

criticism from certain quarters in this country.⁵ But neither such criticism nor the opposition of any sector of our society will be allowed to determine the policies of this Government. In particular, I have neither the intention nor the desire to invade Cuba; I consider that it is for the Cuban people themselves to decide their destiny. I am determined to continue with policies which will contribute to peace in the Caribbean.⁶ . . .

There are other issues and problems before us, but perhaps I have said enough to give you a sense of my own current thinking on these matters. Let me now also offer the suggestion that it might be helpful if some time in May I should send a senior personal representative to discuss these and other matters informally with you. The object would not be formal negotiations, but a fully frank, informal exchange of views, arranged in such a way as to receive as little attention as possible. If this thought is appealing to you, please let me know your views on the most convenient time.

In closing, I want again to send my warm personal wishes to you and all your family. These are difficult and dangerous times in which we live, and both you and I have grave responsibilities to our families and to all of mankind. The pressures from those who have a less patient and peaceful outlook are very great—but I assure you of my own determination to work at all times to strengthen world peace.

9. Memorandum of a Meeting with President Kennedy Prepared by CIA Director McCone

JFK and his CIA director discuss the right tack to take with Castro.

Palm Beach, Florida, April 15, 1963, 5:30 p.m.¹

SUBJECT

Meeting with the President—5:30—15 Apr 1963

. . . I raised the question of the possibility of working on Castro with the objective of disenchanting him with his Soviet relations causing him to break relations with Khrushchev, to effect the removal of Soviet troops from Cuba, reorient his policies with respect to Latin America, and establish in Cuba government satisfactory to the rest of the Hemisphere. I explained to the President that the Cuban problem must be solved in one of two ways; either the manner outlined

⁵Presumably a reference to hawks in the Republican party.

⁶There follows at this point in the text a section on Laos.

¹McCone drafted this memorandum on April 16.

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above or alternatively, by bringing consistent pressure of every possible nature on Khrushchev to force his withdrawal from Cuba, and then to bring about the downfall of Castro by means which could be developed after the removal of the Soviets [sic] troops (but not before) and thereafter establish a satisfactory government in Cuba. I stated to the President that we were studying both courses of action and I had not made up my mind concerning the feasibility of either plan. The President thought both approaches should be carefully examined and suggested the possibility of pursuing both courses at the same time. In any event it was decided that we should keep the Donovan channel open.² I advised the President that Donovan has to return to Havana at the end of the week and that I will see him privately prior to his departure.

... The President and I talked at some length concerning sabotage in Cuba. I expressed grave doubts and pointed out the hazards from his standpoint in view of the stand-down of the hit-and-run exile operations, the danger of attribution, etc. The President seemed to question whether active sabotage was good unless it was of a type that could "come from within Cuba." I said this was very difficult and that the initial operations conceived were from the sea. I said I thought a program should be engaged in only if it was an essential building block in an agreed program to remove the Soviets from Cuba and to take care of Castro. ...

10. Memorandum from Coordinator of Cuban Affairs Sterling J. Cottrell to the Special Group

Sterling Cottrell, installed in early 1963 as the coordinator of administration policy toward Cuba, reviews current covert actions against Castro and poses the question whether these actions should be intensified.

Washington, April 18, 1963.

SUBJECT

Proposed New Covert Policy and Program Towards Cuba

A. The following guidelines are being used in our present covert policy towards Cuba:

1. Producing comprehensive intelligence related to our basic policy objectives. (No offensive weapons reintroduced into Cuba, removal of Soviet forces, no aggressive Cuban military action, reducing subversion in the hemisphere, di-

²James B. Donovan, a New York lawyer, had been negotiating with Castro over the release of some Americans, including CIA officials, from prisons in Cuba.

vorcing Castro from USSR, replacing present regime, maximizing cost to USSR, political isolation of Cuba and preparing for military contingencies.)

2. Intensifying covert collection of intelligence within Cuba, especially within the regime.

3. Supporting the efforts of certain Cuban exiles, who are associated with the original aims of the 26 of July Movement¹ and who believe that the Castro regime can be overthrown from within in order that they may: a) cause a split in the leadership of the regime at the national or provincial levels; and b) create a political base of popular opposition to the regime; and c) secure intelligence.

4. The use of [a] variety of propaganda media to stimulate passive resistance and low-risk, simple, sabotage actions by the populace of Cuba.

5. The placing of incendiary devices and/or explosives with suitable time delay within the hull or cargo to disable or sink Cuban vessels and/or damage their cargos while on the high seas.

6. Introducing abrasives or other damaging materials into the propulsion, communication and other systems of the ship to inactivate the ship.

B. The questions now to be decided are:

1. Should the U.S. move beyond the above policy to a program of sabotage, harassment and resistance activities?

2. What kind of effective action can be taken?

3. What capabilities do we possess?

4. What repercussions can we expect?

C. With respect to (1.) above, the following considerations apply:

1. U.S. policy statements have consistently reiterated the view that the liberation of Cuba is primarily a function of the Cuban people themselves.

2. The absence of continued harassment against the regime inside Cuba will consolidate its control and indicate the success of Castro in imposing Communism upon the Cuban people.

3. The absence of U.S. assistance inside Cuba to those who desire the overthrow of the Communist regime will deny an important asset.

4. The U.S. effort to assist the fighters for freedom inside Cuba will involve expense and risk of lives to those Cubans who are trained for this purpose.

5. The risk of U.S. involvement through confessions of captured personnel is a continuing one. However, world opinion in the event of such exposure is not likely to be severely damaging to the U.S. position.

D. With respect to (2.) (3.) and (4.) above, the following additional proposals are submitted for consideration. . . .

1. *The placing of explosive devices with suitable time delays on the outside of ships either in Cuban or non-Cuban ports.*

Considerations: UDT teams can be ready by June for attack in July on a once monthly basis. This measure would place increased strain on Cuban shipping and demoralize Cuban crews. Soviet reaction is likely in form of propaganda and UN démarche. Retaliation in kind or forceful reactions are probably unlikely.

¹A reference to the original effort to spark a revolution in Cuba when Castro and his cohorts tried to seize the Moncada military barracks in 1953.

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2. *Surface attacks by maritime assets firing on Cuban ships in Cuban waters. When the maritime asset cannot reach the target, shore based attacks on shipping in port or passing the offshore keys will be undertaken.*

Considerations: Attack craft from the sea would be manned by Cubans. Shore based attacks by paramilitary trained Cubans firing on ships with recoilless rifles, rocket launchers or 20mm cannon. First sea attack in May and once monthly thereafter. First shore based attack in June. These operations would disrupt coastal commerce. US would probably be blamed. Cuban reprisal measures possible. Soviets likely allege US culpability. Probably no direct Soviet counter-action outside Cuba. Soviets would probably supply additional hardware to Cubans but caution against too aggressive Cuban response.

3. *Externally mounted hit and run attacks against land targets. Examples: molasses tanker, petroleum storage dumps, naval refueling base, refineries, power plants.*

Considerations: Operations conducted by Cubans with paramilitary training. High possibilities of complex operations going awry. First attack in April with one per month thereafter. Effects would be increased exile morale, some economic disruption. Repercussions would include charges of U.S. sponsorship, and increased Cuban security force activities. Soviet reaction likely to be propaganda-political moves and support to Cuban patrol activity but caution to avoid escalation.

4. *Support of Internal Resistance Elements, providing matériel and personnel to permit them to undertake a variety of sabotage and harassment operations.*

Considerations: The internal elements being supported will attack targets of their own choosing in their own manner. They will be targets of opportunity in line with their capabilities. Effect could be cumulative and snow-balling. The matériel will be introduced by maritime infiltration, diplomatic channels and concealment in open mail. Indigenous materials will be used and instructions provided. Initial sabotage results within 30 days. This program could produce major economic damage, lift morale and keep resistance alive. Repercussions would involve increased security measures. Soviet reaction largely propaganda and supplies.

Attachment

SUBJECT

A Covert Harassment/Sabotage Program against Cuba

1. This paper presents a covert Harassment/Sabotage program targeted against Cuba; included are those sabotage plans which have previously been approved as well as new proposals. While this program will cause a certain amount of economic damage, it will in no sense critically injure the economy or cause the overthrow of Castro. It may, however, create a situation which will delay the consolidation and stabilization of Castro's revolution and may cause some of his 26 July followers to doubt Castro's ability successfully to create a new Cuba.

Losses in men and equipment with the attendant adverse publicity must be expected. Even without such losses, U.S. attribution will be claimed.

When the policy and guidelines of the overall sabotage program are established, it will be possible progressively to develop up to a limit additional covert assets and support capabilities. However, materially to increase the pace of operations, a period of four to six months is required. Ultimate limiting factors are weather, length of "dark-of-the-moon" period each month and appropriate targets. A source of additional agent personnel is from Cuban personnel trained by the U.S. Military Forces under the recent programs, but released to civilian status. . . .

11. Summary Record of a Meeting of the Standing Group of the National Security Council

Robert Kennedy and other American officials look at ways to step up the pressure on Castro.

Washington, April 23, 1963, 5 p.m.

The basis of the discussion was a memorandum prepared by Mr. Bundy entitled "A Sketch of the Cuba Alternatives."¹

Secretary McNamara stated that before the group discussed substance, it should consider whether the present policy we are following would produce a major change in Cuba. He expressed his firm view that Castro's position over the short term would improve if we took no actions other than those now under way or projected. He made clear his belief that the elimination of the Castro regime was a requirement and that, if others agreed our present policy would not result in its downfall, we should develop a program for approval which would produce changes acceptable to us. The program should aim at creating such a situation of dissidence within Cuba as to allow the U.S. to use force in support of anti-Castro forces without leading to retaliation by the USSR on the West.

Mr. McCone summarized information leading him to believe that Castro's position in Cuba would be stronger a year or two years from now than it is at present. He expressed his belief that present policy would not cause a major change in Cuba and that the Russians could provide sufficient aid and technical assistance to permit the Cuban economy to remain about where it is now or slightly improve.

Assistant Secretary Martin did not fully agree with the views of the Secretary

¹This memorandum by McGeorge Bundy has not been included.

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of Defense or Mr. McCone with respect to the effect of existing policy on the Castro regime. He cited evidence to indicate that present measures are crippling the Cuban economy, leading to shortages, lack of spare parts, and even sufficient food to permit full rations for Cuban militia. Mr. Martin saw no possibility of getting Castro to defect from the USSR. He said there was no way to finance Cuba during the transition period until Castro, by his deeds, had proved that he had broken his ties with the USSR. He said, for example, Congress would never approve the sugar quota for Cuba early enough to avoid a collapse of the Cuban economy cut loose from the USSR and not yet aided by the U.S. Furthermore, he said Castro was the kind of a man who might make promises and not keep them, i.e. he did not stay bought. The possibility of persuading Castro to leave Cuba was not feasible because Castro was a true revolutionary who could not be induced to give up his revolution.

The Attorney General proposed three studies:

- a. A list of measures we would take following contingencies such as the death of Castro or the shooting down of a U-2.
- b. A program with the objective of overthrowing Castro in eighteen months.
- c. A program to cause as much trouble as we can for Communist Cuba during the next eighteen months.

Under Secretary Ball stated the view that we should not look at Cuba from the point of view of Cuba alone. He said the Cuban problem was a part of our relations with the USSR and with our global battle against Communist aggression. He urged that our policy toward Cuba always be kept in this perspective. The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Cuba and the disappearance of the Soviet presence in Cuba was of major importance to us.

USIA Director Murrow stated his view that we need promptly a statement of what we would think was an acceptable post-Castro Cuba.

Secretary Dillon raised certain questions as to what kind of a Cuba we could live with if it were no longer run by Castro or tied to Moscow. He said that American companies had written off their expropriated sugar properties in Cuba but the question remained as to who would own these properties in the event Castro and Communism disappeared in Cuba.

There was a discussion on what we would do for a non-Communist Cuba and what we could do to get Castro to defect from the USSR. There appeared to be some differing views as to whether economic measures we can take would wreck the Cuban economy or whether the only result would be to raise the cost to the USSR of maintaining Cuba.

