

Robert Kennedy: No, but I mean the message you're going to send to the ambassador really is—

Unidentified: No.

Robert Kennedy: It will go right to him and won't go to anybody else?

McNamara: Well, that's all right. We have two major decisions we have to make quickly at eleven. We can wait on both of those until eleven. [*Unclear exchange, including Taylor, about the next day's surveillance flights.*] Yes, but we don't let it off until we talk to [*unclear*]. [*Mixed voices, the meeting appears to be breaking up.*]

President Kennedy: They say they shot down our U-2. They say they shot it down. [*Unclear exchange. Eleven seconds excised as classified information.*]

. . . if we go with the low-level reconnaissance at this time. And we don't follow with the . . .

Robert Kennedy: Then I think we ought to, when we get shot at tomorrow, then we ought to have these answers out there.

McNamara: Well. Mr. President, if we go in at the low level tomorrow, we ought to be prepared, it seems to me, to attack MiGs if they attack our aircraft.

Taylor: Well we always, I've said that we're always [*unclear*].

McNamara: This time we would make it perfectly clear if they attack our aircraft, we're going in after some of their MiGs.

Taylor: Yeah.

President Kennedy: It won't be the ground. We'll save that [SAMs and antiaircraft guns] for a real operation, which would [get them]. Under this schedule, you wouldn't do it until Tuesday morning [October 30] because we'll have to go back to NATO again Monday, in which we say the situation is getting worse and so on and so forth. Give them that last chance.

Taylor: Tuesday morning looks like the . . . [*Unclear discussion.*]

McNamara: The thing we haven't talked about today, when we get back, is this [interim occupation] government [for Cuba] in case we do shoot up Cuba in the morning or sometime. The Cuban government. We haven't discussed that today. And we have the military holding the civil affairs problem until the proper stage.

President Kennedy: Is anybody in charge of the—

McNamara: There's a task group of some kind working on it. We ought to take some time tomorrow to talk about that. [*Quiet, inaudible, reply from President Kennedy.*]

Gilpatric: How are the [*unclear*] plans?