

shipment of offensive weapons. Even today the Soviets inspect our, they stop our convoys going into Berlin. People get out, don't they? They don't inspect the trucks.

**Bundy:** No, sir. The people do not get out, and this troop inspection is a complicated one. They have ample means of surveillance, but *inspection* is not the word we want to use.

**President Kennedy:** What surveillance? What does that mean?

**Bundy:** Well, they have a checkpoint and they watch the convoys.

**Rusk:** They have ample means of knowing whether—

**Bundy:** They know that there are no offensive weapons in Berlin. They have plenty of ways of knowing that.

**Unidentified:** Sometimes they get out; sometimes they don't. And they do let these people look in through the tailgates in the trucks.

**Bundy:** That's right.

**President Kennedy:** They do let them? Yeah, well that's—

**Rusk:** But the central point here is that we're in Berlin by right as well as by the acknowledgment and agreement of the Soviet Union. They're bringing these things into Cuba contrary to the Rio Pact. So there's all the difference in the world between these.

**President Kennedy:** Yes. So I think we want to make . . . What we're trying to do is make a distinction between our actions and a Soviet blockade of Berlin, or the [Soviet] blockade of '47-'48. The degree of surveillance and inspection which they have over the movement of troops and personnel [into Berlin]. And the fact that no weapons, no strategic weapons, have been placed in Berlin. And the fact that we're permitting goods to move into Cuba at this point, food and all the rest. This is not a blockade in that sense. It's merely an attempt to prevent the shipment of weapons there.

Khrushchev's conclusion, his purpose apparently, was to force us into, add to his strategic nuclear power, force us into a choice of initiating an attack on Cuba, which would free his hand, et cetera, and/or appearing to be an irresolute ally. [*Unclear.*]

I want to go back to saying: I think that the talk which we considered [at] any time an air attack. I want to restate that now, and that is a matter which I don't think we ought to discuss under any conditions. We may simply have to do it. In any case, we don't want to look like we were considering it. So I think we ought to just scratch that from all our statements and conversations, and not ever indicate that that was a course of action open to us. I can't say that strongly enough. We don't want to ever have it around that this was one of the alternatives that we considered this week. I think it will be very difficult to keep it quiet, but I think