PHILIP NASH

THE OTHER MISSILES OF OCTOBER

EISENHOWER, KENNEDY, AND THE JUPITERS 1957–1963

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TAKING

THEM

OUT

1962–1963

6 A VERY TIDY JOB

I feel as though we [have] won. This is the payoff for our policy of strength and reliance on the United States.

A Turkish newspaper editor, reacting to the publicly announced settlement of the missile crisis, 28 October 1962

Those [Jupiters] are going to be out of there by April 1 if we have to shoot them out.

John McNaughton, 29 October 1962

The Cuban missile crisis did not abruptly end on 28 October 1962. American and Soviet negotiators in New York wrangled over issues such as verification and the removal of Soviet IL-28 bomber aircraft from Cuba, and not until 20 November could Kennedy announce that the IL-28s would also leave Cuba and that he was lifting the naval blockade of the island. The Jupiter missiles remained an important issue during this last phase of the crisis and for months beyond. Kennedy had to clarify the nature of the missile deal with the Soviets, keep the agreement secret from just about everybody, and, of course, see that the Jupiters were actually dismantled.[1]

FINALIZING THE DEAL, LAUNCHING THE REMOVAL

On 29 October, Dobrynin presented the attorney general with a letter from Premier Khrushchev to President Kennedy. In it, Khrushchev acknowledged that removal of the Jupiters was a delicate issue for the United States, but he also expressed the hope that an accord on it would "mean taking a step—a far from unimportant one, too—toward easing international tensions." This in turn might "serve as a welcome incentive to the solution" of other problems of international security. The Kennedys read the letter, and then RFK met again with Dobrynin the next day. Robert Kennedy's notes recall what he told the Soviet ambassador:

> Read letter—Studied it over night.
> No quid pro quo as I told you.
> The letter makes it appear that there was.
> You asked me about missile bases in Turkey. I told you we would be out of them—4–5 months. That still holds. . . . You have my word on this & that is sufficient.

> Take back your letter—Reconsider it & if you feel it is necessary to write letters then we will also write one which you cannot enjoy.
>
> Also if you should publish any document indicating a deal then it is off & also if done afterward will further affect the relationship.

In Dobrynin's report to Moscow on the meeting, rather than declaring "no quid pro quo," RFK twice stated that the president "affirm[ed] the agreement" on removal of the Jupiters. Nor did RFK appear as threatening as he portrayed himself, and he added, interestingly, that any written agreement "could cause irreparable harm to [his] political career in the future" should it surface. However, the two accounts agree that the Kennedys returned Khrushchev's letter and flatly refused to create any paper trail.[2]

Dobrynin informed RFK on 1 November that Khrushchev agreed not to press for a formal agreement and "had no doubt that the President would keep his word." Indeed, because of the damage he expected to Soviet relations with Cuba—Castro, like the Turks, made it clear he would have deeply resented his relegation to pawn status—Khrushchev soon came to appreciate the absence of a public trade. In their busy correspondence over the following weeks, neither leader raised the Jupiter issue again, although while drafting Kennedy's letters, ExComm had to remind itself about the Cuba-Turkey analogy. This was undoubtedly the reason why the committee excised from JFK's 6 November letter a paragraph in which the president asks Khrushchev how he "would have felt if the situation had been reversed and if a similar effort had been made by [the United States] in a country like Finland."[3]

The day after Khrushchev came to terms, Defense Secretary McNamara summoned DOD general counsel John McNaughton, already becoming the trusted assistant who would later immerse himself in policy making on Vietnam. "John," McNamara remembers saying, "get those missiles out of Turkey. . . . Cut them up. Saw them up. Take photographs of them. Deliver the photographs to me. . . . Do it!" "I don't want you to ask any questions about it," he also told McNaughton. "I don't want you to say to anybody else why it's being done, 'cause I'm not going to tell you." Thus began the effort to remove the Jupiters.[4]

McNamara claims that he ordered the Jupiters photographed so that he "could personally see that those missiles had been destroyed." Still, this request is curious in light of several facts: the secretary of defense was obviously not in the habit of demanding photographic proof that his directives had been carried out; the Jupiter–SS-4 trade was explicit, and the United

States verified removal of the Soviet missiles using low-level aerial reconnaissance; and yet clearly Washington was not about to let the Soviets reciprocate by overflying Turkey and Italy. Is it possible, then, that McNamara passed the photos of the dismantled Jupiters on to the Soviets, to prove to them that Kennedy had upheld his side of the deal? McNamara writes that he does "not believe copies of the photos were ever given to the Soviets," but the intriguing possibility that they were remains.[5]

In any case, McNaughton formed and chaired an interdepartmental task force in accordance with his chief's instructions. Virtually no information is available about this task force, but clearly haste was its hallmark; it first met immediately after the crisis, on 29 October. Even more striking, McNaughton opened the session by proclaiming, "Those missiles are going to be out of there by April 1 if we have to shoot them out." The date 1 April is not coincidental; it lay five months ahead, the outside length of time RFK had told Dobrynin the administration would need to take the Jupiters down. Moreover, at least superficially the U.S. removal effort was conforming to superpower symmetry: with urgent talk of photographic verification and "shooting them out," ironically, administration officials were referring to NATO Jupiters in Turkey as they had to Soviet SS-4s in Cuba.[6]

TWO INTERNAL COVER-UPS

In reality, the U.S.-Soviet missile agreement of 27 October existed not between the two governments but between only the highest levels of each government, to the exclusion and deception of all levels below. This fact led to two-tiered behavior among both Soviets and Americans. At the highest level, the Americans sought to fulfill their part of the missile bargain and dismantle the Jupiters by 1 April, and the Soviets sat and watched, hoping that Kennedy would keep his word. At the lower levels, in the dark as to what had transpired at the top, U.S. and Soviet officials understandably continued to act as they had before—the Soviets raised the issue of immediate Jupiter removal, and the Americans refused to discuss it.

