

Secretary Rusk's News Conference of February 1

Press release 65 dated February 2

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February 18, 1963

Soviet Military Presence in Cuba

Q. Mr. Secretary, as there was last August and September, there is some feeling now that the Government of our country may be under-

**For statement of Jan. 26 by President Kennedy, see p. 238.*

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estimating the military strength of Cuba. You may have noticed certain comments on the Hill in that regard. I wonder if you could tell us what your own estimate of the situation is?

A. The information that we have on that has been made public. I believe the Department of Defense issued a statement yesterday on certain aspects of it. There is a significant Soviet military presence in Cuba which is of great concern to the United States, but I do not believe that there has been a recent significant buildup of any major proportions. I think the Department of Defense statement took care of that particular point, but the continued presence of Soviet military personnel in Cuba is something which this entire hemisphere must be concerned about.

Secretary Rusk Appears on "Meet the Press"

Following is the transcript of an interview with Secretary Rusk on the National Broadcasting Company's radio and television program "Meet the Press" on January 27. Members of the panel were Elie Abel, NBC News; Stewart Hensley, United Press International; James Reston, New York Times; and Lawrence E. Spivak, permanent panel member. Ned Brooks was moderator of the program.

Press release 55 dated January 28

Mr. Brooks: This is Ned Brooks, inviting you to "Meet the Press." Our guest today on "Meet the Press" is the Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Rusk. His book, entitled *The Winds of Freedom*,¹ will be published tomorrow.

We will start the questions now with Lawrence E. Spivak, permanent member of the "Meet the Press" panel.

Mr. Spivak: Mr. Secretary, there is growing concern in the United States again about Soviet military power in Cuba. Can you give the American people any assurance that there are no nuclear warheads in Cuba today?

Secretary Rusk: We do not believe that there are nuclear warheads in Cuba today, but of course this is the problem of proving the negative. This is one of the reasons why we were so anxious to establish detailed on-site inspection in Cuba, and this we have not been able to do.

Mr. Spivak: Is it not true that the MIG fighters—I think you have said that you have some assurance that there are no missiles in Cuba.

Secretary Rusk: That is correct.

Mr. Spivak: But isn't it true that a MIG can carry a nuclear warhead and can carry it 700 miles into the United States?

Secretary Rusk: It is true that the MIG fighter, just as some of our fighters, can in fact carry nuclear warheads. These fighters have been coming into Cuba for many months. It has been our judgment that they have been consistent with a defensive capability on that island.

Mr. Spivak: Mr. Secretary, I have heard re-

¹ *The Winds of Freedom, Selections from the Speeches and Statements of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, January 1961–August 1962, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass. (\$4.95).*

ports that Russian aviators have been flying MIG's in Cuba in maneuvers. Are any of those reports true, as far as you know?

Secretary Rusk: Yes, there have been Russians flying those MIG's, as well as Russians training Cubans to fly others.

Soviet Military Presence in Cuba

Mr. Spivak: You have said that we in this hemisphere could not accept as a normal situation any Soviet military presence in Cuba. Now according to reports there are some 15,000 to 17,000 troops—Russian troops and technicians—in Cuba. Now, Mr. Khrushchev can remove those, although he may not be able to force Mr. Castro to have on-site inspection. Why hasn't he removed those?

Secretary Rusk: The Soviet military aid program and buildup in Cuba started last July. That reached a crescendo, of course, with the missiles and the bombers which were dealt with in October and early November.² There remains a substantial Soviet military presence in Cuba.

As the President indicated in his November 20 press conference,³ there had been some indication from the Soviet Union that those forces that were there for the servicing and protection of those missiles would be removed in due course.

We have seen some outtraffic of Soviet military personnel in recent weeks, but we are very much interested in the continuation of that outtraffic.

There are in Cuba at the present time, for example, four relatively small Soviet combat groups, heavily armed, whose presence there is, I think, a matter of some real concern. But the underlying factor is that this hemisphere, including the United States, does not look upon a Soviet military presence in Cuba as a normal condition. It must be our policy, as indicated at Punta del Este in January⁴ that the penetration of this hemisphere by a Marxist-Leninist regime, backed from the outside, is unaccept-

² For background, see BULLETIN of Nov. 12, 1962, pp. 715–745, and Nov. 19, 1962, p. 702.