Mr. Sorensen listed the seven objectives raised at the meeting as follows:

- a. Improve our present course of action by doing some things that we are not now doing.
- b. Agree on military responses which we should make to contingencies, such as the shooting down of a U-2 plane.
- c. Develop a program to get rid of Castro.
- d. Measures to disrupt the economy of Cuba.
- e. A program to induce Soviet withdrawal.
- f. The detachment of Cuba from Moscow.

g. A program of support for dissident elements in Cuba.
Overriding all these points would be a statement of our views as to the kind of a regime we would want to see in Cuba post-Castro.²

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12. Memorandum from President Kennedy to Secretary of Defense McNamara

JFK continues to press for the development of contingency plans to attack Cuba.

Washington, April 29, 1963.

Are we keeping our Cuban contingency invasion plans up to date? I notice that there have been a number of new judgments on the amount of equipment that the Cubans have. I thought last October the number of troops we planned to have available was rather limited and the success of the operation was dependent upon, in large measure, our two airborne divisions getting in and controlling the two airfields. It seems to me that we should strengthen our contingency plans on this operation.

13. Extract of a Message from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy

In response to JFK's message of April 11 (see Document 8), Khrushchev maintains that the number of Soviet troops still in Cuba is insignificant, and that U.S. reconnaissance flights over the island are unacceptable.

April 29, 1963.¹

Already for a protracted period, in the exchange of opinions between us no matter in what channels they took place, one and the same question has inevitably arisen—concerning the situation around Cuba. To a considerable degree this is understandable if one considers how we passed through a most

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²Bromley Smith produced this memorandum.

¹The message was received on this date via a private communication channel.

dangerous crisis in the fall of last year. But it is impossible not to recognize also that tension around Cuba decreases too slowly and at times rises anew not unlike the way the mercury jumps in the thermometers of the present spring.

And of course when one thinks about where the abnormalities are coming from which are making the atmosphere in the region of the Caribbean Sea ever more feverish, one comes to the conclusion that a one-sided approach can least of all help the situation.

If one allows that in the Western Hemisphere uneasiness is evoked by the presence in Cuba of a certain small number of Soviet troops which are helping Cubans to master the weapons delivered by the Soviet Union for the purpose of strengthening the defense capabilities of Cuba, then how much more uneasiness should be evoked in the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa by the hundreds of thousands of American troops in the Eastern Hemisphere? It is sufficient to make such a comparison in order that things can be seen in proper perspective. At our meeting in Vienna we seemed to have agreed to proceed from the fact that the forces of our states were equal. Well, then, if our forces are equal, then there should also be equal possibilities. Why does the United States forget about this?

You know that we have withdrawn from Cuba a significant part of our military personnel. I can tell you that we have withdrawn several times more people than has been stated in the American press. How this matter will develop in the future depends on a number of circumstances and in the first place on the pace at which the atmosphere in the region of the Caribbean Sea will be normalized, and whether, as could be expected, the reasons which occasioned the necessity for assistance to the Cubans by Soviet military specialists and instructors will disappear.

I would like to express the thought of how important it is in evaluating what is happening around Cuba that one rise above one-sided understandings and base his judgments on the respective estimate of the situation of the interested parties. From your point of view, as set forth in your message,² the reconnaissance flights of American aircraft over Cuba are only "peaceful observation." But if one were to characterize these flights objectively, without even considering the point of view, understandable to everyone, of the country over which they are being carried out, then they cannot be described other than as an unrestrained intrusion into the air space of a sovereign government and as a flagrant violation of the elementary norms of international law and the principles of the UN Charter, to which are affixed the signatures of both the USA and Cuba. It is natural that no state prizing its sovereignty, no government solicitous of the interest and dignity of its people, can tolerate such flights.

Perhaps it is desired that we recognize the right of the USA to violate the Charter of the United Nations and international norms? But this we cannot do and will not do.

We have honestly carried out the obligations we assumed in the settlement of the crisis in the region of the Caribbean Sea, and withdrew from Cuba even more than we promised to withdraw. There are no grounds for you to doubt the

²See Document 8.

readiness of the Soviet Union to carry out firmly in the future as well the agreement which was reached between us. Why then are reconnaissance flights by American aircraft over Cuba necessary? What are they looking for there when there is not a single thing, seen in the light of the agreement reached, which could cause concern? Trampling on sovereignty in this way can lead to quite serious consequences for us if it is not stopped in time.

And can one pass over in silence or recognize as in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter the continuing efforts to strangle the economy of Cuba? I shall not address myself to this in more detail although of course I could find many words with which to characterize these actions, even from a purely humanitarian point of view.

The Soviet Union gives due credit to the measures which have recently been undertaken by the USA, as well as by England, in connection with the attacks which have taken place on Soviet vessels near the Cuban coast.³ We of course do not underestimate the significance of these measures and hope that they will be sufficiently effective to preclude the possibility of a repetition of armed raids against Cuba.

I read with a feeling of satisfaction that passage of your message in which you confirm that you have neither the intention nor the desire to invade Cuba and where you recognize that it is up to the Cuban people to determine their fate. That is a good statement. We have always stressed that, like any other people, the Cuban people possess the inalienable right to determine their own fate as they see fit.

14. Memorandum from Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Kennedy

McNamara informs JFK of progress in improving military contingency plans for Cuba.

Washington, May 7, 1963.

SUBJECT

Contingency Plans for Cuba (U)

1. In response to your inquiry, dated 29 April 1963,¹ I wish to assure you that our contingency plans for invasion of Cuba have been and are being maintained

³Presumably a reference to the attacks mentioned in Document 6, footnote 3.

¹See Document 12.

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up to date. A revision of CINCLANT's basic invasion plan for Cuba was reviewed and approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 26 February 1963.

2. Intelligence reports received since last October do indicate the assignment of additional matériel to the Cuban armed forces. Responsible commanders are being kept fully informed of the changing intelligence picture and our plans are continually updated to insure that the U.S. forces and equipment and their planned employment reflect the latest information available. For example, the order in which U.S. forces and their supporting equipment are committed is being restudied in the light of the estimated increases in Castro's T-34 medium tanks and self-propelled anti-tank guns.

3. The most significant change in the basic invasion plan since last October has resulted from our increasing capability to introduce larger numbers of troops and heavy equipment into the objective area early in the operation. This capability is being achieved by the reactivation of 11 LST's, which will materially expedite the delivery of combat forces and equipment. In the longer term, programmed acquisition of additional C-130 aircraft into the air lift force will expedite the delivery of airborne and airlanded forces during the initial assault. Through these measures the weight of our early attacks will be increased and the probability of their success further enhanced. . . .

15. Paper Prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency for the Standing Group of the National Security Council

The momentum that had been gathering in the Kennedy administration in the spring of 1963 in favor of greater covert pressure on Cuba culminates in this CIA plan of action.

Washington, June 8, 1963.

SUBJECT

Proposed Covert Policy and Integrated Program of Action towards Cuba

I. Introduction

1. Submitted herewith is a covert program for Cuba within CIA's capabilities. Some parts of the program have already been approved and are being implemented. Being closely inter-related, the total cumulative impact of the courses of action set forth in this program is dependent upon the simultaneous coordinated execution of the individual courses of action.

2. This program is based on the assumption that current U.S. policy does not

contemplate outright military intervention in Cuba or a provocation which can be used as a pretext for an invasion of Cuba by United States military forces. It is further assumed that U.S. policy calls for the exertion of maximum pressure by all means available to the U.S. Government, short of military intervention, to prevent the pacification of the population and the consolidation of the Castro/Communist regime. The ultimate objective of this policy would be to encourage dissident elements in the military and other power centers of the regime to bring about the eventual liquidation of the Castro/Communist entourage and the elimination of the Soviet presence from Cuba.

3. While the effect of a program of maximum pressure is unpredictable, it is suggested that a sustained intensive effort undertaken now to prevent the consolidation of the Castro/Communist regime may in the future present the United States with opportunities and options not now foreseeable. The consequences of a policy of allowing Castro to "stew in his own juice," however, are foreseeable. According to current estimates, barring Castro's death or a decisive change in the U.S. posture or Soviet policy towards Cuba, the Castro regime is likely to be more firmly established a year hence, despite possible economic setbacks. The mere passage of time tends to favor Castro as the population and elite groups in Cuba become accustomed to the idea that he is here to stay and as his regime gains in administrative experience and the security organs become more efficient. Over the long run, the existence of an organized party apparatus as well as a stable governmental machinery could reduce the indispensability of Castro's personal leadership. Thus, if left to chance, the U.S. must be prepared to accept for the indefinite future a Communist regime in Cuba closely tied to and a significant component of the Soviet world power structure.

4. Within the context of the policy assumptions and estimate of the situation in Cuba outlined above, CIA submits a program consisting of the following interdependent courses of action:

A. Covert collection of intelligence, both for U.S. strategic requirements as well as for operational requirements.

B. Propaganda actions to stimulate low-risk simple sabotage and other forms of active and passive resistance.

C. Exploitation and stimulation of disaffection in the Cuban military and other power centers.

D. Economic denial actions on an increased basis.

E. General sabotage and harassment.

F. Support of autonomous anti-Castro Cuban groups to supplement and assist in the execution of the above courses of action.

5. A vital feature of the foregoing program to exert maximum pressure on the Castro/Communist regime is the dependence of the impact of each course of action on the simultaneous and effective execution of the other courses of action. Thus, intelligence information is needed to permit the planning and mounting of operations against economic denial and sabotage targets. Covert propaganda actions are designed to produce a psychological climate in Cuba conducive to the accomplishment of the other courses of action in the integrated covert program. Only after the effects of economic denial and sabotage actions are deeply

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felt by the populace and the elite groups can one hope to convert disaffection in the armed forces and other power centers of the regime into militant revolt against the Castro/Communist entourage. It is also at this point where CIA-controlled and autonomous activist elements in the Cuban exile community can begin to assume genuine resistance proportions. As a consequence of this inter-related and continuous process, it is reasonable to expect a considerable increase in the volume and quality of the intelligence product on the basis of which additional and increasingly more effective operations can be mounted. Unless all the components of this program are executed in tandem, the individual courses of action are almost certain to be of marginal value, even in terms of achieving relatively limited policy objectives. This is clearly a case where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

II. Discussion of Components of an Integrated Program

6. In amplification of the courses of action listed in paragraph 4 above, the following additional description and terms of reference are offered:

A. Covert collection of intelligence, both for U.S. strategic requirements as well as for operational requirements.

Covert collection of intelligence continues to be a major CIA mission. Without detracting from our strategic intelligence efforts, emphasis is being given to increasing the volume and quality of intelligence needed for planning and mounting the operations contemplated in the integrated program described in this paper, particularly for defections and penetrations and for economic denial and sabotage actions against vulnerable sectors of the Cuban economy.

B. Propaganda actions to stimulate low-risk simple sabotage and other forms of active and passive resistance.

In accordance with a previously approved psychological program in support of U.S. policy on Cuba, CIA-controlled radio programs and other propaganda media directed at Cuba encourage low-risk simple sabotage and other forms of active and passive resistance. These media also seek to stimulate and exacerbate tensions within the regime and between Cuba and the Soviet Bloc, taking advantage of Sino-Soviet tensions. All of these propaganda operations are calculated to create a psychological atmosphere within Cuba which will facilitate the accomplishment of the other courses of action within the integrated covert action program.

C. Exploitation and stimulation of disaffection in the Cuban military and other power centers.

We are undertaking an intensive probing effort to identify, seek out and establish channels of communication with disaffected and potentially dissident non-Communist elements in the power centers of the regime, particularly in the armed forces hierarchy. The objective is to promote the fragmentation of the regime and possibly lead to an internal coup which would dislodge Castro and his entourage, and make it possible to eliminate the Cuban Communists from positions of power and force the withdrawal of the Soviet military presence and the termination of its economic aid. Several promising operations are already underway.

D. Economic denial actions.

Overt official U.S. economic sanctions in conjunction with covert economic denial operations . . . is [sic] causing a marked adverse effect on the Cuban economy. For maximum impact on the Cuban economy this effort must be coordinated with sabotage operations. We propose to continue and intensify economic denial operations which would be greatly enhanced by an inter-agency committee with a charter enabling it to call upon member agencies for rapid action.

E. General sabotage and harassment.

Sabotage in this program is both an economic weapon and a stimulus to resistance. As an economic weapon, it is a supplement to and therefore must be coordinated with the economic denial effort. As a stimulus to resistance, there must be visible and dramatic evidence of sabotage to serve as a symbol of growing popular defiance of the Castro regime.

These operations will be conducted either by externally held assets¹ now available or by existing internal assets or those to be developed. Assets trained and controlled by CIA will be used as will selected autonomous exile groups. Initially, the emphasis will be on the use of externally held assets with a shift to internal assets as soon as operationally feasible.