Most of the Americans, that is. An exception was George Kennan, whose 1957 warning about the IRBM deployments had proven so astoundingly accurate. Now, five years later, from his ambassadorial post in Yugoslavia, he suggested to Rusk that the resolution of the missile crisis had created an excellent opportunity for improving U.S.-Soviet relations through "a series of reciprocal unilateral concessions." An example of such a move Washington

could make to start the ball rolling, he cited in his ignorance of the missile trade, was a statement that it proposed to raise with the Turks and NATO the question of the future of the Turkish Jupiters.[7]

The dominant attitude, however, was that which drove Lauris Norstad, soon to step down as SACEUR, to launch a preemptive strike against any postcrisis Jupiter withdrawal. "To permit the question of missiles in Turkey to be raised again," he wrote to the president personally on 1 November, "would seem to deny the soundness of your position on the Soviet missiles in Cuba." Even to discuss the issue would divide, demoralize, and provoke opposition in the alliance. In his reply to Norstad, however, Kennedy avoided the IRBM issue altogether.[8]

Norstad's warning was ahead of its time by only a few days. Although the explicit missile trade remained a tightly held secret, during the first week of November word of the impending Jupiter removal could not help but spread swiftly throughout the administration. Opposition to the new policy arose just as quickly, as is clear from a memo Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs William Tyler sent to Dean Rusk on 9 November. Tyler argued that although the Jupiters were "obsolescing," they remained "a significant military asset of NATO." More important, "from a political point of view, it would be highly inadvisable for the U.S. to associate itself" with a withdrawal effort *"at any time in the near future,"* although it could do so ultimately—*after* a substitute force in which the Italians and Turks could take part was up and running. Tyler stressed that his admonition had gained newfound urgency because he and his colleagues at State had just gotten wind of McNamara's instructions for removal before May 1963. He added that Paul Nitze too was "vigorously opposed" but felt he was "under direct orders" from McNamara. Tyler appended a seven-page supporting memorandum that he suggested Rusk send to the president.[9]

Rusk followed the recommendation the same day. "Though I share your concern about maintaining the Turkish and Italian Jupiter missiles," he wrote to JFK in his cover memo, "I have concluded that, [on] balance, it would be undesirable to undertake action leading to their being phased out in the near future." Rusk's action is strange considering his knowledge of the explicit missile deal and the "four- to five-month" time frame RFK had agreed on with Dobrynin on 27 October. Perhaps Rusk did not consider four to five months to be "in the near future," or had changed his mind about the advisability or feasibility of withdrawing the missiles so quickly, or accepted the policy but was creating a false paper trail in case it went awry, or sent the memo to appease his subordinates, knowing that it would have no effect.[10]

Whichever the case, Tyler and Rusk were quickly joined by other officials. Jeffrey Kitchen, a midlevel State Department official, wrote to Robert Komer, one of Bundy's most influential NSC assistants, that even though he had long considered the IRBM deployments "military and deterrence nonsense," he nevertheless felt "more strongly than on any single problem since [he] returned to government . . . that precipitate attempts to obtain removal of these weapons would do the U.S. great damage." Komer, in turn, seconded the objections from State; early withdrawal, he warned Bundy, would harm the credibility of the United States with Pakistan and Iran as well as NATO, while encouraging Khrushchev. It could, in short "create one hell of a mess" and "undermine [the United States'] whole success in Cuba."[11]

Although the evidence is spotty, Kennedy clearly ignored or deflected these worries bubbling up to his office. He went ahead with "precipitate" removal of the Jupiters and did nothing to lessen the ignorance of the foreign policy bureaucracy. In speaking to subordinates, some top officials denied the existence of a trade while indicating that removing the Jupiters "on grounds of obsolescence [would] soon require attention," as McNamara had to the Joint Chiefs on 29 October. Midlevel officials in the State Department objected to the firm 1 April deadline, and they must have wondered when top policymakers continued to insist on that date. But U.S. officials would continue to coinhabit this split-level house even beyond the removal of the missiles. Just before leaving for Moscow to negotiate a nuclear test ban treaty in July 1963, Averell Harriman "was sure the Russians would not agree to an inspection quota acceptable to [the United States] unless he had, as he liked to put it, 'some goodies in his luggage,' " Arthur Schlesinger later wrote. Harriman "thus regretted the fact" that the United States had unilaterally withdrawn the Jupiters from Turkey and Italy three months earlier: "If he only had them to trade now!"[12]

Soviet diplomats and propagandists, having been similarly denied knowledge of the trade, acted as if removal of the Jupiters was still a goal they should pursue. On 29 October, for instance, the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Budapest asked a U.S. diplomat when Washington was going to reply to Khrushchev's trade offer of the 27th. The Soviet ambassador in Bonn raised the issue with West German diplomats as well. On the 29th and 30th, Soviet radio demanded liquidation of the Turkish bases. And Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Kuznetzov, head of the Soviet delegation sent to New York to hammer out a final settlement of the crisis with Stevenson and McCloy, said he wanted to discuss broader issues including the Turkish bases. The president, understandably concerned, instructed his delegation to keep the focus

narrow, which it did. McCloy, as ignorant of Kennedy's missile concession as Kuznetzov was, warned him over lunch on 4 November against dragging the Jupiter issue into their talks. "It bears no relation," he said, "to the Caribbean or the Western Hemisphere." It was a lunch of the mutually uninformed.[13]