³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 10, 1962, p. 874.

⁴ For background, see *ibid.*, Feb. 19, 1962, p. 270.

able in the hemisphere so that as a matter of policy we must, I think, anticipate that these forces would be removed and that Cuba someday will rejoin the hemisphere as a loyal part of it.

Mr. Spivak: Well, Mr. Secretary, I don't quite understand this thing. Have the Russians indicated to us in any way at the present time that they are going to remove those troops? We were prepared to go to nuclear war if necessary in order to get offensive missiles out. Now what are we doing about the troops? Are we just sitting back and allowing them to take the initiative in getting rid of them when and if they want to?

Secretary Rusk: While the missiles were going out, we said relatively little about the bombers, as you will recall. When the missiles got out we gave a lot of attention to the bombers, and they were removed.

Now this Soviet military installation there—the surface-to-air missiles, the anti-air missiles—these combat forces are a matter of concern, and, as I have indicated, we have had some indication from the Soviet Union that these forces, at least portions of them, will be removed in due course.

So long as there is a Soviet military presence in Cuba then this is an abnormal situation which will have to be a matter of great concern to the hemisphere and to the United States.

Mr. Spivak: Mr. Secretary, what do you mean by "due course," and what do they mean by "due course"? It has been several months now that those troops have been there and several months now since we were prepared to take the risk of all-out war. Are we doing nothing at all to take them out?

Secretary Rusk: The critical stage was reached when there were in Cuba massive offensive capabilities represented by these missiles and bombers. That we have gotten over, so far as we can tell.

The next stage is to find ways and means of reducing the continued Soviet presence and the continued propaganda and other threats to this hemisphere.

Mr. Spivak: Well, all Mr. Khrushchev has to do to get them out is to say "get out" to them. Is there anything else he has to do?

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Secretary Rusk: That is correct; and when he said "in due course," we of course are very much interested in this time factor. The fact that they have been moving out over the last several weeks is a matter of some interest to us. So long as the outtraffic continues, then that is a gain, but we are interested in whether that outtraffic will now continue.

Mr. Brooks: We will be back with "Meet the Press" and more questions for our guest, Secre-

tary of State Dean Rusk, but first this message. (Announcement.) Now, resuming our interview, our guest today is the Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Rusk. You have just met Lawrence E. Spivak, permanent member of the panel. Our other reporters today are James Reston of the New York Times, Stewart Hensley of United Press International, and Elie Abel of NBC News. We will continue the questions now with Mr. Reston.

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March 4, 1963

The Road Ahead

Address by Secretary Rusk¹

It is a pleasure and privilege to speak to this distinguished audience at the conclusion of this regional foreign policy conference. We in the Department of State are grateful to you, the co-sponsors. Organizations such as yours serve the Nation by helping to inform the American public on issues of critical concern to every citizen.

We in the Department understand that foreign policy has its impact upon every home and every community and that our efforts are aimed at your safety and well-being. Therefore nothing is more important in a free society than the opportunity for give-and-take between the citizen and his government. Our thanks go to Mr. Robert Minckler and Mr. Walter Coombs of the World Affairs Council; to Mr. Theodore Braun, Mr. Elden Smith, and Mr. William B. Miller of Town Hall; and to Mr. George Getty, chairman of the citizens' committee for the conference.

Two years ago last week I held my first news conference as Secretary of State. The transcript² shows that I was asked a great many questions about Cuba. I was also asked searching questions about the Congo, Southeast Asia, Berlin, the strengthening of NATO, our foreign aid program in Latin America and elsewhere, disarmament, and the resumption of talks with the Soviet Union about a nuclear test ban.

From a mere listing of the topics one might

¹ Made before a regional foreign policy conference at Los Angeles, Calif., on Feb. 13 (press release 78 dated Feb. 12, for release Feb. 13). The conference was conducted by the Department of State with the co-sponsorship of the Los Angeles World Affairs Council in cooperation with Town Hall.