The types of sabotage considered appropriate for this program are:

- (1) Simple low-risk sabotage on a large scale stimulated by propaganda media (approved and being implemented).
- (2) Sabotage of Cuban ships outside Cuban waters (approved and being implemented).
- (3) Externally mounted hit-and-run attacks against appropriately selected targets.
- (4) Support of internal resistance elements, providing matériel and personnel to permit them to undertake a variety of sabotage and harassment operations.

It must be recognized that no single act of sabotage by itself can materially affect the economy or stimulate significant resistance. However, it is our opinion that a well-planned series of sabotage efforts, properly executed, would in time produce the effect we seek. Each action will have its dangers: there will be failures with consequent loss of life and charges of attribution to the United States resulting in criticism at home and abroad. None of these expected consequences should cause us to change our course if the program as outlined can be expected to be successful.

Annex A is an elaboration of a proposed sabotage and harassment program against Cuba.

F. Support of autonomous anti-Castro Cuban groups to supplement and assist in the execution of the above courses of action.

In the past, CIA has utilized only fully controlled and disciplined agent assets as a safeguard against unilateral and irresponsible action by Cuban exiles intent upon the liberation of their country. If sabotage and resistance activities are to be undertaken on a larger scale, it will be necessary to accept the risks involved in utilizing autonomous Cuban exile groups and individuals who will not nec-

¹Presumably a reference to Cuban emigrés.

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essarily be responsive to our guidance. CIA proposes the following "rules of engagement" to govern the conduct of these autonomous operations:

(1) It is the keystone of autonomous operations that they will be executed exclusively by Cuban nationals motivated by the conviction that the overthrow of the Castro/Communist regime must be accomplished by Cubans, both inside and outside Cuba acting in consonance.

(2) The effort will probably cost many Cuban lives. If this cost in lives becomes unacceptable to the U.S. conscience, autonomous operations can be effectively halted by the withdrawal of U.S. support; but once halted, it cannot be resumed.

(3) All autonomous operations will be mounted outside the territory of the United States.

(4) The United States Government must be prepared to deny publicly any participation in these acts no matter how loud or even how accurate may be the reports of U.S. complicity.

(5) The United States presence and direct participation in the operation would be kept to an absolute minimum. Before entering into an operational relationship with a group, the U.S. representative will make it clear that his Government has no intention of intervening militarily, except to counter intervention by the Soviets. An experienced CIA officer would be assigned to work with the group in a liaison capacity. He would provide general advice as requested as well as funds and necessary material support. He may be expected to influence but not control the conduct of operations.

(6) These operations would not be undertaken within a fixed time schedule.

III. Recommendation

7. Policy authority already exists for courses of action described in paragraph 6 A-D. In order that full advantage can be taken of an integrated covert action program, the Standing Group is requested to approve courses of action outlined in paragraph 6 E and F within the terms of reference and rules of engagement therein.²

Annex A

SUBJECT

Sabotage/Harassment Program

The broad target categories against which the sabotage/harassment operations would be mounted and a preliminary evaluation of their effect, can be summarized as follows:

A. Electric Power

Disruption of any of the existing power grids which might be effected by damage to or destruction of the generating facilities or of the critical sub-stations in the distribution network, would significantly weaken the existing economic

²On June 18 the NSC Standing Group endorsed the course of action outlined in this paper, passing it to President Kennedy the next day for final approval (see Document 16).

and social structure, particularly in view of the fact that in many areas the power now available is not adequate to meet the demands of industrial and public consumers. Smaller acts of sabotage/harassment by the populace such as throwing chains over high tension lines to short them out, would also exacerbate the current power shortage, and the cumulative effect of all such actions could cause a prolonged breakdown of the power system as there is already a shortage of spare parts and replacement matériels.

B. Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL)

Damage to or destruction of POL production and/or storage facilities would seriously affect almost all aspects of the Cuban economy. The electric power industry depends almost entirely upon POL as fuel for the generating plants and the sugar industry depends upon POL powered processing and transportation facilities as does all intra-province transportation. Production and storage facilities are susceptible to external attacks by heavy weapons or by more subtle methods if internal assets having an appropriate degree of accessibility can be developed. The loss of refining facilities could be offset by increased [Communist] Bloc shipments of refined products but such a shift would require a period of readjustment during which there would be a heavy strain on the Cuban economy. An additional burden on the Bloc refining capacity would also exist until Cuba's refining capacity is restored.

C. Transportation

Damage to or destruction of railway and/or highway rolling stock or the destruction of key bridges would lead to breakdowns in the regional economies which to a large degree are dependent on the distribution of imported products. The processing and export of the vitally important sugar crop is also entirely dependent on transportation. It is not anticipated that we could achieve that degree of disruption which would cause a collapse of the economy or social structure, but even a minor degree of disruption will adversely affect the standard of living and the output of the economy, both of which are key factors in the stability of the regime. The type of operations envisioned in this category would range from fairly sophisticated attacks by external or internal assets against the rolling stock, key bridges and repair facilities to simple low risk acts by the populace such as the derailing of rail transportation or placing tire puncturing material on highways.

D. Production Processing and Manufacturing Facilities

While the Cuban economy primarily depends on imports for indigenous consumption and even though the sugar crop is by far the most important item in Cuban exports, there are still a number of other facilities such as the nickel complex at Nicaro, cement plants, distilleries, and the myriad industries associated with the provision of food, clothing and shelter, which are worthwhile targets in that stopping or lessening their output will weaken the economy and breed discontent against the regime. These targets are particularly susceptible to attack by external or internal assets in that due to their profusion and their relatively low strategic importance they are not well guarded or otherwise secured against attack.

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The selection of specific targets within the above categories and the determination of timing and tactics will be predicated upon detailed analysis of the following factors:

1. The extent to which the target can be physically damaged.
2. The resultant effect upon the Cuban economy.
3. The cost or effort required if additional burdens are placed on Bloc support.
4. The psychological effect on the Cuban population.
5. Anticipated adverse reactions.
6. Operational capabilities and limitations of CIA assets.

16. Memorandum for the Record

JFK approves a new program of sabotage operations and other covert actions against Cuba—the CIA plan of June 8 (see the preceding document).

Washington, June 19, 1963.

SUBJECT

Meeting at the White House concerning Proposed Covert Policy and Integrated Program of Action towards Cuba

PRESENT

Higher Authority [JFK]
Secretary McNamara
Under Secretary Harriman
Mr. McCone
Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Mr. Thomas Parrott
Mr. Desmond FitzGerald
Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, General W. F. McKee

1. The program as recommended by the Standing Group of the NSC¹ was presented briefly to Higher Authority who showed a particular interest in proposed external sabotage operations. He was shown charts indicating typical targets for this program and a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages ensued. It was well recognized that there would be failures and a considerable noise level. . . . Mr. Bundy described the integrated nature of the program presented and made the point that, having made the decision to go ahead, we be prepared to take the consequences of flaps and criticisms for a sufficient period

¹See Document 15, including footnote 2.

to give the program a real chance. Mr. Harriman stated that the program would be "reviewed weekly" by the Special Group.² (It is believed that an arrangement can be made with Mr. Bundy for less detailed control by the Special Group than was indicated by Mr. Harriman.)

2. Higher Authority asked how soon we could get into action with the external sabotage program and was told that we should be able to conduct our first operation in the dark-of-the-moon period in July although he was informed that we would prefer to start the program with some caution selecting softer targets to begin with. Higher Authority said this was a matter for our judgement. Although at one stage in the discussion Higher Authority said that we should move ahead with the program "this summer" it is believed that Mr. Bundy will be able to convince him that this is not a sufficiently long trial period to demonstrate what the program can do.³

17. Memorandum of Conversation

In a secret message to JFK, Khrushchev makes clear that he is aware of the recent resumption of sabotage by the United States against Cuba. He also warns Kennedy that the Soviet Union will respond if Cuba is attacked.

Washington, September 10, 1963.

SUBJECT

United States Actions in Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR
Llewellyn E. Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large, Department of State

Ambassador Dobrynin said he had a personal message for the President, and he considered it so confidential, that he had not had it typed but would read from his handwritten notes.

He said that the Soviet Government considered that things had recently taken a turn for the better in the international situation and in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. With the signing of the Test Ban Treaty¹ and the exchange of views with Secretary Rusk,² there had developed a relax-

²It was customary for the National Security Council Special Group to oversee covert operations.

³CIA official Desmond Fitzgerald prepared this memorandum.

¹An agreement limiting nuclear testing, signed in Moscow on August 5, 1963, by Rusk, Gromyko, and British Foreign Secretary Lord Home.

²Presumably a reference to Rusk's talks with Khrushchev and other Soviet officials in August 1963.

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ation of tension and the prerequisite for the settlement of other questions had been established. This could lead to a real turning point, and the end of the cold war. The Soviet Union took satisfaction from the willingness of the United States to look for the solution of other international problems. If both countries were determined to accomplish this, it was important that nothing be done contrary to this intention. The Soviets wished to tell the President, frankly, what was of concern to them. There were certain facts which did not fit in with the situation and these were the provocative actions against Cuba, which had increased in recent weeks. Unknown planes had shelled industrial establishments and there had been landings of saboteurs on the Cuban coast. These actions had been intensified after the conclusion of the nuclear Test Ban treaty. It had been stated that the United States had nothing to do with these actions, but no one could believe this. When the United States took a position against the attacks on Soviet ships in Cuban waters,³ these attacks had stopped. This action had been understood by the Soviet Union as a measure showing the good intentions of the United States. How then could these recent actions be interpreted? If such attacks continued—and they could only be taken from the United States proper or from countries allied with the United States and with the knowledge and connivance of the United States—this could only lead to a new crisis.

The Soviet Union did not want a new crisis to emerge. Both sides had expressed their satisfaction over the elimination of the last crisis, which had been resolved after each side had undertaken certain commitments. The President had said that these commitments should be carried out. The Soviets agreed with this. They believed that for the future of our relations, it was important that effective measures be taken to stop the piratic attacks against Cuba. The Soviet Union had undertaken certain commitments in respect to the protection of the independence of Cuba which were aimed exclusively at preventing Cuba from becoming a victim of aggression, and the Soviet Union would certainly fulfill its commitments if aggression were unleashed against Cuba.

The Soviet Union hoped for understanding of the motives that prompted them to convey to the President, personally from N. S. Khrushchev, this assessment of the effect of the activation lately of provocative actions against Cuba.⁴

18. Memorandum of Conversation Prepared by Ambassador-at-Large Llewellyn E. Thompson

Responding to Khrushchev's September 10 message, JFK tries to change the subject from sabotage against Cuba to Cuban subversion in Latin America.

³Probably a reference to the matter addressed in Document 6, footnote 3.

⁴Llewellyn Thompson drafted this memorandum.

(continued from front flap)

1963: *Old Tactics, New Approaches*

333

Washington, September 13, 1963.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR
Llewellyn E. Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large, Department of State

I made the oral statement which is attached hereto. . . .

The Ambassador [Dobrynin] said he hoped that Mr. Khrushchev's motives in raising this question were understood. He said that the Chairman believed it was to our mutual interest to reduce tension in the Caribbean and to avoid a crisis over the Cuban problem.

I said I was sure that the President did understand, and thought that our position was clear from the statement which I had just made to him.

Attachment

ORAL STATEMENT

The President wished Mr. Khrushchev to know that he shares his view that the signing of the Test Ban Treaty¹ and the recent exchange of views with the Soviet Government is encouraging, and he hopes it will be possible to proceed to the solution of other problems. The President is hopeful that the Test Ban Treaty will be approved by the United States Senate in the course of next week.²

With respect to the Cuban situation, the President also agrees that the emergence of a new crisis would be in the interest neither of the Soviet Union nor of the United States, and can assure him that the United States will faithfully carry out its commitments.

With respect to any air attacks on Cuba, it can be stated categorically that not only was the United States not involved in any way in such attacks, but has been making every effort to prevent them. It is possible, but not likely, that a light private aircraft could take off from one of the large number of private fields in the southeastern portion of the United States. No such illegal flights have been detected by the means available to us. The President has directed, however, that the measures already taken be reviewed to see what further steps could be taken.

In keeping with the March 30, 1963 declaration by the Departments of State and Justice concerning hit and run attacks by Cuban exile groups against targets in Cuba, the law enforcement agencies are taking vigorous measures to assure that the pertinent laws of the United States are observed.