Even Anastas Mikoyan, whom Khrushchev would have let in on the secret if anyone, was either clueless or careless enough to resurrect the Jupiter issue in a meeting with JFK on 29 November. Kennedy had stumbled upon the broader issue in an equally careless way, according to Mikoyan's memorandum of conversation, by asking his visitor "half in jest" whether the Soviets "would be able to sleep soundly if in, say, Finland there unexpectedly turned out to be 100 missiles targeted on the Soviet Union." Mikoyan replied that Soviets "slept soundly" because the only missiles stationed "next door" were those in Turkey, which he incorrectly thought were "in the hands of the Americans." Kennedy then merely remarked that the "missile bases in Turkey and Italy did not mean much," and that his administration "was studying the expediency of keeping those bases." It is as if the president was unsure whether Mikoyan was in on the secret and thus thought it best to assume he was not. Understandably, Kennedy and Khrushchev had not coordinated the remarkable cover-ups they were directing against their own subordinates.[14]

ONE EXTERNAL COVER-UP

On the missile-deal aspect of the Cuban crisis resolution, at least, Khrushchev had it easy. Having neither made any concessions nor acted from any motives that were not already public, and leading a closed government responsible to no independent institutions, all he had to do was keep quiet about the U.S. Jupiter concession. Kennedy, by contrast, had to work to drape a "cloak of secrecy" over it, although because he held the secret so closely, he could rely on most of his subordinates to help cover it up unwittingly—and convincingly, because they sincerely thought there had been no trade. Enduring in its intensive version for several months—and then lingering more subtly for several years—this subterfuge assumed several forms.

First and foremost, the administration directed the cover-up toward the U.S. Congress. Soon after Kennedy's public announcement of the impending Jupiter removal, some lawmakers on Capitol Hill began suspecting that it bore some relationship to the Cuban missile crisis. They asked about this in committee, and the administration denied it unequivocally.

SENATOR STENNIS: [Withdrawal of the Jupiters] has nothing to do with the Cuban situation or anything like that.

MCNAMARA: Absolutely not . . . the Soviet Government did raise the issue . . . [but the] President absolutely refused even to discuss it. He wouldn't even reply other than that he would not discuss the issue at all.

Dean Rusk was not to be outdone.

SENATOR HICKENLOOPER: The removal of the missiles from Turkey . . . was in no way, shape or form, directly or indirectly, connected with the settlement, the discussions or the manipulations of the Cuban situation?

RUSK: That is correct, sir.

"We denied in every forum that there was any deal," Bundy later wrote, adding a monument to qualification, "and in the narrowest sense what we said was usually true, as far as it went."[15]

Besides flat denials, the administration used other tactics on Congress. One was to cite the Jupiters' maintenance costs, which McNamara put at $1 million per missile per year. When faced with a particularly good question—why was the administration taking the Jupiters out so quickly?—officials either ducked or explained that they did not want to be caught in another crisis, which might erupt any moment at a flashpoint like Berlin, with these vulnerable missiles still in place. Nor did they shy away from torturous logic, which they used in written answers to the questions of Senator Milward Simpson (R-Wyo.). "The replacement of the obsolescent Jupiters could scarcely be part of any agreement . . . with Khrushchev," they argued, "since the net effect of this replacement will be to strengthen [NATO's] military capabilities." But the approach they took most often was also their best: invoke modernization. The crisis had driven home the Jupiters' obsolescence, they argued, and this was only one system among many that should be replaced with newer, less vulnerable weapons, in this case the Polaris SLBM.[16]

In approaching Congress, the administration also dusted off the February 1961 JCAE subcommittee report. In his testimony, McNamara quoted the portions of it that had recommended cancellation of the Turkish deployment and substitution of Polaris submarines. Indeed, he mentioned the spring 1961 contacts with the Turks and then said, "It has taken from then until now to work this out"—implying that negotiations had been continuous,

which of course was not the case. The secretary suggested that the report "was the foundation" for the administration's attempts at removal. By citing the JCAE's earlier work as extensively as they did, administration officials deftly, if disingenuously, shifted some of the responsibility for removal back onto the same lawmakers who were asking awkward questions about the new policy.[17]

A second approach to the cover-up involved emphasizing or exaggerating all elements in the resolution of the crisis apart from the Jupiter deal. In April 1963, for example, Robert Kennedy gave a speech in which he claimed that on 27 October, the president had notified Khrushchev that "strong and overwhelming retaliatory action would be taken unless he received immediate notice that the [Cuban] missiles would be withdrawn." This, the first public reference by any administration official to a U.S. ultimatum, is particularly interesting in light of preponderant evidence indicating RFK and Dobrynin's agreement that the U.S. demand for a swift withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba was *not* to be understood as an ultimatum. In a similar vein, after again completely denying the existence of any missile deal, McNamara testified that on 27 October ExComm "faced . . . the possibility of launching nuclear weapons and Khrushchev knew it, and that [was] the reason, and the only reason, why he withdrew [his] weapons."[18]

