

McNamara: Yeah. I would suggest to have an eye for an eye.

Unidentified: Yeah. That's right. It isn't too serious.

McNamara: In fact . . .

Dillon: That would do it.

Robert Kennedy: I'd like to take Cuba back. That would be nice.

Unidentified: Yeah, and let's take Cuba away from Castro. [*McNamara begins to stammer a reply.*]

Unidentified: Get all of the Mongoose [people].⁵⁷

Unidentified: Yeah! [*Laughter.*]

Unidentified: [*chuckling*] Don't say . . . you ought to see what fools they are. [*Unclear comment.*]

Unidentified: Yeah, how are you going to partition it [Cuba]?

Unidentified: Suppose we make Bobby mayor of Havana?

Dillon: That's something you're going to have to get done tomorrow.

The Executive Committee meeting then broke up for the night. Work went on, however. The first task was to send off the instructions to NATO and selected U.S. ambassadors in allied capitals. The cable that had been discussed was sent out around midnight. It told the envoys that Khrushchev's October 26 message to President Kennedy and other contacts had "seemed to offer real hope solution could be found" but, as a result of Khrushchev's new, public message, "these hopes have been diminished." The United States would "continue to press for solution in Cuban framework alone." Using President Kennedy's language, the cable then added that the situation was "deteriorating." Given the activity at the missile sites and continued movement of Soviet ships into the interception zone, the ambassadors were warned that the United States might find it necessary "within a very short time" to "take whatever military action may be necessary to remove this growing threat to the Hemisphere." So that they could take the temperature of their foreign counterparts, the ambassadors were also cryptically advised to pass along that "U.S. action in Cuba may result in some Soviet moves against NATO."⁵⁸

57. He is referring to the CIA's covert action program, code-named Mongoose, created to spy on, harass, and possibly overthrow Castro's government.

58. State telegram (no Deptel number but ToPol 578 to Finletter at NATO), 28 October 1962 (dated 26 October but actually sent shortly after midnight in the early morning of October 28), in Meetings and Memoranda, "ExComm Meetings 6-10, 10/26/62-10/28/62" folder, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library.