² BULLETIN of Feb. 27, 1961, p. 296.

assume that the world has changed little in 2 years. But all of us know—certainly we whose daily business is the foreign policy of the United States know—that is not the case. These 2 years have been packed with both crisis and forward movement.

Where do we stand today in our relations with that world beyond our borders which we can influence but not control? How stands the great struggle for freedom which is the basic commitment of ourselves, our 42 allies, and most of the unaligned world?

A Secretary of State cannot indulge in easy optimism. We shall continue to have in front of us a heaping plate of problems, because change is the constant for our generation. During 1963 national elections or other nonviolent changes in government are expected to occur in some 33 nations. And we, as other free peoples, are locked in a world struggle with dangerous adversaries. There remains the necessity to remain alert and to sustain our effort, but there are also reasons for a measure of confidence and satisfaction.

Situation in Southeast Asia

In Southeast Asia in 1961 both Laos and South Viet-Nam were gravely threatened by Communist guerrilla offensives supplied and directed from North Viet-Nam. A Soviet airlift was transporting arms directly to Laotian rebels. At Vienna, in June 1961, President Kennedy and Chairman Khrushchev agreed that Laos should become an independent, neutral nation.³ Agreements signed at Geneva last

³ For text of a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. communique, see *ibid.*, June 26, 1961, p. 999.

July⁴ and the formation of a Lao Government of National Union provided a basis on which the armed conflict could be ended and the country unified.

In accordance with the Geneva agreements we withdrew our personnel training the Lao Army and have given our support to Prince Souvanna Phouma, the Prime Minister of the coalition government. However, we are not convinced that the agreements are being loyally supported by the Pathet Lao and the regime in Hanoi. The Viet Minh still have military cadres in Laos, and the Pathet Lao have obstructed the Prime Minister's attempt to effect a national reconciliation.

The Geneva agreements created an opportunity for the landlocked people of Laos to be left alone to work out their own future without outside interference. We shall continue to bend all our efforts to assure that the Geneva agreements are enforced. For what could be a satisfactory solution will remain precarious and old dangers revived if solemn pledges are not fully observed.

In South Viet-Nam, where the Communist aggression attained very serious dimensions in 1961, we took decisive action to help Viet-Nam defend itself. The momentum of the Communist drive has been stopped. Complete victory for South Viet-Nam is not just around the corner, but the guerrillas are losing ground and the number of guerrilla attacks has declined significantly. Major deficiencies in training, intelligence, and mobility have been repaired; government forces have the initiative and are using it with growing effect.

Both the Vietnamese and we recognize that this is a political and social struggle as well as a military conflict. The Government of South Viet-Nam is pushing programs designed both to improve rural life and to provide better protection against Communist assaults and terror tactics. We are confident that they are on the right track and that, with our help, the brave and capable people of South Viet-Nam will preserve their independence and steadily eradicate the Communist infestation.

⁴ For texts of a Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos and an accompanying protocol, see *ibid.*, Aug. 13, 1962, p. 259.

In the Congo President Kennedy decided that our national interest would best be served by giving full effect to President Eisenhower's decision to support the United Nations in a determined effort to restore order and tranquillity in the face of outside interference. There have been many difficulties along the way, from the very moment of independence in July 1960. But the Congolese have frustrated Communist designs on their country, and the several secessionist movements, of which Katanga was one and a Communist-leaning regime in Stanleyville another, have been unsuccessful. The Congo is still faced with serious problems, but the foundations have been laid for economic recovery and political stability in this potentially rich country in the heart of Africa.

In Europe, West Berlin continues to thrive in freedom. We believe that the Soviet leaders understand that when President Kennedy said we had vital interests there, he meant it—that we and our allies are prepared to do whatever may be necessary to protect the freedom of that city.

Soviet Military Elements in Cuba

Turning to Cuba, President Kennedy said again at his press conference last week [February 7] that we are reasonably certain that the offensive weapons deployed there under a blanket of secrecy have now been removed. We cannot, of course, be absolutely certain that none remains, in the absence of on-the-spot inspection. But we do not believe that forces now in Cuba represent a serious military threat to the security of this country or of our neighbors. Much of the information on which this judgment is based was set forth in detail last week by Secretary of Defense [Robert S.] McNamara. In the background is the fact which both sides fully understand—that the armed forces of the United States and its neighbors in the hemisphere will insure that arms in Cuba will not be used outside Cuba.