Third, the Kennedy administration selected Adlai Stevenson as postcrisis scapegoat in such a way as to suggest that it had dismissed the idea of a missile trade. Stevenson was the obvious choice for fall guy; well known as dovish on international questions, outspoken in his support of a trade in early crisis deliberations, thoroughly disliked and distrusted by Kennedy and many of his top advisers, he fit the bill nicely. All it took was approval of a single leak to JFK's friend Charles Bartlett, who with Stewart Alsop was writing a major behind-the-scenes account of the crisis for the *Saturday Evening Post*. In their article, which hit newsstands on 1 December, a "nonadmiring official" leveled the worst possible charge: "Adlai wanted a Munich," that is, to "trade the Turkish, Italian, and British missile bases for the Cuban bases." The piece also had Stevenson as the lone peacenik bucking the ExComm consensus and Kennedy listening "politely" to his proposal and then rejecting it.[19]

"Adlai on Skids over Pacifist Stand in Cuba" read the subsequent *New York Daily News* headline, part of the international controversy the Alsop and Bartlett account had stirred. Angry and humiliated, Stevenson, like many others, assumed the accusation had been White House–inspired and probably intended to elicit his resignation. The latter supposition was wrong; for

purely practical reasons, Kennedy did not want him to step down. But JFK's claim in a private consolation letter to Stevenson—"I did not discuss the Cuban crisis or any of the events surrounding it with *any* newspapermen"—was a lie. Indeed, Kennedy probably was the "nonadmiring official" supplying the Munich quip, and he did discuss the article with Bartlett before publication, prevailed upon him to make several changes, and yet let the depiction of Stevenson stand. Publicly and privately, the president expressed his regret over the rumpus and continuing support for his UN ambassador but never disputed the charge against him. Kennedy probably treated Stevenson so shabbily in order to contain the ambassador's popularity—which his famous "hell-freezes-over" performance during the crisis had enhanced immensely—and thereby his independence. But the leak also served the purpose of staking out a first history of the missile crisis that marginalized the trade proposal as a kooky attempt at appeasement and thus something that ExComm, naturally, had not seriously considered—much less adopted.[20]

Fourth, policymakers acted as if they had been surprised by Khrushchev's 27 October trade proposal and puzzled over where he could have gotten the idea. Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Dean Rusk claimed that the administration "didn't know exactly why" Khrushchev demanded a trade, and again speculated about the Kreisky speech and Lippmann article. In early November, Kennedy feigned wonderment that Khrushchev had thought he could exact the abandonment of the Turkish bases. He also said he was annoyed and baffled by Lippmann's column advocating a trade.[21]

Fifth, when it came to suspicions that a trade had taken place, Kennedy's men were not above dismissing the messengers along with the message. In a letter to French political analyst Raymond Aron, Bundy wrote that those "who would spread rumors" about a Jupiter trade, "of course, must be pretty far gone in their mistrust of the United States to start with." This was an exception, however. Generally the administration did not resort to this approach, probably because it did not have to, with so many others available.[22]

Finally, the cover-up became institutionalized in the years after the removal, through a variety of means. One was the published government document, such as DOD's FY 1963 annual report, which made the incredible claim that Britain, Italy, and Turkey had "announced *their* decisions to phase out the IRBMs" stationed in their countries. Another technique was the interview. In one of these for a 1964 NBC White Paper on the missile crisis, for example, Bundy said that a missile trade "was the gravest kind of political danger" for the United States because if it had done that "at the point of a gun . . . the Atlantic Alliance might well have come unstuck." In

1967 Schlesinger went so far as to assert, according to an interviewer's notes, that "Turkey was Stevenson's idea." Interviews had a huge impact particularly through accounts that relied heavily on them, such as Elie Abel's *The Missile Crisis* (1966). But by far most useful and durable in preserving the cover-up, however inadvertent, was the insider history. In *A Thousand Days* (1965), Arthur Schlesinger allowed that "others" on ExComm had discussed the Jupiters besides Stevenson and that Stevenson had "changed his mind on this" by 21 October. But most important was his portrayal of the reaction to Khrushchev's "perplexing" trade offer: Kennedy "regarded the idea as unacceptable, and the swap was promptly rejected." Ted Sorensen, in *Kennedy* (1965), similarly wrote that the "President had no intention of destroying the alliance by backing down" and that it was the "vulnerable, provocative and marginal nature" of the Jupiters that "led to their quiet withdrawal" in 1963. *Kennedy* and *A Thousand Days*, both Book-of-the-Month Club selections, both dramatic, intimate, and authoritative, formed perhaps the sturdiest pillars of the cover-up. But they were only two among many.[23]

Fidel Castro, oddly enough, chiseled the first tiny crack in the cover-up. "One day, perhaps, it will be known," he said in an interview published in 1967, "that the United States made some concessions in relation to the October Crisis besides those which were made public." He was more direct in another interview, published in 1969: "Kennedy was willing to give up the Turkish and Greek [*sic*] bases." The first major, widely noticed break in the story appeared in RFK's *Thirteen Days*, and additional revelations have continued to seep out since. Only in 1989, however, did Ted Sorensen reveal the occurrence of an explicit missile trade. The cover-up had succeeded for more than a quarter century.[24]

