.S.-Soviet Understandings on Cuba*, 9/6/79)

*November 30, 1978:* President Jimmy Carter holds a news conference to quell the political controversy that erupts after the publication of a column by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak reporting the deployment of Soviet MiG-23 fighter-bombers in Cuba. Carter told reporters that the Soviet government has given him assurances that no shipments of arms to Cuba had or would violate the terms of the 1962 agreement. (Garthoff 1, pp. 149-50)

*January 17, 1979:* After reviewing the deployment of Soviet MiG-23 aircraft to Cuba, the State Depart-

ment announces it has concluded that the aircraft are not configured for delivering nuclear weapons and thus do not constitute a violation of 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement. (Garthoff 3, p. 438)

*August 1979:* A crisis that develops in the Carter administration over the "discovery" of a 2,600-man Soviet military "brigade" ended abruptly when it was realized that the brigade has probably been stationed in Cuba since 1962, a vestige of the Cuban missile crisis. The Soviet Union had agreed in November 1962 that the brigade would be left behind to compensate Fidel Castro for the withdrawal of Soviet strategic missiles and a large number of Soviet forces (see entry for November 2, 1962). (Garthoff 1, p. 151)

*September 14, 1983:* President Reagan said of the 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding: "As far as I'm concerned, that agreement has been abrogated many times by the Soviet Union and Cuba in the bringing in of what can only be considered offensive weapons." (*The Kennedy-Khrushchev Agreement Has Been Abrogated Many Times*, 9/14/83)

*September 18, 1983:* In response to a reporter's question, President Reagan states that his administration is actively reviewing the Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding and the question of whether the continued transfer of MiG-23 aircraft to Cuba constitutes a violation of the agreement. The Reagan administration, like the Carter administration in 1978, ultimately decides that the MiGs should not be considered "offensive weapons." (Garthoff 1, p. 152)

*March 5-8, 1987:* Harvard University's Nuclear Crisis Project at the Center for Science and International Affairs hosts a major conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis in Hawks Cay, Florida. The first of five such conferences organized by Professor James G. Blight, the Hawks Cay meeting brings together many of the surviving members of the ExComm, including Robert McNamara, C. Douglas Dillon, George Ball, McGeorge Bundy, Theodore Sorensen, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., as well as the most prominent crisis

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scholars, among them Graham T. Allison, Ernest May, Joseph Nye, Richard Neustadt, and Thomas Schelling. The National Security Archive provides the documents for the conference, from which emerges a number of significant revelations—most notably that President Kennedy had secretly asked Secretary of State Dean Rusk to initiate a U.N. proposal on trading missiles in Turkey for Soviet missiles in Cuba if negotiations broke down between the superpowers. Proceedings from the conference, as well as those from a second conference held in October 1987, are later published in James G. Blight and David A. Welch's book, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989).

*April 1987:* The National Security Archive files twenty-seven Freedom of Information Act requests for thousands of pages of documentation on the Cuban missile crisis which the State Department has gathered and stored since 1965. The requests specify the file folders contained in five boxes of materials. The FOIAs are filed in the name of Professor Philip Brenner, a Cuba specialist and board member of the Archive.

*October 11–13, 1987:* A second conference on the Cuban missile crisis, organized by James G. Blight, takes place in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Former members of the ExComm and scholars are joined by three prominent Soviets: Fyodor Burlatsky, Khrushchev's former speechwriter and adviser; Sergo Mikoyan, son of former First Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan; and Georgi Shakhnazarov, a personal aide to General Secretary Gorbachev. The information provided by the Soviet participants fills a major gap in the one-sided history of the crisis; the conference results in compelling new analysis of the critical question of why Premier Khrushchev decided to deploy the missiles in Cuba. (Blight, pp. 225–90)