Apparently it is assumed that the United States exercises control over the policies and actions of the other sovereign, independent states of this Hemisphere. This assumption betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the relationship between the United States and the other American Republics. The

¹See Document 17, footnote 1.

²The Senate did ratify the treaty in September, by a vote of 80 to 19.

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history of inter-American relations makes abundantly clear that the American Governments will not tolerate interference with their foreign or domestic affairs. The states of this Hemisphere jealously defend the principle of juridical equality of states and reject any insinuation that difference of size and power in any way modifies this fundamental rule governing their relations.

The United States could, of course, consult with any government in this Hemisphere from whose territory we have information indicating that flights were originating against Cuba, but, in all candor, we must point out that such consultation would be greatly complicated by the increasing sense of outrage among the governments of this Hemisphere about Cuba's deliberate stimulation and support of subversive activities throughout the Hemisphere in direct violation of international norms. This is not simply a matter of speeches or words by Castro, as has sometimes been indicated. Clear evidence of Cuban involvement in this form of aggression is to be found in the fact that:

a) The Cuban Government is recruiting Latin Americans, sending them to Cuba for training in guerrilla tactics and returning them to their countries to engage in terroristic activities. A case in point are the Cuban-trained Peruvians captured on May 14 and 15, 1963, at Puerto Maldonado as they attempted clandestinely to enter Peru from Bolivia.

b) The Cuban Government is furnishing funds to revolutionary groups seeking the overthrow of governments by force and violence. By way of illustration, in May 1963, two leading members of the Ecuadorean Communist Party, Jose Maria Roura and Alejandro Roman were seized as they were returning to Ecuador. They were carrying over \$30,000 which they confessed had been given them by Chinese and Cuban sources.

c) The Cuban leaders continue to exhort revolutionaries in Latin American countries to resort to sabotage, terrorism and guerrilla action. Premier Castro returned to this theme in his July twenty-sixth address when he called on activists in Venezuela and other countries to "open the breach" and begin fighting. Major Ernesto Guevara, in an article published in the September issue of *Cuba Socialista*, strongly advocates guerrilla warfare as the surest road to power in Latin America. Information available to us shows a direct connection between terroristic activities in Venezuela and the Castro regime. In addition to being guilty of such aggression against other American Republics by promoting these and other activities, the Cuban Government recently embarked on a most risky venture of direct violation of the territory and territorial waters of another country in this Hemisphere using units of its armed forces. On August 14, 1963, a Cuban helicopter and two patrol boats furnished by the Soviet Union forcibly removed from Cay Anguila, one of the islands of the Bahamas group, nineteen persons who had sought refuge on the island. This incident led to a vigorous protest by the British Government on August 21, 1963, requesting an apology and return of the persons taken prisoners.

In sum, it is not the United States, but the behavior of the Castro regime that is to blame for the difficulties in the Caribbean area.

19. Memorandum of Conversation at the White House

In a meeting with the Soviet foreign minister, JFK again learns of Moscow's cognizance of the sabotage being carried out against Cuba. Kennedy and Gromyko also discuss the final withdrawal of all Soviet military personnel from the Caribbean island.

Washington, October 10, 1963, 4 p.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

US

The President
The Secretary [Rusk]
Ambassador Thompson
Assistant Secretary Tyler
Mr. Akalovsky

USSR

Foreign Minister Gromyko
Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov
Ambassador Dobrynin
Mr. Sukhodrev, Foreign Ministry

Mr. Gromyko recalled the President's remark about Soviet personnel in Cuba and said that, as Mr. Khrushchev had told Mr. Harriman,¹ there were now no Soviet troops in Cuba. The Soviet personnel now in Cuba were specialists training the Cubans in the use of arms supplied by the USSR. When this limited task was accomplished these would be withdrawn. As to what had been done in Cuba so far, there was no need to repeat that now because the President was informed on this matter. The Soviet Government was acting in Cuba on the basis of the understanding the President and Mr. Khrushchev had reached in their correspondence.²

The President asked how many Soviet military specialists would remain in Cuba in, say, six months.

Mr. Gromyko said that he was unable to answer this question. He preferred not to speak in terms of dates but he wished to ask the President to understand that the USSR had in Cuba only military specialists with a limited mission.

The President commented that it would be helpful if, when the specialists

¹This was presumably during Harriman's talks in Moscow in July 1963 regarding the nuclear test-ban treaty.

²Namely, their correspondence at the end of the missile crisis.

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were completely withdrawn, Mr. Khrushchev were to consider making a statement to that effect.

Mr. Gromyko said he would inform Mr. Khrushchev about this. However he suggested that the President take into account the difficulty of mentioning specific dates. So if Mr. Khrushchev did not mention any dates, this did not mean that specialists would stay forever.

The President said this might be so, but perhaps Mr. Khrushchev could make such a statement to one of the visiting newsmen in terms of an accomplished fact.

Mr. Gromyko said that he did not think there was any need to remind the President that Cuba was being subjected to constant pressure and provocation on the part of some forces which engaged even in such things as sending planes with bombs. The President probably knew better than he, Gromyko, who those forces were. The Soviet Government was convinced that if the US Government and the President personally wished to stop these activities, they would cease immediately.

The President said we believed we had stopped harassment by planes and had given warning, although perhaps if someone was close enough he could still fly in and drop a bomb. In any event, he did not see any benefit to the US from harassment. This would not unseat Castro and serve no useful purpose.

Mr. Gromyko commented that those air raids must be originating somewhere. If they originated outside the US, they could be stopped too, because the USSR had a high opinion of US influence in Latin America.

The President said we were not sure that the planes came from Latin America. Of two recent flights over Cuba, one has perhaps come from Central America, and some plane may have come even from Florida. We tried to stop the planes, but there were many fields in Florida, light planes were used and it was very difficult to keep them under control.

The Secretary [Rusk] recalled his remarks to Mr. Gromyko about activities in the other direction,³ noting this made it more difficult for us to deal with this situation. He also observed that the Chinese may be involved in this matter.

Mr. Gromyko asserted that the USSR had no information about such activities. If the US regarded speeches by Castro or other Cuban leaders as subversive, then Soviet speeches about capitalism and US speeches about communism were also subversive. In any event, the USSR had no information about any subversive activities from Cuba.⁴ . . .

³A reference to Cuban subversion in Latin America.

⁴Akalovsky drafted this memorandum.

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20. Memorandum from U.S. Delegate at the UN William Attwood to Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff

By the autumn of 1963 the Kennedy administration was pursuing a two-track policy toward Castro. While sabotage activities against Cuba continued, an effort was under way to develop a secret dialogue with Castro, with a view to achieving some sort of accommodation between Havana and Washington. UN official William Attwood, formerly an editor of Look magazine, was a key figure in this diplomatic endeavor. Here he recounts his role in the period from August through early November 1963.

New York, November 8, 1963.

Following is a chronology of events leading up to Castro's invitation on October 31, to receive a U.S. official for talks in Cuba:

Soon after joining the U.S. Mission to the U.N. on August 26, I met Seydou Diallo, the Guinea Ambassador to Havana, whom I had known well in Conakry.¹ He went out of his way to tell me that Castro was isolated from contact with neutralist diplomats by his "Communist entourage" because it was known he was unhappy with Cuba's satellite status and looking for a way out. He, Diallo, had finally been able to see Castro alone once and was convinced he was personally receptive to changing courses and getting Cuba on the road to non-alignment. Diallo added that the exile raids [on Cuba] were an obstacle since they strengthened the hand of the hard-liners both with Castro and the public.

In the first week of September, I also read ABC correspondent, Lisa Howard's article, "Castro's Overture,"² based on her conversation with Castro last April. This article stressed Castro's expressed desire for reaching an accommodation with the United States and his willingness to make substantial concessions to this end.³ On September 12, I talked with Miss Howard, whom I have known for some years, and she echoed Ambassador Diallo's opinion that there was a rift between Castro and the Guevara-Hart-Alveida group⁴ on the question of Cuba's future course.

On September 12, I discussed this with Under Secretary Harriman in Washington. He suggested I prepare a memo and we arranged to meet in New York the following week.

On September 18, I wrote a memorandum based on these talks and on corroborating information I had heard in Conakry. In it I suggested that discreet

¹Attwood had been U.S. ambassador to Guinea from March 1961 to May 1963.

²In *War/Peace Report*, September 1963.

³Cuban officials had expressed an interest in improved relations with the United States on several occasions. See Mark J. White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York, 1996), pp. 51-53.

⁴A reference to various senior Cuban political figures.

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contact might be established with the Cubans at the United Nations to find out whether Castro in fact wanted to talk, and on our terms. I showed this memo to Ambassador Stevenson, who felt the matter was worth exploring quietly and who indicated he might discuss it with the President.

On September 19, I met Harriman in New York. After reading my memo, he suggested I also discuss it with the Attorney-General [Robert Kennedy] because of the political implications of the Cuban issue.

On September 20, I made an appointment with the Attorney-General in Washington. Meanwhile, Stevenson obtained the President's approval for me to make discreet contact with Dr. Lechuga, Cuba's chief delegate at the United Nations.

On September 23, I met Dr. Lechuga at Miss Howard's apartment. She has been on good terms with Lechuga since her visit with Castro and invited him for a drink to meet [sic] some friends who had also been to Cuba. I was just one of those friends. In the course of our conversation, which started with recollections of my own talks with Castro in 1959, I mentioned having read Miss Howard's article. Lechuga hinted that Castro was indeed in a mood to talk, especially with someone he had met before. He thought there was a good chance that I might be invited to Cuba if I wished to resume our 1959 talk. I told him that in my present position, I would need official authorization to make such a trip, and did not know if it would be forthcoming. However, I said an exchange of views might well be useful and that I would find out and let him know.

On September 24, I saw the Attorney-General in Washington, gave him my September 18 memo, and reported my meeting with Lechuga. He said he would pass the memo on to Mr. McGeorge Bundy; meanwhile, he thought that it would be difficult for me to visit Cuba without it being known and risking the accusation that we were trying to make a deal with Castro. He wondered if it might be possible to meet Castro—if that's what he wanted—in another country, such as Mexico, or at the United Nations. Meanwhile, he agreed it would be useful to maintain contact with Lechuga. I said I would so inform Lechuga and wait to hear from him or Bundy.

Back in New York, I informed Stevenson of my talk with Lechuga and the Attorney-General.

On September 27, I ran into Lechuga at the United Nations, where he was doing a television interview in the lobby with Miss Howard. I told him that I had discussed our talk in Washington, and that it was felt that my accepting an invitation to go to Cuba would be difficult under present circumstances, especially in view of my official status. I added, however, that if Castro or a personal emissary had something to tell us, we were prepared to meet him and listen wherever else would be convenient. Lechuga said he would so inform Havana. Meanwhile, he forewarned me that he would be making a "hard" anti-U.S. speech in the United Nations on October 7. I remarked that it wouldn't help reduce tensions; he replied he couldn't help making it because of the "blockade."⁵

On October 7, in his reply to Lechuga's tough speech, Stevenson suggested

⁵Perhaps a reference to the American economic embargo on Cuba, imposed in February 1962.

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that if Castro wanted peace with his neighbors, he need only do three things—stop being a Soviet stooge, stop trying to subvert other nations, and start carrying out the promises of his revolution regarding constitutional rights.

On October 18, at dinner at the home of Mrs. Eugene Meyer, I talked with Mr. C. A. Doxiades, a noted Greek architect and town-planner, who had just returned from an architects' congress in Havana, where he had talked alone to both Castro and Guevara, among others. He sought me out, as a government official, to say he was convinced Castro would welcome a normalization of relations with the United States if he could do so without losing too much face. He also said that Guevara and the other communists were opposed to any deal, and regarded Castro as dangerously unreliable; and that they would get rid of Castro if they thought they could carry on without him and retain his popular support.

On October 20, Miss Howard asked me if she might call Major Rene Vallejo, a Cuban surgeon who is also Castro's current right-hand man and confidant. She said Vallejo helped her see Castro and made it plain to her he opposed the Guevara group. They became friends and have talked on the phone several times since the interview. Miss Howard's purpose in calling him now was that she thought any message from Lechuga would not get past the foreign office, and she wanted to make certain, through Vallejo, that Castro knew there was a U.S. official available if he wanted to talk. I told her to go ahead, so long as she referred to my talk with Lechuga and made it quite plain we were not soliciting a meeting but only expressing our willingness to listen to anything they had to say. She then called Vallejo at his home. He was out and she left word for him to call her back.