THE DIPLOMACY OF WITHDRAWAL

On 10 December 1962, the president met with McNamara, Rusk, and Bundy to discuss strategy for the upcoming regular ministerial session of the North Atlantic Council in Paris. They agreed that Rusk and McNamara, who would attend the meeting, should use the opportunity to begin steering the alliance toward modernization of its missile force. But they also decided, according to the minutes, "that in light of the uncertainties surrounding the problem of multilateral and seaborne deterrents, it might be well to begin" side talks with the Turkish and Italian defense ministers "simply with an effort to clear up the problem of the Jupiters itself." This made sense, especially if the administration was to achieve removal of the Jupiters by 1 April; establish-

ment of a multilateral force would surely take longer than that. McNamara added that he would attempt to persuade the Italians and Turks by pointing out that the missile crisis had underscored how "dangerous" the Jupiters were; that the IRBMs were expensive and thus diverted funds from other projects; that the United States would consider strengthening the Mediterranean deterrent, perhaps by redeploying U.S.-owned and -crewed Polaris submarines there; and that it was willing to discuss Italian participation in the manufacture of armored personnel carriers and Turkish acquisition of additional fighter aircraft. Armed with this array of arguments and enticements, Rusk and McNamara flew to Paris.[25]

Italy

The Italians immediately proved themselves the easier sell, which is understandable considering their positive response on the subject of IRBM removal even before the missile crisis. At the NATO ministerial conference, held 13–15 December, McNamara spoke with Defense Minister Andreotti and proposed dismantlement of the Jupiters by 1 April and their replacement with Polaris. He sweetened the pot by offering to replace Corporal tactical missiles in Italy with Sergeants (a promotion, of sorts, which would also serve to bury the Jupiter removal in a broader context of "modernization"). Andreotti responded that the move must be a U.S. initiative and should precede the spring elections in Italy, but otherwise he "appeared not overly disturbed" by it. Not until 5 January 1963, however, did McNamara follow up with a more formal proposal, which reiterated the Polaris substitution and 1 April target date.[26]

The U.S. initiative annoyed Italian political leaders, including Prime Minister Fanfani and Antonio Segni, now president. Although accepting the logic behind it, they worried that Italy would lose the elevated status it enjoyed over nonnuclear members of the alliance. They assumed that Kennedy had made his decision during the missile crisis and thus were irritated to learn of it only three months later. In a related sense, they suspected that it resulted from a secret superpower bargain. And finally, they felt Washington did not consider the domestic political problem withdrawal might create for them. With the Americans now making the same anti-IRBM arguments the opposition parties had made all along, and a 1 April pullout coming on the eve of parliamentary elections, the embarrassment and political costs might prove considerable. Fanfani's frustration showed in his quip to a colleague: when it came to the proposed multilateral force, "the United States would probably propose placing Italian cooks on the submarines and call it joint control."[27]

President Kennedy with Italian prime minister Amintore Fanfani, January 1963. Fanfani's smile concealed his resentment, shared by the Turks, of being treated as a pawn. Nevertheless, he agreed to give up his Jupiters. They would be replaced by Polaris missile-firing submarines under sole U.S. control. (National Archives)

Despite all this, however, no Italian leader seriously considered opposing the withdrawal. Thus on 16–17 January, when Kennedy proposed the withdrawal and Polaris substitution to the visiting Fanfani, the prime minister was amenable. Although according to their joint communiqué the two leaders had only "agreed on the need to modernize both the nuclear and conventional weapons and forces which their countries contribute[d] to the Alliance," newspapers correctly noted that this would entail dismantlement of the IRBMs.[28]

The rest was anticlimax. Fanfani's cabinet signed off on the decision on 24 January, and the Chamber of Deputies voted in favor of it the following day. On 12 February, Gilpatric and Andreotti agreed on various cooperative defense measures, including joint conventional weapons production, which were part of the Kennedy administration's attempt to appease the Italians. That same day, U.S. officials in Rome announced the 1 April Polaris deployment in the Mediterranean. Andreotti's public complaint a week later, that the missile substitution weakened his country's voice in NATO defense matters, was in vain.[29]

Turkey

The Turks provided a stark contrast. Unlike the Italians, they had been unwilling to give up their IRBMs before the missile crisis, and they were unwilling afterward. On 28 October, the same day Khrushchev gave in apparently without winning removal of the Jupiters, Turkish anxiety still led Foreign Minister Erkin to tell Hare that he "assumed [the] U.S. would do nothing which concerned Turkey without consultation." Rusk quickly authorized Ambassadors Hare and Finletter to tell the Turks that "no 'deal' of any kind was made with USSR involving Turkey," and U.S. diplomats such as Adlai Stevenson assured their Turkish counterparts that they would consult Turkey and NATO before Washington engaged in any talks on the Jupiters. Ankara tried to protect itself by reiterating publicly its desire to keep the missiles in place.[30]

At the December NATO conference, McNamara approached Turkey's defense minister, Ilhami Sancar, as he had Andreotti. Sancar expressed concern over how removal would affect Turkish morale and confidence in NATO; in general he did not respond favorably. Foreign Minister Erkin, on the other hand, told Rusk "that he saw no difficulty" as long as the United States provided alternative means of demonstrating its commitment to Turkish security. Whether Sancar and Erkin were performing a good cop–bad cop routine or genuinely disagreed on the U.S. proposal, the Turks clearly posed more of an obstacle than the Italians did.[31]