*January 26, 1989:* The National Security Archive releases substantive documentation on OPERATION MONGOOSE, the covert program authorized by Presi-

dent Kennedy to overthrow the Castro government. The documents, declassified for the first time as a result of a FOIA lawsuit filed against the State Department, offer a better understanding of events leading up to the missile crisis. According to the memoranda, CIA covert sabotage operations, combined with punitive economic measures and psychological operations, were intended to result in a popular uprising against Castro, the success of which would "require decisive military intervention" by the United States. The timetable established for Mongoose foresaw the revolt, and a U.S. invasion to support it, coming to fruition in October 1962—the month the missile crisis began. The new documentation lends credence to the argument that the Soviets and Cubans, whose agents had infiltrated MONGOOSE, believed a U.S. invasion was being planned and that the Soviet missiles were then deployed for defensive reasons. (Documents 5–9; "Papers Show 1962 U.S. Plan Against Castro," *NYT*, 1/27/89)

*January 27–29, 1989:* An unprecedented retrospective conference is held in Moscow. The third in a series organized by James G. Blight, the conference brings together the U.S., Soviet, and Cuban sides of the missile crisis for the first time. Besides lengthy discussion of the revelations in the OPERATION MONGOOSE documents, significant new facts about the crisis are disclosed:

- U.S. intelligence estimates of ten thousand to twelve thousand Soviet troops in Cuba during the crisis were far off, according to the Soviets. The real figure was over forty thousand.
- The Cubans expected the United States to invade and predicted up to eight hundred thousand casualties.
- At least twenty nuclear warheads were actually in Cuba but were never mounted on the rockets, according to General Dmitry Volkogonov, this is the first confirmation that the Soviets had managed to deploy warheads as well as missiles before the blockade was implemented.
- The U.S. withdrawal of missiles in Turkey was an explicit part of the U.S.-Soviet settlement of the missile crisis, according to Theodore Sorensen, who edited Robert Kennedy's memoir of the cri-

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sis, *Thirteen Days*.

- Some of Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin's cables to Moscow were transmitted via a Western Union office in Washington, D.C.

The Moscow conference proceedings were subsequently published in Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch's book, *Back to the Brink: The Moscow Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (WSJ, 2/30/89)

*January 3-7, 1991:* A fourth conference on the missile crisis, "Cuba between the Superpowers," is held on the island of Antigua. Organized by James Blight, who is now at Brown University's Center for Foreign Policy Development, the conference is once again attended by American, Soviet, and Cuban officials. For the first time, the focus is on the U.S.-Cuban and Soviet-Cuban dynamic and Cuba's role in the crisis. (James G. Blight, David Lewis, and David Welch, "Cuba Between the Superpowers: Antigua, 3-7 January 1991," Transcript of the Meetings.)

*January 6, 1992:* Pursuant to a FOIA lawsuit filed by the National Security Archive, the Department of State releases the remaining correspondence between Kennedy and Khrushchev. The eleven letters, dating from October 30-December 19, 1962, shed new light on the continuing tension between the superpowers in the weeks following the climax of the crisis on October 28, 1962. They reveal, among other facts, that there was no secret deal between Kennedy and Khrushchev that would have constrained the

United States from future overt intervention in Cuba. The release of the letters generates numerous newspaper articles, including front-page stories in *USA Today* and the *Miami Herald*. (Documents 64, 69-72, 76; "The Cuba Missile Crisis: Kennedy Left a Loophole," *NYT*, 1/7/92)

*January 9-12, 1992:* The last of five meetings, "The Tripartite Conference over the Crisis of October, 1962," organized by James Blight, Janet Lang, and Brown University's Center for Foreign Policy Development, is held in Havana, Cuba. Attended all four days by Fidel Castro, the last surviving world leader involved in the episode, as well as by former high-level officials from the United States, Cuba, and the former Soviet Union, the conference marks the apex of historical exploration of the crisis. Castro provides unparalleled accounts of his personal role in the events, as well as that of Cuba as a nation. Among the more astounding revelations that emerge from the delegation from the former Soviet Union is confirmation that the Soviets had installed short-range tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba, and that the local Soviet commander had the authority to fire those weapons without further direction from the Kremlin in the event of a U.S. invasion. (See Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "Four Days with Fidel: A Havana Diary," *New York Review of Books*, 3/26/92; the proceedings will be published in James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, with David Lewis, *Cuba On the Brink: Fidel Castro, the Missile Crisis and the Collapse of Communism* [New York: Pantheon Books, 1993])

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