

first challenge in this case, and that in the light of this record these activities in Cuba required the responses I have announced.

I repeat my regret that these events should cause a deterioration in our relations. I hope that your government will take the necessary action to permit a restoration of the earlier situation.

**President Kennedy:** There you are.

**Nitze:** Doesn't that suggest, though, that what he intends is to not let his ships be put in a position where they can be held captive, boarded and searched?

**President Kennedy:** Except he just put one in there, yesterday, with . . .

**Unidentified:** Some ships . . .

**Nitze:** But if we hadn't put any . . . I think he'd [*unclear*].

**Bundy:** It's possible, it seems to me, Paul, that what you're saying is that we may be moving into some kind of de facto, unclarified quarantine.

**McNamara:** I'd like to assume that that's the case. I think our problem of the minute is to look ahead at least 24 hours here.

For the minute, let's make these assumptions, that:

(a) The Security Council does not accept our proposal or the United Nations does not;

(b) That we have no Soviet ship to intercept tomorrow, or that if we do intercept one it carries no prohibited weapons and submits to whatever action we apply to it;

(c) That the development of offensive missiles continues in Cuba, and we have evidence of that today from our low-level surveillance.

What do we do?

**Ball:** I think we escalate to the —

**President Kennedy:** Well, we first stop a Soviet ship someplace and have [*unclear*] what they're going to do.

**McNamara:** I'm just speaking of 24 hours now. The possibility is we won't be able to do that, Mr. President. Maybe we can, but let's assume for the minute that we can't.

Or alternatively assume we do, and it wasn't carrying prohibited weapons, and it submitted to our quarantine procedure in any way we choose to apply it, indicating that the Soviet Union, for the time being, is going to prohibit the movement of offensive weapons to Cuba. What do we do under these circumstances?

It seems to me at least, George implied, we have to escalate. And if that's the case, how are we going to escalate?

Now, we have a number of alternatives. And I would like to suggest we consider those today, and at least some of us, perhaps the same group,