

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The letter is also released directly to the press to avoid

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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