

it]. Last month I should have said that we don't care. But when we said we're *not* going to, and then they go ahead and do it, and then we do nothing, then I would think that our risks increase.

I agree, what difference does it make? They've got enough to blow us up now anyway. I think it's just a question of . . . After all, this is a political struggle as much as military.

Well, so where are we now? Where is the . . . ? I don't think the message to Castro's got much in it.

Let's just try to get an answer to this question: How much . . . ? It's quite obviously to our advantage to surface this thing to a degree before . . . first to inform these governments in Latin America, as the Secretary suggests. Secondly, let the NATO people who have the right to some warning: Macmillan, de Gaulle. How much does this diminish . . . ? Not [telling them] that we're going to do anything, but the existence of them, without any say about what we're gonna do.

Let's say, 24 hours ahead of our doing something about it, we inform Macmillan. We make a public statement that these have been found on the island. That would be a notification, in a sense, of their existence and everybody could draw whatever conclusion they wanted to.

Martin: I would say this, Mr. President. That I would . . . that if you've made a public statement, you've got to move immediately, or you're going to have a [*unclear*] in *this* country.

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

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

Taylor: I don't think anything like that [would work]. I can't visualize doing it successfully that way. I think that anything that shows our intent to strike is going to flush the airplanes and the missiles into concealment. These are really mobile missiles.

President Kennedy: They can just put them—

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

McNamara: And they can also be readied, perhaps, between the time