At the same time certain Soviet troops remain in Cuba. As we have said before, we in the Western Hemisphere cannot accept as normal any Soviet military presence in this hemisphere. The authorities in Moscow and Habana must recognize that Soviet military

elements in Cuba do not insure the peace of Cuba but poison the atmosphere and increase the dangers. The sooner this source of potential trouble is eliminated, the better for everyone concerned.

Cuba will not become a base for offensive military operations against other countries of this hemisphere for the simple reason that it will not be permitted to play that role. Communist subversion in Latin America, whether connected with Cuba or not, is being met by the individual and joint actions of the American states. The continuing economic, psychological, and political isolation of the Cuban regime not only protects others from this source of infection but brings home to the people of Cuba that there is no future along the Marxist-Leninist path.

Communism and the Hemisphere

Having failed in the fifties to prevent the establishment of a Communist regime in Cuba, the United States and its hemispheric partners now face the more difficult problem of finding a cure. The hemisphere is unanimous that the present regime in Cuba is incompatible with the inter-American system and that the policy of the hemisphere must be directed toward the return of a free Cuba to the American family of nations. Precise steps to give effect to this policy must take into realistic account all the elements involved; there are no easy and cheap solutions in a nuclear age. Great risks must be accepted to meet great threats, but issues affecting the life and death of nations must be treated with the sober responsibility exhibited by President Kennedy last fall.

Apart from the crisis over offensive weapons last October,⁵ the most important development with regard to Cuba has been the decline of Castro as a symbol of the popular demand for economic and social reform. The betrayal of the Cuban revolution to Communist imperialism has made its indelible mark on Latin America, and those who aspire to change want none of the Castro brand. Communism now benefits from the harsh conditions of life in the hemisphere, conditions which the Alliance for

Progress was designed to improve as a free alternative to the Castro brand of revolution.

Throughout the world communism itself has been losing its appeal as more and more people have come to understand its true nature and objectives. Its inefficiency is underscored by the chronic food shortages in the Communist empires. Its failures as a system of society are dramatized by the fact that it has to string barbed wire and build walls to keep its own people in.

International communism is no longer a single, coordinated world movement. The leaders of its two main branches are quarreling among themselves. We should not draw too much comfort from that quarrel, for it is over methods, not objectives. Both sides are intent on destroying us; both are determined to impose their system on all the people of the earth. But the rift subtracts from the strength as well as the luster of the Communist movement. Throughout the Communist world we see the forces of nationalism at work. And increasingly in the Soviet Union, as well as in Eastern Europe, we see pressures of human beings for more personal freedom.

⁵ For background, see *ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1962, p. 715.

MARCH 18, 1963

Secretary Rusk Holds Press and Radio News Briefing at Houston

Following is the transcript of a press and radio news briefing held by Secretary Rusk at Houston, Texas, on February 26 preceding his address before the Texas Daily Newspaper Association.¹

Press release 107 dated February 27

Secretary Rusk: I have no prepared statement. Since time is short let's start with your questions.

Q. Mr. Secretary, what steps are being taken to prevent aggression or subversion in this hemisphere from Cuba?

A. The hemisphere has made it very clear that it will not accept any armed aggression out of Cuba; so that point is very clear to all sides.

The question of other steps with regard to Cuba involves a lot of action by a great many governments, both in the hemisphere and outside, to underline that Cuba must not become a source of infection for the hemisphere, to underline that Castro and Castroism will not be accepted as a part of the hemispheric system, that Marxist-Leninism must be eliminated from this hemisphere, that normal relations between the regime in Cuba and its neighbors cannot be expected. The reduction, for example, in shipping and trade has been going on to such a point that both shipping and trade with the free world during 1963 will be the smallest fraction of what it had been, and it will be of insignificant importance. Both individual and joint action in the hemisphere by governments with respect to subversive threats is now being taken.

We are, of course, as the President has indicated, very much interested in the continued outmovement of these Soviet forces. In October and November the missiles and bombers were removed; certain equipment was removed at that time. It has been indicated that several

thousand additional Soviet forces will be removed between now and the middle of March. So we are watching all that with very great concern.