The Americans certainly recognized this, and in his 5 January letter to Sancar, McNamara bolstered the now standard arguments about modernization and vulnerability with an offer to accelerate deliveries of nuclear-capable F-104G aircraft to Turkey; Rusk authorized Hare to take a similar tack. Erkin presented the U.S. proposal to Prime Minister Inönü and his cabinet on 18 January, and although the government agreed in principle to the withdrawal, Erkin muddied the waters by suggesting to his colleagues that Turkish personnel would serve on board the Polaris submarines. This the U.S. government would not even consider; it had decoupled the Mediterranean Polaris force and the planned MLF, and blurring the line between the two might delay the former and jeopardize the latter. Despite this new potential stumbling block, Erkin made it clear to Hare after the cabinet meeting that Turkey did not want to be shown up on the issue by Italy, and Hare considered this the U.S. "ace in the hole." As it had during the search for IRBM hosts, the United States might again enjoy an opportunity to play one NATO ally off another.[32]

Frustration continued for U.S. officials, however, as an agreement con-

tinued to elude them despite tantalizing progress. The Turks did effectively tie their own hands by announcing publicly on 23 January that their Jupiters would be dismantled and replaced, but complications persisted. One was conflicting responses coming from the Turkish Foreign and Defense Ministries; another, more grave, was the need for some tangible evidence of the United States' continued strategic commitment with the Jupiters gone and joint Polaris crews out of the question. "[The] problem is essentially psychological," Hare reported, "and something more obviously demonstrable [is] required than visits to Turkish ports or visits [by] Turkish officers to Polaris subs." On 9 February, Erkin informed Hare that the Turkish government had accepted the missile substitution without conditions, but the types of compensatory military aid Turkey would receive—that is, the conditions—remained unresolved. It took a visit to Ankara by Major General Robert Wood, acting as McNamara's representative, to achieve closure. Wood succeeded in hashing out the final details of the U.S. compensation, which included additional F-104Gs (which would mean a six-month delay in F-104G deliveries to Taiwan) and other, wholly conventional armaments, by 15 March.[33]

The broader alliance posed the only other potential diplomatic obstacle. Technically, the North Atlantic Council had to approve the IRBM removals, but the White House had no intention of allowing it to get in the way. Any illusions about this on the NAC were no doubt shattered when its members first learned of the Italian Jupiter removal from press reports. As briefing papers for JFK's early February press conference stated, the administration wished to meet its "obligation to the North Atlantic Council in this matter without providing the Council an opportunity for divisive discussion or action." It thus recommended reference to NAC "endorsement" rather than "approval." Apparently no real effort was necessary, however, to realize this preference; the NAC met sometime around 22 February and concluded that because the Jupiter removal decision was an accomplished fact, there was no need for the council to approve it. Many of its members doubtless considered all this business as usual, that is, nonconsultation.[34]

POT PIE: WITHDRAWAL

The USAF removal operation, dubbed with minimal wit POT PIE, went fairly quickly; after all, taking missiles down is much easier than putting them up. The air force did receive what one general later called "the goddamnest instructions from Mr. McNamara's office": do not merely dismantle the IRBMs, but salvage them in the "most economical" way. Unfortunately,

Operation POT PIE: dismantled Italian Jupiter missile being readied for transport, April 1963. The period for which the missiles were actually deployed turned out to be far shorter than the time required to deploy them. (National Archives)

dismantled Thors alone were more than the air force or NASA could usefully convert into space boosters, and no one else in the government was interested in the leftover Jupiters. So, the air force destroyed the missile bodies and returned the warheads, guidance systems, and mobile equipment to the United States. This attempt to reap more buck for the bang recovered multipurpose items worth only $14 million, which was, as one DOD official admitted, a disappointingly small sum.[35]

The IRBM dismantlement began on 1 April 1963 and thus was complete a few weeks after the 1 April target date. The thirty Italian Jupiters lay in pieces by 23 April. McNamara, well aware of the president's special interest in the subject, scrawled a note to him on 25 April: "The last Jupiter missile in Turkey came down yesterday. The last Jupiter warhead will be flown out of Turkey on Saturday." The sixty British Thors, incidentally, were carted off by September, and the short-lived Western arsenal of IRBMs was no more.[36]

The first of the substitutes, a sixteen-missile Polaris submarine, was on station in the Mediterranean by 30 March, and the second by 12 April. One of them, the USS *Sam Houston*, paid a visit to the Turkish port city of Izmir on 14–15 April. This played a major role in a well-orchestrated effort,

which included the visits by General Wood before and others of high rank after, like the new SACEUR Lyman Lemnitzer, to reassure the Turkish government and public of Washington's continuing strategic commitment to them. And, as Ambassador Hare argued persuasively, the goal was largely achieved. "Submarine Which Scares Soviets Is In Izmir" read an Ankara headline that typified the Turks' enthusiasm. They did not have their Jupiters any more, and like the Italians they resented being on the receiving end of an unequal partnership with Washington and, as they saw it, being informed rather than consulted about important decisions affecting their security. But with the official attention and increased aid, they did have a renewed sense of their importance in the alliance, at least for the moment, and the Jupiter removal had certainly not caused any serious rift in the Turkish-American relationship.[37]

REACTIONS

Overall, public reaction was rather mild in the United States. Many stories in major newspapers framed the issue as one of missile replacement or even Polaris deployment rather than Jupiter retirement, no doubt to the relief of administration officials. A solid majority of editorials welcomed the move as strengthening—or accepted it as not weakening—Western defense or expected it to reduce tension in U.S.-Soviet relations. *Time* gave the administration's version of events and in its accompanying photo caption described the Polaris substitution as "sending lethal fish to replace sitting ducks." Only a handful of observers charged Kennedy with having concluded a secret trade or viewed the dismantlement as a surrender to Soviet demands. Some on the Far Right were certainly outraged, including New Orleans private investigator Guy Banister, one of the shadowy figures many authors tie to Kennedy's assassination. His files on what he considered JFK's most nefarious policies included one labeled "Missile Bases Dismantled—Turkey and Italy." But more broadly, the new policy neither generated significant public controversy nor stayed in the news for very long.[38]