On October 21, Gordon Chase called me from the White House in connection with my September 18 memo. I brought him up to date and said the ball was in their court.

On October 23, Vallejo called Miss Howard at her New York apartment. She was out of town; he left word with the maid that he would call again.

On October 28, I ran into Lechuga in the U.N. Delegates Lounge. He told me that Havana did not think sending someone to the United Nations for talks would be "useful at this time." But he hoped he and I might have some informal chats from time to time. I said it was up to him and he could call me if he felt like it. He wrote down my extension.

On October 29, Vallejo again called Miss Howard at home. He assured her, in response to her question, that Castro still felt as he did in April about improving relations with us. As to his going to the United Nations or elsewhere for such a talk, Vallejo said it was impossible for Castro to leave the country at the present time. But he said he would relay her message to Castro (that there was now a U.S. official authorized to listen to him), and would call her back soon.

On October 31, Vallejo called Miss Howard, apologizing for the delay and saying he had been out of town with Castro and "could not get to a phone from which I could call you." He said Castro would very much like to talk to the U.S. official anytime and appreciated the importance of discretion to all concerned. Castro would therefore be willing to send a plane to Mexico to pick up the official and fly him to a private airport near Veradero where Castro would talk to

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him alone. The plane would fly him back immediately after the talk. In this way there would be no risk of identification at Havana airport. Miss Howard said she doubted if a U.S. official could come to Cuba but perhaps he, Vallejo, could come and see the official at the U.N. or in Mexico, as Castro's personal spokesman. Vallejo replied that Castro wanted to do the talking himself but did not completely rule out this situation if there was no other way of engaging a dialogue. It was agreed Miss Howard would relay the invitation to me and call Vallejo back as soon as possible with our reply. At this point she identified me as the U.S. official. Vallejo asked for the spelling, and recalled having met me in 1959 (I do not remember him). Miss Howard got the impression that Lechuga's previous message to Havana had not reached Vallejo or Castro.

On November 1, Miss Howard reported the Vallejo call to me and I repeated it to Chase on November 4.

On November 5, I met with Bundy and Chase at the White House and informed them of the foregoing. The next day, Chase called and asked me to put it in writing.

21. Memorandum for the Record

CIA Director McCone presents an update on the situation in Cuba, and JFK and his advisers evaluate their sabotage program.

Washington, November 12, 1963, 10:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting on Policy Relating to Cuba—10:30 a.m.—12 Nov 63

IN ATTENDANCE

The President, Secty. McNamara, Secty. Rusk, Secty. Gilpatric, Attorney General [Robert Kennedy], Secty. Vance, General Taylor, Mr. Bundy, Secty. Johnson, Mr. McCone, Mr. Helms, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Shackley

McCone opened the meeting with a brief résumé of conditions in Cuba along these lines:

1. Cuba still belongs to Castro though his grip is weakening.
2. The military remain essentially loyal to Castro with some evidences of disension and dissidents which are being exploited by CIA.
3. The internal security forces and apparatus are effective and show evidence of increasing efficiency.
4. The economy is bad and is deteriorating, causing increasing hardships to the civilian population. . . .

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5. The Soviets are continuing a gradual withdrawal. No organized Soviet units appear in Cuba although they apparently provide principal manning for the SAMs. There are recent evidences of considerable rotation with between 1,000 and 2,000 new arrivals, but in balance there is a decrease.

6. Training of Cubans continues on all Soviet equipment including the SAMs. It is not clear whether the SAMs will be turned over to full Cuban control; however it is clear the Cubans will supply the majority of the operating personnel.

7. The only equipment which has been withdrawn has been the advanced C-band radar for the SAMs and certain communication equipment. No military equipment has been withdrawn. There have been some recent new arrivals of military equipment, particularly between 25 and 50 tanks.

McCone then stated that the program which had been followed for the last several months, having been approved about the first of June,¹ was integrated and interdependent one part on the other and therefore should be considered as a comprehensive program and not a number of independent actions.

FitzGerald then made a presentation.²

With respect to sabotage, McCone stated that no one event will particularly affect the economy. However a continuous program will have its effects on the economy and it will encourage internal sabotage by dissident people within Cuba. There have been 109 events since April which were probably internally-inspired sabotage.

The President then raised the question of the sabotage program; whether it was worthwhile and whether it would accomplish our purpose.

Secretary Rusk then spoke at considerable length, the thrust of his remarks being opposed to sabotage. He stated we should concentrate on obtaining information as to what Castro is doing with respect to other countries, particularly sending arms to Latin American countries. Rusk said we must replace Castro; we must accomplish a reduction in Soviet troops, however sabotage might result in an increase in troops. Rusk had no problem with infiltration of black teams; furthermore internal sabotage gave him no problem and the more of this, the better. In addition he strongly supported our economic efforts. However he opposed the hit-and-run sabotage tactics as being unproductive, complicating our relationships with the Soviets and also with our friends and indicated a connection between our sabotage activities and the autobahn problem.³

McCone observed that infiltration was difficult, internal sabotage was extremely difficult to stimulate but that external hit-and-run sabotage had the effect of automatically stimulating internal sabotage.

McNamara could see no connection between the Cuban operations and the Berlin autobahn incidents. He saw many advantages to going ahead which he advocated but ordered a careful watch.

¹This was the sabotage program approved by JFK on June 19, 1963. See Documents 15 and 16.

²FitzGerald's presentation was a progress report on the six-point covert program proposed by the CIA on June 8 and endorsed by JFK eleven days later. See Documents 15 and 16.

³In early November the Russians had harassed traffic en route to Berlin, detaining a British and American convoy for nearly two days before allowing it to proceed down the Autobahn.

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The President asked questions concerning the immediate operations, and the next one on the schedule was approved.⁴ . . .

22. Memorandum for the Record Prepared by the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy

A memorandum by his national security adviser indicates that JFK was interested in generating a dialogue with Castro via intermediaries, though he did not want the talks to commence in Cuba.

Washington, November 12, 1963.

I talked this afternoon with William Attwood and told him that at the President's instruction I was conveying this message orally and not by cable. I told him that the President hoped he would get in touch with Vallejo to report that it did not seem practicable to us at this stage to send an American official to Cuba and that we would prefer to begin with a visit by Vallejo to the U.S. where Attwood would be glad to see him and to listen to any messages he might bring from Castro. In particular, we would be interested in knowing whether there was any prospect of important modification in those parts of Castro's policy which are flatly unacceptable to us: namely, the three points in Ambassador Stevenson's recent speech¹ of which the central elements are (1) submission to external Communist influence, and (2) a determined campaign of subversion directed at the rest of the Hemisphere. Reversals of these policies may or may not be sufficient to produce a change in the policy of the United States, but they are certainly necessary, and without an indication of readiness to move in these directions, it is hard for us to see what could be accomplished by a visit to Cuba.

I left it to Attwood how much of this he would convey in the initial message to Vallejo, and I also gave him discretion as to how this message was to be transmitted, with the proviso that it must be clear at all times that we were not supplicants in this matter and that the initiative for exploratory conversations was coming from the Cubans. Attwood indicated to me that he expected Lisa Howard to telephone Vallejo and then probably to get on the line himself to handle the conversation along the lines stated above. Attwood will report the results of this communication and in the event that an arrangement is made for Vallejo to come to New York Attwood will come to Washington to concert a position for his use in this conversation.

⁴McCone produced this memorandum.

¹Delivered October 7.

(continued from front flap)

23. Memorandum from Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs
McGeorge Bundy

On the day of John Kennedy's assassination in Dallas, William Attwood records the developments that had taken place during the final days of the Kennedy presidency regarding the attempt to hold private discussions with Cuban officials. What might be called the Attwood initiative raises the question whether relations between Washington and Havana would have improved had JFK not been assassinated.

Washington, November 25, 1963.

SUBJECT

Cuba—Bill Attwood

1. Attached is an unsolicited chronology from Bill Attwood which describes the activities of the Cuba—Attwood tie-line from November 11 to the present. Apparently, the memo was dispatched on November 22, but because of the recent events,¹ did not reach us until today.

Attachment

Memorandum From William Attwood to Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff

New York, November 22, 1963.

Following is an addition to my memorandum to you dated November 8, 1963:²

On November 11, Vallejo called Miss Howard again to reiterate their appreciation of the need for security and to say that Castro would go along with any arrangements we might want to make. He specifically suggested that a Cuban plane could come to Key West and pick up the emissary; alternatively they would agree to have him come in a U.S. plane which could land at one of several "secret airfields" near Havana. He emphasized that only Castro and himself would be present at the talks and that no one else—he specifically mentioned Guevara—would be involved. Vallejo also reiterated Castro's desire for this talk and hoped to hear our answer soon.

On November 12, Bundy called me and I reported Vallejo's message. He said this did not affect the White House decision that a preliminary talk with Vallejo

¹Namely, the assassination of JFK in Dallas on November 22.

²See Document 20.

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at the United Nations should be held in order to find out what Castro wanted to talk about—particularly if he was seriously interested in discussing the points cited in Stevenson's October 7 speech.³ Bundy suggested I transmit our decision to Vallejo, stressing the fact that, since we are responding to their invitation and are not soliciting a meeting, we would like to know more about what is on Castro's mind before committing ourselves to further talks in Cuba.

On November 13, I went to Miss Howard's apartment and called Vallejo at home. There was no answer. She then sent a telegram asking that he call her at his convenience.

On November 14, Vallejo called her. She gave him my message—that we would want to talk to him here at the United Nations before accepting an invitation to go to Cuba. She said that, if he wished to confirm or discuss this further with the U.S. official, he could call him (Vallejo) at home on the evening of November 18. Vallejo said he would be there to receive the call. Meanwhile, he did not exclude the possibility of his coming to the United Nations and said he would discuss it with Castro.

On November 18, Miss Howard reached Vallejo at home and passed the phone to me. I told him Miss Howard had kept me informed of her talks with him and that I assumed he knew of our interest in hearing what Castro had in mind. Vallejo said he did, and reiterated the invitation to Cuba, stressing the fact that security could be guaranteed. I replied that we felt a preliminary meeting was essential to make sure there was something useful to talk about, and asked if he was able to come to New York. Vallejo said he could not come "at this time." However, if that's how we felt, he said that "we" would send instructions to Lechuga to propose and discuss with me "an agenda" for a later meeting with Castro. I said I would await Lechuga's call. Vallejo's manner was extremely cordial and he called me "Sir" throughout the conversation.

On November 19, I called Chase, and reported the conversation.

³If Castro wanted peaceful relations with his neighbors, Stevenson had asserted, he needed to cut ties with Moscow, end his subversive activities in Latin America, and provide basic constitutional rights for his people.