But this presence in the hemisphere cannot be accepted as a matter of policy by the hemisphere, and steps will be taken to underline that and to give it force and effect.

Q. Does this mean, then, with Castro trying to export his revolution to some other Latin American countries, if we know that arms are coming from Cuba directly to support these clandestine revolutions, the U.S. and the OAS [Organization of American States] will take action?

A. Action will be taken to interrupt and intercept that kind of movement. Yes.

Q. Mr. Secretary, will you clarify for us what the orders are now to the Air Force regarding another shooting incident on the shrimp boat, for instance?

A. Well, those orders were of course issued by the Defense Department, and the statement was made by the Defense Department on that subject. They have orders to protect American shipping in international waters against attacks, and they, I am sure, will press that with vigor.

Q. Mr. Secretary, it is announced now or admitted now by the administration that four Americans were killed in the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion. Why was this information only brought out at this time? Why not in advance?

A. Well, quite frankly, I was not aware of these four cases, and I asked to get information on that when I left Washington. But I have not as yet had it; so I think I had perhaps better leave those comments to Washington at this time.

¹ See p. 383.

Secretary Rusk Addresses Advertising Council

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April 1, 1963

Secretary Rusk spoke informally before the annual conference of the Advertising Council at Washington on March 12. Following is the text of his remarks, together with an introduction by McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President, and the transcript of a question-and-answer period.

Some Comments on Cuba

Anticipating, perhaps, one or two of your questions, I'd like to make some comments on Cuba. (Laughter.)

The objective of the hemisphere and of the United States with respect to Cuba must be—and it is—the return of a free Cuba to this hemisphere. On this the hemisphere is unanimous. The foreign ministers themselves unanimously have stated this as the central theme of hemisphere policy toward that island.

Now, we are discovering with regard to Cuba that, having failed to take the steps that might

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have prevented in years past the establishment of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba, the problem of finding a cure is more difficult. (And let me say parenthetically that this factor alone gives highest priority to an effective and vigorous Alliance for Progress program throughout the hemisphere, because we must anticipate and try to prevent these situations, because the cure becomes so much more difficult.)

Well, let me remind you of some of the elements in the policy and action which are now being pursued with respect to Cuba, because we seldom see these more or less put together all in one place.

It has been made very clear that under no circumstances can the United States accept or tolerate the reintroduction of offensive weapons into Cuba and that, if that should occur, the crisis of last October would look relatively trivial compared to the crisis that would be engendered by any such fresh episode of that sort.

Secondly, it has been made very clear that the armed forces of the hemisphere, including our own, are made available to insure that arms that are now in Cuba not be used outside of Cuba, either in terms of organized effort or through piecemeal infiltration of those arms into other countries of the hemisphere. And the most diligent efforts are being made by us and others to insure that there is not that kind of surreptitious arms traffic in this hemisphere, a policy accepted unanimously by the OAS long since.

Third, we must keep taking a look at Cuba to assure ourselves as well as we can about what is going on in that island—a surveillance which we feel, and which we are confident, is thoroughly based upon the OAS structure and the OAS resolutions, but a surveillance which we believe is necessary under all the circumstances.

Fourth, to protect the free and active use of international waters and airspace in the general vicinity of Cuba and to enforce that use by armed force, if necessary.

Then we have felt, along with many other of our allies, that the kind of Cuban regime that we have today not only is not fit to participate as a regime in the activities of the inter-American system but that, with its declaration of subversive and other types of war upon the hemisphere, it is not entitled to normal economic or other relations with the free world.

And so there has been a systematic discussion with other governments about the restriction of trade between the free world and Cuba and about the restriction of shipping between the free world and Cuba.

The statistics on both of those show a dramatic decline in the economic relationships between Cuba and the rest of the free world. I think we will find that 1963 will almost surely result in almost complete isolation of Cuba from the free world in such transactions.