The worst reaction was that of U.S. Air Force leaders, who were upset by what they saw as a premature withdrawal of the IRBMs. The "concrete for some of the launching pads had just been poured," air force chief of staff Curtis LeMay later complained. He was exaggerating, but he and his colleagues did feel that the deployment, on which they had worked so hard and for so long, was just beginning to bear fruit. Indeed, although the Turkish Jupiters had become operational by March 1962, construction of the facili-

ties was deemed 100 percent complete only in December of that year. U.S. Air Force officials still valued the missiles and did not share civilian concerns over command and control. Thus they were understandably irked by the removal, as well as by the additional aid to Rome and Ankara used to achieve it. "We objected to it at the time," LeMay remembered, "but in vain"—this the unhappiness, oddly, of one who in early 1962 had remarked that the British Thor program was "entirely political; there was no military requirement for it and the RAF had never wanted the program." Regardless, the timing of the Jupiter removal, coming so soon after the missiles had gone on line, convinced them the president had cut a secret deal with Khrushchev. LeMay's key congressional testimony is heavily censored, but in the portions released he hinted darkly that "other factors" besides modernization had affected the IRBM withdrawal, about which the inquiring congressman should "ask the Secretary of Defense." Years later, top air force officers were more blunt. "We gave away everything," recalled General Disosway, negotiator of the Italian deployment in 1958–59. "We lost our fannies on that Cuban deal."[39]

Congress, for the most part, accepted the administration's policy and its explanations for it. Several legislators asked questions, sometimes insightful, about the removal decision. But only a few Republicans wondered aloud whether Kennedy had made a secret trade, like Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.). "Mr. President," he asked on the Senate floor, "what goes on?" Were the IRBM removals and other Kennedy defense policies "part of some kind of deal involving Cuba and disarmament plans?" And only a few senators objected to the removal, like Armed Service Committee chair Richard Russell (D-Ga.), who belonged to the more-is-simply-better school of nuclear deterrence (and even suggested secretly retrieving the nuclear warheads but leaving the missiles in place armed with dummies). At no point was congressional opposition to removal anything more than a nuisance easily contained via artful testimony.[40]

The effect on NATO and other individual European countries is difficult to assess, although the French reacted sharply. They chose to interpret the Jupiter withdrawal as proof that the United States was disengaging from Europe. "To pretend that any new arrangement, such as moving the deterrent to sea, is a way of modernizing [it]," said General Pierre Gallois, one of de Gaulle's military advisers, "is a swindle." The semiofficial *Revue Militaire d'Information* accused the United States of having made a missile deal with the Soviets and thus having demonstrated its willingness to sacrifice the security of its allies. The Gaullist press, predictably, cited this as justification for France's independent nuclear force. Yet overall, the impact of the removal

on the alliance appears to have been negligible, certainly in the long run and certainly compared with the fears of many U.S. officials. Some other Europeans joined the French in suspecting American disengagement, but their reactions to the Jupiter removals scarcely affected transatlantic relations.[41]

Kennedy's recent experience with Turkey and its Jupiters continued to influence his thinking. In February 1963 he confided in Ben Bradlee that "the presence of 17,000 Soviet troops in Cuba . . . was one thing viewed by itself, but it was something else again when you knew there were 27,000 U.S. troops stationed in Turkey." He warned Bradlee not to repeat the observation. "It isn't wise politically," JFK said quietly, "to understand Khrushchev's problems quite this way." He returned to the subject the following evening over dinner, almost accepting the case for tolerating Soviet troops in Cuba because of the U.S. forces in Turkey. One of the dinner guests, ambassador to Greece Henry Labouisse, raised the issue of Hawk surface-to-air missiles that were slated for Crete and might create a political problem. The president quickly became irritated. "What the hell do we need those missiles for, anyway?" he asked. Formally he was more polite, asking for a DOD report on the deployment, because he did "not understand the justification for it at this time." The fact that the missiles in question were short range, indisputably defensive, and for training purposes merely underscores the eagerness with which Kennedy sought to avoid other bad missile experiences in the Mediterranean.[42]

CONCLUSIONS

The Jupiter withdrawal was in a real sense, as McGeorge Bundy noted in May 1963, "a very tidy job."[43] The Kennedy administration came rather close to fulfilling its promise to remove the Jupiters four to five months after the missile crisis. Several lawmakers were asking hard questions about the removal, but even the most suspicious soon dropped the subject. For the White House, public exposure of the missile trade would have been a political nightmare, if not an outright disaster, and yet it remained a secret even for years after Kennedy's death. Italy, Turkey, and NATO agreed to the withdrawal, raising little fuss and demanding little compensatory military aid relative to what one might have expected. For all these reasons, the administration must have been pleased with how quickly and smoothly it had completed the operation.

The diplomacy of withdrawal did not prove nearly as nettlesome as had the diplomacy of deployment. The understandable opposition within the Turkish

government presented the main difficulty. Negotiating deployment with the Turks in 1959 had been easy, because they shared the U.S. desire for a Turkish deployment. Negotiating withdrawal in 1963 was tougher, because now the Americans wanted them out and many Turks, particularly in the military, did not. The resulting split in the Turkish government, whether feigned or real, hampered the process. Nevertheless, reaching a removal agreement with the reluctant Turks of 1963 required no more than four months—still significantly less time than that needed to achieve a deployment accord with the enthusiastic Turks of 1959.

