

local civil-defense directors of states, in buildings that will take care of 40 million people of the 92 million in this area. The spaces now are stocked, and in the process of being stocked, for the 100-protection factor or above. But sometimes it's bound to be a lower-protection-factor space. The [unclear] spaces had intended to be stocked by now. But, in fact, we can do a little accelerated [unclear].<sup>46</sup>

**President Kennedy:** OK. Well, let me just ask you this. It seems to me the most likely problem we're going to have in the next ten days is if we decide to invade Cuba. They may fire these weapons. Or at least we've got to go under the assumption that some of them may be fired.

Now, what is it we could do in this [1,100 mile] arc to evacuate these communities so that, after all, people living out in the country, we can take care of them, to the extent that is possible, against radiation. We can take the various steps. And then you've got the problem of blast. Can we, say before we invade, evacuate these cities?

**Pittman:** Well, if we knew that there would be no nuclear response, it might make some sense. If there will be fallout, the only protection that exists today is in the cities, and there's little or no protection in the rural areas.

**President Kennedy:** Well, we have to assume that there isn't going to be very much, and on the assumption [unclear], we're not going to have an all-out nuclear exchange. If we were going to have an all-out nuclear exchange, then we'd have a different problem.

Let's say we're going into Cuba, and there's maybe some bombs back, 10 or 15 [missiles launched against the United States]. That kind of fallout. Not the usual—I don't know how many megatons. Now, what is it we do, before we go in, by the time we say we're going to invade Cuba, if we give you, say, five or six or seven days' notice? What can we do during this period of a week in which this risk will be with us, or three or four days? What is it that we ought to do with the population of the affected areas, in case some bombs go off? I just don't see [unclear] how you can [unclear] effectively.

*At this point the recording is obscured by background noise for about 13 minutes. McCone summarized the ensuing discussion as follows: "The President asked what emergency steps could be taken. Replied that many arrangements could be made without too much publicity, such as reposi-*

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46. Pittman is referring to stocking spaces with survival supplies. These spaces were civil defense, or fallout, shelters where people would take refuge in order to try to survive a nuclear attack and its aftermath.