Index

- Acheson, Dean G., 174, 184, 185
Act of Bogota, 22
Adenauer, Konrad, 175, 270–271
Akalovsky, Alexander A., 59
Alliance for Progress, 53, 64, 67, 68
Anderson, George W., 159, 197
Argentina, 67–68
Attwood, William, 302, 337–340, 342–344
- Ball, George W.: during missile crisis, 165, 173, 179, 184, 191, 193, 217, 229, 230, 234n. 235; after missile crisis, 290, 320
Barnes, C. Tracy, 16–17, 54–55, 65, 69
Batista, Fulgencio, 25, 34, 60, 61, 117
Bay of Pigs operation, 89, 100, 182; air strikes during, 26, 28–29, 30, 31; assessed by John Kennedy, 30–31, 182, 223–224; CIA during, 4, 9, 16, 17–18, 19, 20–21, 25, 28–29, 33, 39–40; compared to Operation Mongoose, 71, 108; consequences of, 45, 65, 88, 95; John Kennedy during, 4–5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16–17, 19–21, 22, 26, 28–29, 30–31, 33, 34–35, 37–38, 44, 50; Robert Kennedy during, 30, 33, 35–36, 37–38, 43–44; opposition to, 9, 13, 16n, 19–20, 22–24, 25. *See also*
- Covert operations; Operation Mongoose.
Bell, David, 19
Berle, Adolf A., 19, 25
Berlin, 7, 58, 152, 160; as potential Soviet target, 39, 120, 140, 142, 144, 162, 173, 175, 177, 179, 191, 196, 197, 199, 200, 202, 206, 212–213, 235, 257, 306, 341
Bissell, Richard M.: during Bay of Pigs operation, 21, 26, 28, 29; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 54–55, 65; during Operation Mongoose, 74, 98
Board of National Estimates, 136–138, 142
Bohlen, Charles E., 173–174, 175, 178, 188
Bolshakov, Georgi, 283, 295n, 297, 298n
Bowles, Chester, 22–24, 37, 43–44, 49–50
Brazil, 68, 218–219, 281
Bundy, McGeorge, 9, 306, 309, 330–331; during Bay of Pigs operation, 16–17, 28, 116; and dialogue with Castro, 338, 340, 342–344; during missile crisis, 169, 172, 178, 184, 185, 186, 189, 190, 192, 219, 220, 230–231, 233, 244; during Operation Mongoose, 135, 140, 157, 166n, 171
Bundy, William P., 21

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History at
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JPI/Corbis

- Burke, Arleigh A., 21, 33, 50, 51, 61-62
 Bush, George, 9
- Cabell, Charles P., 28, 31
 Califano, Joseph A., 313
 Canada, 93, 125, 142
 Capehart, Homer E., 182, 211
 Cardona, José Miró, 26
 Caribbean Survey Group, 97-98, 111
 Carter, Marshall S., 143, 163
 Castro, Fidel, 4, 5, 283; character of, 320; as CIA assassination target, 68-69, 120n; commitment to communism, 16, 25, 35-36, 60, 61, 64, 68, 117, 136-137, 337; explores dialogue with U.S., 6, 302, 337, 339-340, 343-344; image of, 23, 57, 62, 67-68, 71, 78, 101, 104, 155; Khrushchev on, 24-25, 60, 61; during missile crisis, 241; rejects UN inspectors, 249, 255n, 256, 258, 269, 271, 275-276, 280, 287, 288, 291, 296. *See also* Cuba; Latin America.
 Castro, Raul, 69
 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA): during Bay of Pigs operation, 4, 9, 16, 17-18, 19, 20-21, 25, 28-29, 33, 39-40; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 52, 54-58, 62-63, 66-67, 73, 81, 143; criticisms of, 39-40; after missile crisis, 301, 306-307, 309-310, 313, 324-330; during Operation Mongoose, 72, 75-77, 78, 82-83, 84, 86, 87, 89-90, 91-93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 108, 109, 113, 120, 123-126, 128, 135-136, 145, 146-149, 157, 166; plots to assassinate Castro, 68-69, 120n
 Chase, Gordon, 306-307, 309-310, 337-340, 343-344
 Cheever, Bruce, 157
 Chile, 68
 China, People's Republic of, 5
 CINCLANT (Commander-in-Chief Atlantic), 27-28; and invasion planning, 44-49, 50, 53-54, 166, 282-283, 324
 Clifford, Clark, 15
 Clinton, Bill, 9
 Coerr, Wymberly, 69
 Colombia, 68
 Communism, 47, 59, 63, 105-106, 221; Castro's commitment to, 16, 25, 35-36, 60, 61, 64, 68, 117, 136-137, 337; U.S. fears of, 10, 17, 35, 41-43, 45, 151, 320. *See also* Kennedy administration, Cuba regarded as threat to Latin America by.
 Congo, 34, 36
 Congress, 173, 175, 177, 179, 199-201; Cuba resolutions in, 160-161, 172, 203, 205
 Cordier, Andrew, 169, 240
 Cottrell, Sterling J., 316-319
 Covert operations: before Bay of Pigs operation, 16-17; after Bay of Pigs operation, 54-58, 62-63, 65-67, 68-69, 73-74, 75-77, 81, 82; after missile crisis, 6, 301, 306-307, 309-310, 313, 315-319, 324-331, 340-342; proposals for, 36, 71, 100-105, 112, 141, 317-319. *See also* Bay of Pigs operation; Operation Mongoose.
 Craig, William H., during Operation Mongoose, 89, 95, 100-105, 111-115, 120
 Cuba: relations with Organization of American States (OAS), 5, 16, 17, 46, 52-53, 68, 78, 83, 87, 90, 91, 93, 100, 118, 125, 129, 147, 150, 155, 159, 205, 288; relations with Soviet Union after missile crisis, 268, 275, 303, 304, 307, 315-317, 320, 332, 341; Soviet military buildup in, 5, 10, 32, 35, 36, 45, 52, 111, 133, 136-138, 140, 141-144, 149-150, 152-156, 157-159, 164-165, 166, 181, 182, 183, 221-222, 224, 226-227, 228, 242, 294. *See also* Kennedy

- administration; Soviet Union; United States.
- Cuban exiles: during Bay of Pigs operation, 4, 13, 15, 17-18, 19, 20, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34, 41, 182; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 46, 52, 56, 62-63, 75-78, 95-96; after missile crisis, 270, 303-304, 309-310, 311, 313, 316, 318, 319, 323, 325-326, 327-328, 333; during Operation Mongoose, 82, 83, 85, 86, 89-90, 94, 96, 101, 104, 113, 115, 122, 124, 126, 139, 144-145, 147, 148, 156, 157
- Cuban Revolutionary Council, 20, 26, 52, 56, 57-58, 75, 148
- Czechoslovakia, 24, 35
- De Gaulle, Charles, 175
- Dean, Patrick H., 240
- Defense Department. *See* Department of Defense.
- Defense Production Act of 1950, 93
- Dennison, Robert L., 27-28, 53-54
- Department of Commerce, 93
- Department of Defense, 55, 69; during Bay of Pigs operation, 16-17, 38-39, 40; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 52; during Operation Mongoose, 78, 82, 84, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 97n, 98, 100-105, 107, 109, 120, 121, 126, 128-131, 143-144, 145, 147, 148, 163, 166. *See also* Joint Chiefs of Staff; McNamara, Robert S.
- Department of Justice, 84
- Department of State, 40, 55, 69, 73, 212, 252-253; during Bay of Pigs operation, 16-17, 19-20, 30, 31, 33, 37-38; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 53, 66; during Operation Mongoose, 72, 78, 82, 83-84, 89, 90-91, 92, 93, 95, 97n, 98, 100, 107-108, 109, 115, 120, 124, 125, 128, 130, 143-144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 157, 163, 166. *See also* Rusk, Dean.
- Diallo, Seydou, 337
- Dillon, C. Douglas, 320; during missile crisis, 178, 184, 185, 189, 190, 191, 196, 197, 217, 220, 230
- Dobrynin, Anatoly F., 10, 152-153, 182, 183, 202, 297n, 331-332; relationship with Robert Kennedy during missile crisis, 169, 210-212, 237-240, 245, 247-248; relationship with Robert Kennedy after missile crisis, 249, 251-253, 255-256, Dobrynin, 261-262, 269-272, 274-277, 295n, 311-312
- Dominican Republic, 113
- Droller, G., 54-55
- Dulles, Allen W., 51, 58n, 75; during Bay of Pigs operation, 16-17, 30, 33; replaced as CIA director, 9, 77n
- Ecuador, 68
- Eisenhower, Dwight D., 172, 199; policies toward Cuba, 4, 15, 25n, 68
- Europe, 23, 123, 173, 175, 176, 197, 212
- ExComm (Executive Committee of the National Security Council): air strikes discussed by, 169-170, 173-175, 177-179, 184-185, 186, 188-190, 191, 193, 198, 216, 220, 232, 233-234, 235, 306; blockade discussed by, 169-170, 173-175, 178, 179, 183-194, 197, 198, 209, 216-220, 306; diplomacy discussed by, 173-175, 177-178, 179, 196, 197-198, 218-220, 232; discussions after missile crisis, 249, 285-286, 289-290; invasion of Cuba discussed by, 178, 185, 191, 197, 198, 233, 234, 235; Khrushchev's proposals discussed by, 229-235; presidential speech discussed by, 195-196; receives information that Soviet ships are turning back, 212; receives Khrushchev's acceptance of

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Univer-
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- ExComm (*cont.*)
 John Kennedy's proposals, 244-245;
 removal of U.S. missiles from
 Turkey discussed by, 229-232, 233,
 234, 235
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI),
 82, 83, 84, 92
- Feklisov, Aleksandr, 220, 286, 297n
- Finletter, Thomas K., 213, 230
- Formosa, 120
- France, 193, 196, 197
- Fronzizi, Arturo, 67-68
- Fulbright, J. William, 25, 201
- Giglio, James, 7
- Gilpatrick, Roswell L., 23; during
 missile crisis, 173, 185, 190, 231;
 during Operation Mongoose, 81,
 98, 100, 116, 121, 163
- Goldberg, Arthur, 37, 51
- Goldwater, Barry M., 154
- Goodwin, Richard N.: during Bay of
 Pigs operation, 44, 50; during Bay
 of Pigs aftermath, 73-74; chairs
 Task Force on Cuba, 53, 54, 65-67;
 conversation with Guevara, 63-65;
 during Operation Mongoose, 78,
 79, 89
- Goulart, Joao, 68
- Gray, David W., 20, 26
- Great Britain, 26, 125, 227, 314, 323,
 334
- Greece, 142, 191
- Gromyko, Andrei A.: during missile
 crisis, 10, 176, 179, 180-183, 204,
 211-212, 223, 247; relationship
 with John-Kennedy, 176, 179,
 180-183, 204, 211, 223, 335-336
- Guantanamo Naval Base, 24, 48, 54,
 65, 95, 135, 151, 162, 264; in
 discussions of covert operations, 36,
 103-104, 112, 141, 142; during
 missile crisis, 188, 192, 197-198,
 205
- Guatemala, 113; Cuban exiles in, 15,
 16, 19, 20, 30
- Guevara, Ernesto "Che," 13, 63-65, 69,
 305, 334, 337, 338, 339, 343
- Haiti, 113
- Halberstam, David, 3
- Halleck, Charles, 200
- Hare, Raymond, 213
- Harriman, W. Averell, 331, 335, 337
- Harris, Benjamin T., 123
- Harvey, William K., 120, 123, 136-138,
 157
- Havana Treaty, 307
- Hawkins, Jack, 25
- Helms, Richard M., 310; during
 Operation Mongoose, 86, 89, 95,
 136, 172-173
- Hershberg, James G., 120n
- Hilsman, Roger, 72, 107
- Howard, Lisa, 337, 338, 339-340, 342,
 343-344
- Hungary, 41, 42, 99, 108
- Hurwitch, Robert A., 89, 100, 123, 171,
 310
- IL-28s, 166, 189-190, 195; John
 Kennedy requests removal of, 6,
 244-245, 249, 257, 261-262,
 264-265, 266-282, 283-287, 290,
 293
- Indonesia, 82
- International Committee of the Red
 Cross, 254, 256, 258, 260, 280
- Iran, 60, 200
- Italy, removal of U.S. missiles from,
 140, 142, 173, 178, 186, 188, 191,
 192, 193-194, 196, 197, 213n, 227,
 229, 312
- Japan, 93, 153
- Johnson, Lyndon B., 16-17, 37-38, 235
- Johnson, U. Alexis, 51, 286; during
 missile crisis, 185, 186, 231, 234n;

(continued from front flap)