The removal in addition brought tangible, even mutual, benefits. The Italians and Turks, although they were excluded from the real underlying decision and may have lost some short-term political capital in the alliance, gained conventional and dual-purpose weaponry they might not otherwise have gained. They were relieved of their IRBMs, military lightning rods that had periodically ignited domestic political brushfires. In addition, the withdrawal freed up for each country more than two thousand skilled technicians, badly needed for other military and industrial projects. Western security and deterrence enjoyed marked improvement with the substitution of Polaris; according to calculations used by the JCS, the Polaris A-2 SLBM entailed 27 percent better reliability, 25 percent greater accuracy, a 65 percent less destructive warhead, 100 percent better survivability without warning, and 1,900 percent better with. In addition, of course, all allies on both sides of the Atlantic benefited from scrapping their most vulnerable and provocative nuclear systems, and doing so significantly earlier than they would have otherwise.[44]

For the Kennedy administration, however, withdrawing the Jupiters did have its costs. It had to come up with additional military aid to Italy and Turkey; it had to deceive those countries, the rest of NATO, the public, the U.S. Congress, and itself. It had to obtain the acquiescence or cooperation of these groups, and this required making excuses, allaying suspicions, warding off counterarguments, exaggerating other motives, and maintaining the cover-up over the long haul. These represented at least a major bureaucratic nuisance, entailing care, effort, and orchestration. More important, the United States went behind the backs of its minor allies, who depended on it for their security, and bartered away part of that security—however flawed the particular weapons—for the sake of its own. Those who sat on ExComm would have argued, and some indeed have argued, that these were small prices to pay to help extinguish the most perilous crisis of the postwar era and avoid World War III. Perhaps they are right. Nor can anyone deny that the ad-

ministration pulled off what was politically an extraordinarily dangerous maneuver with some skill and great deal of luck. In a curious way, Kennedy had converted the militarily useless into the politically useful. But while the job of removing the Jupiters may have been tidy, it was not exactly clean.[45]

Kennedy and the Jupiters

This mixed portrait of skill and luck, of deceit and resourcefulness, of satisfactory ends and questionable means, is perfectly consistent with the larger, divided mural of Kennedy's entire Jupiter policy dating from January 1961. And this policy, in turn, neatly conforms to the profound ambivalence that acts as a consensus in recent scholarship on Kennedy's foreign policy.[46]

Kennedy's handling of the Jupiters is in large part a story of redemption. Like the missile crisis, the Jupiter policy encompassed a negative, probably avoidable beginning and a positive ending. Just as Kennedy deserves higher marks for his handling of the missile crisis once he found himself in it than he does for his contribution to touching it off in the first place, so does his liquidation of the provocative, obsolete Jupiters to help end the crisis far outshine his 1961 decision to proceed with their deployment. Continuing the deployment reflected a careless, timid drift with the existing flow of policy, whereas the secret trade with Khrushchev, if a bit obvious, was nevertheless relatively bold and efficient.

More broadly, JFK's management of the Jupiter issue exhibits numerous characteristics seen elsewhere in his foreign policy. First, it was alternately or simultaneously pragmatic, cynical, clever, improvised, risky, and conservative. Second, it was in keeping with Kennedy's use of nuclear weapons for political purposes. He saw nuclear weapons as tools useful for solidifying the Atlantic alliance, and in this regard his 1961 Jupiter deployment decision joins his flirtation with the Multilateral Force and his provision of Polaris missiles to Great Britain to settle the flap over Skybolt in late 1962. Third, Kennedy's use of the Jupiters during and after the missile crisis belongs in the context of his heavy reliance, throughout his presidency, on secret back channels, especially via Robert Kennedy, Dobrynin, and Georgi Bolshakov regarding such hot spots as Berlin and Laos. And fourth, it fits in with a similar pattern of tacit agreements and secret cooperation with the Kremlin, such as the administration's part in forming a reconnaissance satellite regime, its alleged proposal of a joint U.S.-Soviet military strike against the Chinese nuclear complex, and its deliberate leak of information on PALs to the Soviets. In light of these various foreign policy methods, Kennedy's Jupiter policy suddenly appears less extraordinary.[47]

Yet equally in step with many of Kennedy's initiatives, his Jupiter policy could not escape the powerful pull of credibility. This was definitely the case in late spring of 1961, when the administration decided, amid conflicting recommendations, to proceed with the Turkish deployment. Here its concern over U.S. credibility in the shadows of the Vienna summit and the Berlin crisis, in conjunction with its related worry over relations with Turkey, played a decisive role. During the Cuban missile crisis, credibility of course had everything to do with Kennedy's determination to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba, although it coexisted with more pressing matters, namely settling the crisis and avoiding a military clash that might escalate uncontrollably. Still, even before the crisis ended, credibility dictated the manner in which the Jupiters figured in the settlement. After all, fear for U.S. credibility lay at the root of Kennedy's insistence that his Jupiter concession remain a secret. To be sure, credibility with Turkey and the other allies had supplanted credibility toward the Soviet Union, but it is credibility that most influenced what decision was taken, in the first instance, and how the decision was carried out, in the second. It left its telltale marks on JFK's Jupiter policy at every stage.