

we ought to because it may inhibit us in the future. And, in addition, it will become a propaganda matter, that this was a matter seriously considered by the [U.S.] government. So let's not consider that as one of the alternatives in any discussion.

Anybody else have any thoughts about this?

Rusk: [*Unclear*] one more question, Mr. President.

Robert Kennedy: I think probably the reason, when you compare—when somebody brings up why you didn't have an attack or why you didn't have an air strike, to say that it was just not considered on the basis of the fact that we couldn't have the Pearl Harbor kind of operation, rather than go into all the detail of why it would not . . .

Rusk: It was not done because, rather than it was not considered.

Robert Kennedy: Not done. Yeah. Rather than go into all the details, the military reasons we didn't.

President Kennedy: All right. Well, I think that's fair enough.

Taylor: Mr. President, I should call attention to the fact we're starting moves now which are overt, and will be seen and reported on and commented on. So that movement of armor, for example, to the East Coast. We'll start moving some shipping. We'll start loading some Marines on the West Coast. And you'll be faced with the question: "Are you preparing to invade?" We'll be faced with that question. I think we need guidance on that point.

President Kennedy: What do you suggest saying on that?

Rusk: Mr. President, I would suggest that we urge the press not to come back to each one of these things. We say that, obviously, precautionary moves are going to be taken. That it does not serve the public interest to call attention to each and all of them. We are in a very critical situation, and that we should not be forced to relate each of these moves. That, naturally, with tensions as high as they are at the present time, the President's going to be redispensing forces, but it's not in the public interest to try to explain each one of the moves.

Bundy: One slightly supplementary point. We don't want to look as if we got scared off from anything. There is no current order for invasion.

President Kennedy: Plan for invasion.

Bundy: I think that's very important.

Rusk: Well, if the President's speech talks about what he's going to do, therefore there are a lot of things that you could do that he's not doing at the moment. I wouldn't, at this moment, deny any particular line of action too categorically.

Unidentified: Keep it ambiguous.

President Kennedy: In other words, though, I think we shouldn't