Index

349

- during Operation Mongoose, 74, 81, 83, 98, 99, 100, 107-108, 116, 135, 163
- Joint Chiefs of Staff: during Bay of Pigs operation, 16n, 17-18, 19, 21, 26, 27-28, 31; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 52; invasion of Cuba recommended by, 71, 118-119; and invasion planning, 38-39, 44-49, 50, 99-100, 110-115, 116, 123, 126, 128-131, 140, 157, 166, 200, 282-283, 308, 323-324; during missile crisis, 189, 218, 234; during Operation Mongoose, 98, 99, 162-163. *See also* Department of Defense; Lemnitzer, Lyman L.; McNamara, Robert S.; Taylor, Maxwell D.
- Jupiter missiles. *See* Turkey, removal of U.S. missiles from.
- Keating, Kenneth B., 133, 149-150, 164-165, 211
- Kennedy, Edward M., 3
- Kennedy, John F., BEFORE MISSILE CRISIS: assessments of, 4, 8, 10-11, 13, 44; attitudes/motivation, 4, 6, 8, 10, 30-31, 34-35, 40-43, 52-53, 67-68; during Bay of Pigs operation, 4-5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16-17, 19-21, 22, 26, 28-29, 30-31, 33, 34-35, 37-38, 44, 50; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 30-31, 51-53, 55, 61-63, 73-74; Bay of Pigs operation assessed by, 30-31, 182, 223-224; and contingency planning for invasion of Cuba, 9, 38-39, 50, 51, 52, 61-62, 159; criticized by Republicans, 5, 10, 133, 149-150, 151, 154, 155, 164-165, 182, 211; on military intervention in Cuba, 87, 116, 133-134, 143-144, 154-156, 166, 182; on nuclear missiles in Cuba, 133, 134, 142, 143-144, 151, 154-156; during Operation Mongoose, 5, 8, 9, 10, 74, 75, 77-78, 79-80, 81, 85, 87, 88n, 89, 94, 95, 96, 98, 105, 107, 116, 123, 133-134, 136, 138-139, 163, 171; public statements, 9, 10, 17, 32n, 40-43, 133, 151, 154-156, 174, 177, 183, 203-204, 211, 216, 259-260; relationship with Robert Kennedy, 3, 6, 7, 9, 13, 35-36, 72, 96; relationship with Khrushchev, 5, 9-10, 14, 32, 34-35, 58-61, 134, 152-153, 160-161, 180, 182, 211, 298-299; responds to Soviet military buildup in Cuba, 141-144, 149, 151. *See also* Kennedy administration; United States.
- Kennedy, John F., DURING MISSILE CRISIS: air strike planning reviewed by, 194-195; air strikes initially favored by, 170, 172; assessments of, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 10; blockade option chosen by, 6, 169-170, 187, 192-195, 198, 199-201, 205, 209; on invasion of Cuba, 182, 183, 192-193, 196-197, 198, 199, 200, 218-219, 234, 236; Khrushchev's first proposal accepted by, 235-239, 245-246, 249; meets with congressional leadership, 199-201; Operation Mongoose accelerated by, 171-172; options weighed by, 178, 179, 183-185, 187-192, 306; public statements, 9, 169, 185, 186, 192-193, 195-196, 197, 199, 201, 203-208, 245, 259-260, 266, 284; relationship with Gromyko, 176, 179, 180-183, 204, 211, 223; relationship with Robert Kennedy, 184-185, 210, 212, 237, 240; relationship with Khrushchev, 6, 9-10, 169, 175-176, 196, 197, 198, 201-203, 206, 208-209, 210, 214-216, 220-229, 232, 234, 235-236, 241-243, 245-247, 249, 259, 266, 272, 279, 287, 335; relationship with Stevenson, 175-177, 187, 194, 219-220, 234; removal of missiles from Turkey considered by, 230-232, 234, 235;

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JPI/Corbis

- Kennedy, John F., DURING MISSILE CRISIS (*cont.*)
retaliation for U-2 downing rejected by, 170; on Soviet deceit, 134, 204, 210-212, 215-216, 237-238. *See also* Kennedy administration; United States.
- Kennedy, John F., AFTER MISSILE CRISIS:
aerial surveillance continued by, 257, 265, 281, 291, 312, 314, 322-323; assessments of, 4, 7, 301; on blockade removal, 258, 260, 269, 271, 275, 279, 286-287, 290; and civil rights, 3, 7, 301; covert operations against Cuba authorized by, 301, 313, 316, 330-331, 342; covert operations against Cuba denied by, 336; criticized by Republicans, 254, 267, 275, 278-279, 314-315; on Cuban aggression, 297, 334; and dialogue with Castro, 302, 342; effects of missile crisis on, 249-250; invasion contingency plans reviewed by, 265, 282-283, 308, 321, 323-324; on nature of missile crisis, 298-299, 306; and no-invasion pledge, 249, 257, 260, 261, 264, 267-268, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 279, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289-290, 291, 296-297, 304, 305-306, 313, 314, 315, 323; public statements of, 285, 286-289, 297, 298-299, 304; relationship with Gromyko, 335-336; relationship with Robert Kennedy, 249-250, 252-253, 261-262, 269, 270, 276, 311-312; relationship with Khrushchev, 6, 249, 251-258, 266-274, 276, 277-282, 283-285, 290-298, 304, 311, 314-315, 321-323, 331-334; relationship with Kuznetsov, 303-305; relationship with Mikoyan, 291-293; relationship with Stevenson, 259-261, 264-265; removal of IL-28s requested by, 6, 244-245, 249, 257, 261-262, 264-265, 266-282, 283-287, 290, 293; removal of Soviet troops from Cuba requested by, 268, 303, 304, 311, 314, 335; on Soviet deceit, 261, 264, 267, 297, 298-299; on verification of missile withdrawal, 253, 254, 256-257, 259-261, 264-265, 268-269, 271, 279-282, 287-290, 291, 296-297. *See also* Kennedy administration; United States.
- Kennedy, Joseph P., 3
- Kennedy, Robert F., BEFORE MISSILE CRISIS: assessments of, 4, 10-11, 13, 43-44, 73-74; during Bay of Pigs operation, 30, 33, 35-36, 37-38, 43-44; on nuclear missiles in Cuba, 134; during Operation Mongoose, 5, 62n, 72, 74, 77-79, 80-81, 84, 86, 87, 88n, 95-97, 106, 108n, 116, 119, 122, 133-134, 136, 140, 141, 142, 157, 171-172; relationship with Dobrynin, 183; relationship with John Kennedy, 3, 6, 7, 9, 13, 35-36, 72, 96; worries about Soviet bases in Cuba, 36, 119-120
- Kennedy, Robert F., DURING MISSILE CRISIS, 173, 175, 189, 194, 196, 216, 232; assessments of, 3-4, 7-8, 10; blockade advocated by, 6, 7, 169, 183, 184-185, 186, 190, 192, 195; relationship with Dobrynin, 169, 210-212, 237-240, 245, 247-248; relationship with John Kennedy, 184-185, 210, 212, 237, 240; on Soviet deceit, 134, 210-212, 237-238, 239
- Kennedy, Robert F., AFTER MISSILE CRISIS: on aerial reconnaissance, 275; assessments of, 3, 4, 302; attitudes toward Cuba, 319, 320; on dialogue with Castro, 338; effects of missile crisis on, 249-250; on no-invasion pledge, 286; relationship with Bolshakov, 295n, 297n, 298n; relationship with Dobrynin, 249, 251-253, 255-256, 261-262, 269-271, 274-277, 295n, 311-313; relationship with John Kennedy,

- 249-250, 252-253, 261-262, 269, 270, 276, 311-312; secrecy concerning removal of missiles from Turkey requested by, 251-253; on verification of missile withdrawal from Cuba, 255-256, 275-276
- Kennedy administration: and assassination of Castro, 68-69, 120n; blockade discussions before missile crisis, 36, 45-46, 48, 51, 52, 131, 140, 144, 157, 162, 167, 168; concern about Soviet bases in Cuba, 10, 36, 118, 119-120, 121, 137, 140, 143, 155, 157-158, 161n; contingency plans for invasion of Cuba before missile crisis, 5, 8, 9, 10, 38-39, 44-49, 50, 51, 52, 53-54, 61-62, 71, 91, 94, 95, 99-100, 107, 108, 110-115, 116, 118-119, 120, 121, 123, 126, 127, 128-131, 133-134, 140, 143-144, 148, 159, 162, 167-168, 196-197, 200, 265; contingency plans for invasion of Cuba after missile crisis, 13, 282-283, 305-308, 319, 321, 323-324; Cuba regarded as threat to Latin America by, 10, 17, 24-25, 35, 36, 41-43, 45, 52-53, 60, 62, 65, 67-68, 88, 93, 96, 106, 109, 113, 119, 126, 127, 137, 142, 146, 151, 155, 156, 157, 158, 161n, 162, 174, 205, 207, 219, 238, 242, 245, 260, 287-288, 297, 305, 334, 336, 339, 342; dialogue with Castro pursued by, 6, 302, 337-340, 342-344; economic sanctions against Cuba imposed by, 4, 5, 8, 52, 66, 71, 83-84, 90-91, 93, 125, 160-161, 181, 182, 311, 323, 327; intelligence concerning Cuba available to, 16, 75, 78-79, 86, 89, 105-106, 116-118, 125, 126, 129, 133, 136-138, 157-159, 172, 187, 306-307, 320-321, 325, 340-341; policy of isolating Cuba pursued by, 5, 17, 68, 87, 100, 126, 145, 310, 311; Soviets regarded as deceptive by, 197, 204, 210-212, 215-216, 237-238, 239, 261, 264, 267, 297, 298-299; trade embargo against Cuba imposed by, 91, 93, 125. *See also* Bay of Pigs operation; Covert operations; Operation Mongoose; United States; specific administration officials.
- Kent, Sherman, 75
- Khrushchev, Nikita S., BEFORE MISSILE CRISIS: assessments of, 8; on Bay of Pigs operation, 32, 60; on Castro, 24-25, 60, 61; motivation, 5, 8, 14, 221-222, 224, 226-227, 228, 242, 294; relationship with John Kennedy, 5, 9-10, 14, 32, 34-35, 58-61, 134, 152-153, 160-161, 180, 182, 211, 298-299; and Soviet buildup in Cuba, 3, 14, 32, 134, 136, 152-154, 224, 294. *See also* Soviet Union.
- Khrushchev, Nikita S., DURING MISSILE CRISIS: describes Soviet buildup in Cuba as defensive, 221-222, 224, 226-227, 228, 242; initial response to U.S. blockade, 208-209, 214-215; offers removal of missiles in exchange for no-invasion pledge from U.S., 220, 224-225, 227-228; proposal from John Kennedy accepted by, 241-243, 249; proposals made by, 6, 220-225, 226-229; relationship with John Kennedy, 6, 9-10, 169, 175-176, 196, 197, 198, 201-203, 206, 208-209, 210, 214-216, 220-229, 232, 234, 235-236, 241-243, 245-247, 249, 259, 266, 272, 279, 287, 335; on removal of U.S. missiles from Turkey, 6, 226, 227-228; on Soviet personnel in Cuba, 268. *See also* Soviet Union.
- Khrushchev, Nikita S., AFTER MISSILE CRISIS: asserts missiles withdrawn, 284; blockade removal requested by, 273, 274, 276, 277, 278, 285; relationship with John Kennedy, 6, 249, 251-258, 262-263, 266-274,

ader to
nterpre-
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sity of
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'Corbis

- Khrushchev, Nikita S., AFTER MISSILE CRISIS (*cont.*)
 276, 277-282, 283-285, 290-298, 304, 311, 314-315, 321-323, 331-334; on removal of IL-28s, 249, 262-263, 272-274, 277-279, 283, 284-285; requests end of U.S. reconnaissance flights, 276, 277, 278, 321, 322-323; requests formal no-invasion pledge, 249, 271, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 285, 293, 294-295; on Soviet troops in Cuba, 322, 335; on U.S. sabotage in Cuba, 331-332; on verification of missile withdrawal, 293-294. *See also* Soviet Union.
- King, J. C., 54-55
- Korea, 42, 177
- Kuznetsov, Vasily, 244, 256, 258, 262, 265-266, 267, 296, 299-300; relationship with John Kennedy, 303-305
- Lansdale, Edward G.: during Phase I of Operation Mongoose, 9, 71, 74, 78-79, 80-87, 88-95, 96-99, 100-107, 108-110, 111, 115-116, 119n, 120-121, 122-131; during Phase II of Operation Mongoose, 135-136, 139, 140, 144-149, 157, 163-164, 171. *See also* Operation Mongoose.
- Laos, 34, 36, 39, 42, 59, 181
- Latin America, 57, 83, 139; relations with United States, 16, 19-20, 22-24, 46, 47, 88, 89, 92, 121, 124, 144-145, 148, 158-159, 175, 176, 178, 186, 189, 190. *See also* Kennedy administration, Cuba regarded as threat to Latin America by; Organization of American States (OAS).
- Lechuga Hevia, Carlos, 338-339, 344
- LeMay, Curtis E., 159
- Lemnitzer, Lyman L.: during Bay of Pigs operation, 16n, 17-18, 21, 27-28, 33, 38-39; during Operation Mongoose, 98, 99-100, 110-115, 116, 118-119
- Lippmann, Walter, 165
- Macmillan, Harold, 26, 200
- Mann, Thomas C., 16-17, 25
- Martin, Edwin M., 120, 171, 175, 185, 186, 319-320
- McCloy, John, during UN negotiations after missile crisis, 249, 259-261, 264-265, 276, 281, 286, 289-290, 296-297, 303
- McCone, John J.: becomes CIA director, 9, 77n; during missile crisis, 172, 173-174, 175, 184, 189, 190, 194, 195, 196, 199, 219; after missile crisis, 315-316, 319, 340-342; during Operation Mongoose, 72, 77-78, 79-80, 81, 82, 86, 87, 95, 98, 99, 107, 108, 109, 116, 122, 135-136, 140, 141-142, 163, 164, 166-167
- McManus, George, 95
- McNamara, Robert S., 15, 52, 143; during Bay of Pigs operation, 16, 17-18, 23, 25, 33, 37; and contingency plans to invade Cuba, 9, 321, 323-324; and invasion planning, 38-39, 44-49, 50; during missile crisis, 173, 174, 175, 178-179, 184, 185, 186, 187-188, 189, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 209, 212, 217, 218, 230, 231, 232, 233-234, 235, 244; after missile crisis, 265, 285, 286, 319, 321, 341; during Operation Mongoose, 74, 79-80, 82, 85, 96, 109, 110-115, 118-119, 128, 140, 141, 142, 159, 162-163, 166, 167, 171. *See also* Department of Defense; Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Meeker, Leonard C., 183, 185
- Mexico, 68, 93
- Mikoyan, Anastas I., 256, 258, 275, 291-293