Then we have the continued problem of the degree of penetration of the rest of the hemisphere coming through Cuba or leaning upon Cuba in terms of subversive effort, the flow of funds, the training of individuals from other countries in Cuba to be returned for nefarious purposes back to their own country. This is a problem which technically is difficult because of the legal and constitutional problems in exist-

ence in some countries but nevertheless is a matter of highest priority among the countries, particularly in the Caribbean area at the present time, and very substantial gains are being made in that respect.

We must look forward to a time when all Soviet military elements are out of Cuba. The penetration of this hemisphere by Marxist-Leninism is itself incompatible with the hemisphere and its commitments.

The presence of Soviet forces in this hemisphere cannot be accepted as a part of the normal situation in this hemisphere. Now, the missiles have gone out; the bombers have gone out; Soviet forces have been moving out.

We will have, I think, a more complete report on just what this amounts to sometime after the middle of the month, because of the recent indication from the Soviet Union that they were taking out several thousand of them before the end of the month. But the continued outflow of Soviet military personnel itself must be and is an object of policy.

In other words, the actions that are being taken include, I think, the actions that can reasonably be taken under all the circumstances, short of the actual launching of an armed at-

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tack upon Cuba, which is not a part of our policy at the present time.

That is an action which is easy to think of and in a certain highly theoretical sense is always easy to employ. But this type of action involves costs and risks which have to be related not only to the degree of the threat which exists in Cuba but also to problems for which we are responsible in other parts of the world.

Now, this is about where we are. I think the situation in Cuba is making it clear to the Cuban people that this present course is not a course on which they can find a fit future for themselves. And it's making it very clear also to the rest of the hemisphere that Castroism does not hold within itself any promise for the economical and social development of the people of this hemisphere.

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Secretary Rusk's News Conference of May 29

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June 17, 1963

Q. Mr. Secretary, the President at his last news conference [May 22] indicated representations had been made to Moscow about the removal of the Soviet troops in Cuba. Could you tell us, sir, whether in your conversations with Mr. Dobrynin or in any other matter you have had any encouraging word along that line?

A. Well, I wouldn't wish to comment on the content of my discussions with Mr. Dobrynin at this stage. I think that the Soviet Union does understand that from our point of view a Soviet military presence in Cuba is a major obstacle to normal or good relations between ourselves and the Soviet Union and is a major

obstacle between Cuba and the rest of the Western Hemisphere. The other great obstacle is any attempt by Cuba to interfere in the internal affairs of any other country in this hemisphere.

It is our policy that this Soviet military presence should disappear. We of course are watching that situation closely, and we think that there has been a significant reduction in Soviet forces in Cuba (as indicated in April by the President), but I think that is perhaps all I should say today on that point.

* For text of a U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency statement of Apr. 5, 1963, see *ibid.*, Apr. 22, 1963, p. 600.

May 6, 1963

Some Current Issues in U.S. Foreign Policy

Secretary Rusk, Under Secretary Ball, and Under Secretary Harriman spoke informally before the American Society of Newspaper Editors at Washington on April 18. Following are transcripts of their remarks and of the question-and-answer periods which followed.

Q. Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question?

Mr. Brucker: Sure.

Q. Senator Keating said at lunch—this is quoted from the, you know, his speech—that the Department of State recently played a key role in blocking Russian-language broadcasts that Radio Liberty had originally proposed to beam to Soviet personnel in Cuba. And he went on to say that all day the Latin American and Cuban broadcasts and Soviet broadcasts are beamed to South America, yet our country held back an organization that wanted to broadcast some Russian-language stuff to that personnel. Do you know anything about that, Mr. Secretary?

A. Well, I believe that there is—there have been this week news tickers indicating that those broadcasts are going forward.

Q. They were held up, though, weren't they?

A. There was a problem about whether the United States Government itself would organize such broadcasts, because we did not wish to—want to—put the stamp of permanency on those Russian troops in Cuba or to take any step which would make them think we were going to let them make themselves at home there or that we are going to let them settle down and make themselves comfortable. But those broadcasts are going on at the present time and have been for, I think, about a week.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Mr. Secretary, we have a Congressman out our way who keeps saying that there are a large number of Red Chinese in Cuba, as well as a large number of Russians. Can you say with certainty that this is not so?

