

President Kennedy: “Statement of your desire.” That’s right.

Rusk: “Welcome the statement of your desire.” Couldn’t we actually just say: “My desire is the same.”

President Kennedy: You know, I could just say—my desire isn’t the same as his—“I can assure you of the great interest of the people of the United States to find a satisfactory solution to this—

Rusk: [*reading*]

The first thing that needs to be done, however, is for work to cease on the offensive missile bases in Cuba and for all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use to be rendered inoperable under effective United Nations arrangements.

Assuming this is done promptly, I have given my representatives in New York instructions that will permit them this weekend to work out an arrangement for a permanent solution to the Cuban problem with the acting secretary-general and with your representative.

If you will give your representative similar instructions, there is no reason why we should not be able to complete these arrangements and announce them to the world within a couple of days. I note and welcome indications in your second letter which you have made public that you would like to work toward a more general arrangement as regards other armaments.

President Kennedy: Now, wait a second. That second letter is the one on Turkey. “. . . note and welcome . . .”—“I note your second letter.” I don’t think we ought to “welcome” it.

Rusk: “I note the indications in your second letter that you have made public that you would like to work toward a more general arrangement as regards other armaments. I would like to say again that we very much want to move in this direction. If your mention of Turkey signifies—”

President Kennedy: Well, now let’s say—you’ve got it “move this in this direction.” It seems to me . . . I don’t believe [*unclear*] general. I don’t know about the . . . I’d like to, I would like to state that the United States is very much interested in . . . What?

Unidentified: “. . . such a discussion.”

President Kennedy: You see it’s Turkey again, and I would like to say that the United States is—

Unidentified: “General reduction of armaments.”

Dillon: Yes—“general reduction of armaments.” And tensions and so forth.