- Missile crisis: Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence during, 6, 9-10, 169, 201-202, 208-209, 210, 214-216, 220-229, 235-236, 241-243, 245-246, 249, 259, 266, 272, 279, 287, 335; origins of, 4-5, 7-8, 10-11; significance of, 3, 5-6. *See also* ExComm (Executive Committee of the National Security Council); Kennedy, John F.; Kennedy, Robert F.; Khrushchev, Nikita S.
- Monroe Doctrine, 156
- Murrow, Edward R., 313, 320
- National Association of Manufacturers, 93
- National Foreign Trade Council, 93
- National Reconnaissance Office, 164
- National Security Council, 43-44, 49-50, 51-53, 54, 87; U.S. policy after missile crisis discussed by, 305-307, 309-310, 319-321, 324-330, 337-342. *See also* ExComm (Executive Committee of the National Security Council); Special Group (Augmented).
- Navy, U.S., 45, 48-49, 95, 131, 135; during Bay of Pigs operation, 27-28, 29, 33; during missile crisis, 217, 218
- Nicaragua, 29, 113
- Nitze, Paul H.: during Bay of Pigs operation, 16-17; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 51, 65n; during missile crisis, 185, 193, 194, 220, 229; during Operation Mongoose, 74, 167-168
- Nixon, Richard M., 4, 133, 269, 278-279
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 93, 147, 156, 173, 174; relations with United States, 142, 143, 175, 176, 178, 179, 193, 199, 213, 229, 230, 231, 232-234, 235, 238, 239, 270-271
- NSC 5412 Committee. *See* Special Group (Augmented).
- Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 7, 34, 228-229, 246, 254, 273, 291, 301, 331, 332, 333
- Operation Mongoose, 8, 13, 88-95, 122-131; anti-Castro revolt component of, 5, 71, 72, 75, 77, 78-79, 80-83, 85, 88-89, 90, 91-93, 94, 95, 99, 106-107, 108, 114-115, 116-118, 120-121, 123, 125, 126-127, 128, 129, 138, 139, 141, 145, 148-149, 162, 163, 306; and Caribbean Survey Group, 97-98, 111; compared to Bay of Pigs operation, 71, 108; criticisms of, 72, 86, 87, 98, 99, 107-108, 135; economic warfare component of, 5, 71, 83-84, 85, 88, 90-91, 93-94, 99, 123, 125, 127, 138, 139, 144, 146-147; intelligence component of, 75, 76, 79, 85, 86, 89-91, 92, 99, 108-110, 115, 116-118, 122, 123-124, 138, 139, 141, 144, 147-148, 163, 171; John Kennedy during, 5, 8, 9, 10, 74, 75, 77-78, 79-80, 81, 85, 87, 88n, 89, 94, 95, 96, 98, 105, 107, 116, 123, 133-134, 136, 138-139, 163, 171; Robert Kennedy during, 5, 62n, 72, 74, 77-79, 80-81, 84, 86, 87, 88n, 95-97, 106, 108n, 116, 119, 122, 133-134, 136, 140, 141, 142, 157, 171-172; legacy of, 301, 306-307; military intervention component of, 71, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 99-100, 103-104, 107, 108, 115, 116, 120-121, 123, 126, 127, 128-131, 138; origins of, 55-58; overseen by Special Group (Augmented), 62n, 78, 79-87, 91, 97n, 98-100, 106, 108, 109-110, 116, 119-120, 121, 122-131, 138-140, 144-149, 163, 164, 172; political component of, 124, 144, 145-146, 148, 163;

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terpre-
e. This
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rsity of
d, and
Univer-
niversi-
as writ-
is the
Missile
rontier

/Corbis

- Operation Mongoose (*cont.*)
 psychological warfare component of, 94, 100-105, 124-125, 127, 138, 148; sabotage component of, 5, 82-83, 86, 91, 94, 99, 123, 126, 135-136, 139, 141, 146-147, 163, 171-172. *See also* Lansdale, Edward G.
- Organization of American States (OAS): and atomic-free zone, 218, 281; relations with Cuba, 5, 16, 17, 46, 52-53, 68, 78, 83, 87, 90, 91, 93, 100, 118, 125, 129, 147, 150, 155, 159, 205, 288; relations with United States, 22-23, 36, 86, 92, 98, 129, 168, 173, 174, 175; and U.S. blockade of Cuba, 200, 201, 206, 208, 210, 214, 246, 265. *See also* Latin America.
- Pakistan, 200
- Parnet, Herbert, 7
- Parrott, Thomas A., 68-69
- Patchell, James, 95, 171
- Philippines, 71
- Poland, 42
- Polaris submarines, 193, 213, 235, 312
- Reeves, Thomas, 7
- Refugees, Cuban. *See* Cuban exiles.
- Republicans, 4, 200; criticize Kennedy before crisis, 5, 10, 133, 149-150, 151, 154, 155, 164-165, 182, 211; criticize resolution of missile crisis, 254, 267, 275, 278-279, 314-315
- Rio Treaty, 51, 68, 177, 185, 203, 206, 219
- Rostow, Walt W., 33
- Rusk, Dean, 9, 143; during Bay of Pigs operation, 3, 16-17, 19-20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31; during Bay of Pigs aftermath, 51, 52; during missile crisis, 173, 174-175, 177, 178, 185, 186-187, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 196, 199, 213, 217, 218-219, 220, 229, 230, 232, 233, 234, 237-238, 240, 244; after missile crisis, 252, 254, 331, 336, 341; during Operation Mongoose, 79-80, 82, 98, 100, 109, 140, 141-142, 171. *See also* Department of State.
- Russell, Bertrand, 225
- Russell, Richard B., 199-200
- Ryan, Hewson, 171, 172
- Salinger, Pierre, 151, 248, 253-255
- Saltonstall, Leverett, 200
- Scali, John, 220, 286, 297n
- Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., 7, 44
- Scoville, Herbert, Jr., 163
- Smith, Abbot, 136
- Sorensen, Theodore C., 7, 152, 211, 320; during Bay of Pigs operation, 44, 50; during missile crisis, 185, 188, 189, 191, 207, 218
- Soviet Union: military buildup in Cuba, 5, 10, 32, 35, 36, 45, 52, 111, 133, 136-138, 140, 141-144, 149-150, 152-156, 157-159, 164-165, 166, 181, 182, 183, 221-222, 224, 226-227, 228, 242, 294; relations with Cuba after missile crisis, 268, 275, 303, 304, 307, 315-317, 320, 332, 341; UN activities of, 6, 34, 160, 188, 259-261, 293, 299-300, 303, 305
- Spain, 191
- Special Group (Augmented) and Operation Mongoose, 79-87, 91, 97n, 98-100, 106, 108, 109-110, 116, 119-120, 121, 122-131, 135-136, 138-140, 144-149, 163, 164, 172; Robert Kennedy added to, 62n, 78
- SS-4s, 187
- State Department. *See* Department of State.
- Stevenson, Adlai E., 338-339, 342, 344; during Bay of Pigs operation, 28,

- 29, 31; during missile crisis, 9, 169, 175-177, 186-187, 191-192, 193-194, 196, 197, 198, 218, 219-220, 230, 234, 240-241; relationship with John Kennedy during missile crisis, 175-177, 187, 194, 219-220, 234; relationship with John Kennedy after missile crisis, 259-261, 264-265; during UN negotiations after missile crisis, 249, 259-261, 262, 264-265, 267, 276, 281, 286, 289-290, 296-297, 299-300, 303
- Sukhodrev, Victor M., 59
- Sweeney, Walter C., 194-195
- Task Force on Cuba, 53, 65-67
- Taylor, Maxwell D., 69, 143, 185; during Bay of Pigs operation, 28, 30; during missile crisis, 173, 174, 175, 178, 184, 188-189, 190, 192, 193, 194-195, 196-197, 218, 234, 245; after missile crisis, 282-283, 308; during Operation Mongoose, 78, 79, 81, 98, 99, 116, 119n, 135, 138-140, 141, 162-163, 171. *See also* Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Thailand, 252, 254
- Thompson, Llewellyn E., 24-25, 252, 331-332; during missile crisis, 173, 174, 175, 178, 179, 185, 186, 192, 196, 233
- Trinidad (Cuba), 20-21, 31
- Turkey, 60, 173; as potential Soviet target, 140, 175, 176, 200, 234, 235; removal of U.S. missiles from, 6, 120, 142, 143, 169-170, 178, 186, 188, 191, 192, 193-194, 196, 197, 213, 219, 226, 227-228, 229-232, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 239, 240, 248, 251-253, 312
- U-2s, 5, 164, 169, 170, 232, 233, 235, 237, 241, 243, 246, 312, 320
- Udall, Stewart, 153-154, 160
- Unger, F. T., 167-168
- United Nations, 19, 45, 119, 161, 184; Charter of, 181, 203, 206, 208-209, 219, 289, 322-323; inspectors from, 187, 191, 218, 227-228, 232, 236, 238, 240-241, 242, 244, 245, 246-247, 249, 254, 255-257, 258, 259, 271, 274, 275-276, 278, 279-280, 281, 287, 289, 291, 293n, 296; Soviet activities in, 6, 34, 160, 188, 259-261, 293, 299-300, 303, 305; U.S. activities in, 6, 28, 29, 31, 34, 111, 168, 193, 196, 206, 210, 258, 259-261, 264-265, 289-290, 293, 296-297, 299-300, 303, 305. *See also* Stevenson, Adlai E.; U Thant.
- United States: relations with Latin America, 16, 19-20, 22-24, 46, 47, 88, 89, 92, 121, 124, 144-145, 148, 158-159, 175, 176, 178, 186, 189, 190; relations with NATO, 142, 143, 175, 176, 178, 179, 193, 199, 213, 229, 230, 231, 232-234, 235, 238, 239, 270-271; relations with Organization of American States (OAS), 22-23, 36, 86, 92, 98, 129, 168, 173, 174, 175; trade embargo against Cuba imposed by, 91, 93, 125; UN activities of, 6, 28, 29, 31, 34, 111, 168, 193, 196, 206, 210, 258, 259-261, 264-265, 289-290, 293, 296-297, 299-300, 303, 305. *See also* Kennedy administration.
- United States Chamber of Commerce, 93
- United States Information Agency, 53, 66, 212, 320; during Operation Mongoose, 78, 82, 84, 89, 90, 94, 97n, 101, 109, 120, 124, 128, 145-146, 147, 148
- United States Intelligence Board, 129, 166
- U Thant, missile crisis mediated by, 217, 218, 219, 223, 225, 226, 227, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 240, 245, 246, 255, 256; 277, 280, 283, 299-300

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 Missile
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/Corbis

- Vallejo Ortiz, Rene, 339-340, 342,
343-344
- Vance, Cyrus R., 309, 310, 313
- Vienna summit of 1961, conversations
between Kennedy and Khrushchev
at, 9, 14, 58-61, 161n, 180, 182n,
202, 222, 223-224, 254, 322
- Vietnam, 7, 39, 42, 71, 162, 301
- Vinson, Carl, 200, 201
- Wheeler, Earle G., 44-49
- Wiesner, Jerome B., 44
- Wilson, Donald M., 89, 120, 123
- Woodward, Robert F., 65, 69, 89
- Zapata peninsula, 21, 30-31
- Zhukov, Georgy, 253-255