A. Well, there are some Red Chinese in Cuba. We understand there are a number there, for

example, in all fields, as agricultural technicians. But there is also, I think, a large pre-Castro Chinese community in Habana—my understanding is several thousand—and some of the reports which we have received on the presence of Chinese there check out to be references to the Chinese who were there earlier. Now, there are a substantial number of Red Chinese there—exactly what figure I would use, I would not wish to indicate, but I should think several hundred Red Chinese were in Cuba.

Mr. Brucker: Is there a further question?

Soviet Military Presence in Cuba

Q. Mr. Secretary, you stated that it was the policy of the State Department not to accept the military presence of the Soviet military in Cuba. You stated that, I believe, it is the policy of the State Department not to accept the Soviet military presence in Cuba as a normal state of affairs.

Now, according to the public reports, Soviet troops have been in Cuba about 8 months now. I presume this is regarded as an abnormal condition. At what point would the State Department consider the presence of the Soviet troops there to become normal rather than abnormal? If they are still there a year from now, would it be considered as an abnormal condition? (Laughter.)

A. We have been since October doing what we can to keep the outtraffic of Soviet forces moving. You recall that some weeks ago I had had a talk with Mr. Dobrynin [Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin] on the subject and that several thousand additional troops did leave Cuba during the month of March. This is a question that it is not dead; it is not inactive. We have made it very clear to the Soviet Union that their troops in Cuba are not acceptable in this hemisphere and that their military presence there is itself a continuing source of danger and that it is in the interest of everybody concerned that they get out.

But to take up your particular question about dates—a moving from normality to abnormality, or vice versa—I wouldn't want to speculate about dates.

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The Stake in Viet-Nam

Press release 213, revised, dated April 22

ADDRESS BY SECRETARY RUSK¹

¹ Made before the Economic Club of New York at New York, N.Y. on Apr. 22.

QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIOD

General Kenneth Royall: Mr. Secretary, no comment is really needed. The response of this audience and their enthusiasm, their intense interest while you talked, would be enough. But I cannot help feeling that this statement you made today is an important one, not only as to the countries you referred to but it's a call to the courage and stability which has rarely been equaled in these recent years. And we all thank you again for your presentation.

We now come to the question period, for which we have about 28 minutes. Questions will be asked alternatively by Mr. Armand Erpf, partner of Loeb, Rhoades and Company, who will question Mr. Hayes,² and from Mr. J. Wilson Newman, chairman of Dun and Bradstreet, who will question Mr. Rusk. Mr. Erpf, will you first proceed and be followed by Mr. Newman?

[Question by Mr. Erpf and answer by Mr. Hayes.]

Mr. Newman: Mr. Secretary, first is a preliminary inquiry to my main question. In these troubled times, when all of us have become very mindful of the importance of the public interest, and being aware of the seriousness of the talk which you have just delivered, I would like to know first, sir, if I should raise a few selective questions, is there any risk that I may say something prejudicial to national security?

Secretary Rusk: There is nothing embarrassing about questions. The answers might be embarrassing. [Laughter.] But you leave that to me. You go right ahead.

Mr. Newman: Well, now, Mr. Secretary, in view of the fact that you have devoted practically all of your remarks to Viet-Nam and Laos, does this mean that these subjects rank highest in importance facing this nation? Or

does it mean that such matters as Cuba, Berlin, and South America are further down the line, or you would rather not talk about it?

Secretary Rusk: No, not at all. I indicated earlier that I do not wish to inhibit the questions in any way. I elected to use my 20 minutes to talk about a particular subject because I think that it's too easy to skip right across an entire range, and I wanted to dig into at least one of them and one that is far away and not very well understood in this country, in order to get into some of the anatomy of the problem. But I would welcome questions on any of these subjects you would want to get into. You shoot the questions.

Mr. Newman: Well, obviously I thought I would have a few minutes to think it up, sir. [Laughter.] But, to begin with, I wonder if you would state, sir, your understanding of the Monroe Doctrine and what the policy of the United States is just now with respect to it.

Secretary Rusk: Well, I think all of us know the tradition behind the Monroe Doctrine. We are more interested in half of it these days than we are in the other half, because we are deeply involved in European and other affairs which were eschewed by the Monroe Doctrine. But what is even more important today is the treaty structure of the hemisphere, the security arrangements of the hemisphere and such things as the Rio Pact.

Now, as a matter of policy, as a matter of policy objective, the hemisphere has unanimously agreed that a Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba is incompatible with the institutions of the Western Hemisphere and that the aim must be to welcome a free Cuban people back into this hemisphere.

Now, as I pointed out just a few days ago in another place,³ the actions that are now being taken fall into three main categories. The first has to do with the commitment of the Armed Forces of the United States and other armed forces of this hemisphere to accomplish certain purposes: one, to insure that there not be introduced back into Cuba offensive weapons which will threaten the security of this hemi-

¹ Alfred Hayes, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, spoke before Secretary Rusk on "Strengthening the U.S. Balance of Payments."

³ For text of remarks made by Secretary Rusk before the American Society of Newspaper Editors at Washington, D.C., on Apr. 18, see BULLETIN of May 6, 1963, p. 679.

sphere; secondly, to keep the kind of eye on Cuba, the watchfulness on Cuba to assure us that that is the case in that particular island—to insure that there is the safe and free use of international waters and airspace in the Caribbean area without interference from the island of Cuba; to insure that there will not be arms shipped from Cuba to other parts of the hemisphere illicitly against inter-American orders, or any other type of foray from Cuba against those other countries; and also to insure that there not be repeated in Cuba the situation which was demonstrated in Hungary some time ago about the use of Soviet arms to impose a political solution against the will of Cubans on the spot.

A second course of combination of actions has to do with insuring that this Marxist-Leninist regime does not offer any future for the Cuban people, or any example for the rest of the hemisphere in terms of economic and social development. There has been a drastic reduction in normal relations, economic, fiscal, and otherwise, between Cuba and the rest of the free world. This has to do with trade, with shipping, with all the transactions which have to do with the economy of the island. That is having an important impact upon the country inside the island and is raising the price rapidly for the other side if they try to maintain the present position there.

And a third set of actions has to do with the rest of the hemisphere: to insure that any attempt from Cuba to send funds, personnel, agents, into other countries will be interrupted and also—and most important of all—to insure that these other countries of the hemisphere and their peoples really understand that economic and social development, and rapid economic and social development, is something that is to be undertaken through free institutions and that it is the free world that has the more adequate answer for that solution.

I think the result of all these steps in the hemisphere has been sharply to cut down on Castro's—the bloom of Castro's original revolution. I think he has been abandoned throughout the hemisphere by all but the hard-core Communist apparatus in country after country. By and large there are few organizations that still pay him some attention.

Now, there remains the question of the presence of Soviet forces, which we have indicated to the Soviet Union, and have declared, cannot be accepted as a normal state of affairs in this hemisphere. Those forces have been moving out. It is our purpose to see that they do continue that movement out. And the question is how, when, under what circumstances. The presence of those forces here is itself a source of danger, itself a major intrusion into the possibilities of relations between the West and the East on any kind of a normal basis, and is an irritant which ought to be removed.

Now, there still remains the question of invasion or a major act of war in dealing with that situation. Let me say to you that if someone says to me, "I want to invade Cuba and take all the consequences of that step, whatever they are," I will honor you for an idea which at least has some integrity. But let's not kid ourselves that waving missiles is going to cause the other side to roll over and play dead. If you want to do all sorts of drastic things on the assumption that no shooting will result, just don't entertain any such illusion. It is necessary to incur very great risks in order to meet great threats. And that was demonstrated last October. And if anyone is under the impression that there was not a very great risk involved last October, then you must catch up to date with the facts.

But it is not my judgment that the threat in Cuba at the present time warrants the escalation of violence which would be involved in direct military action against that island. And direct military action of that sort is something for which we must remain responsible and which we must not put in the hands of those who do not carry the responsibilities which we do for our own people and for situations in other parts of the world.

So I would like to have those who want to do more about Cuba be more precise than the use of general language, because practically everything that can be done, short of the use of armed forces, is being done and is having very considerable effect. Thank you.

[Question by Mr. Erpf and answer by Mr. Hayes.]

Secretary Rusk: Mr. Chairman, may I buy just a little piece of that one? [Laughter.]