

JFK Meeting Tape 40

Date: 1962-10-27

Participant: John F. Kennedy

Participant: McGeorge Bundy

Participant: Theodore C. Sorensen

Start Time: 10:05

Place: Oval Office

SCROLLER TITLE: "It Will Look Like a Very Fair Trade"

SCENE SETTER: During a meeting with his national security team, President Kennedy learned that Moscow had upped its demands for removing Soviet missiles from Cuba. Washington would have to pledge not only to not invade Cuba but also to trade out NATO missiles in Turkey.

President Kennedy: [*reading aloud from news ticker copy handed to him by Theodore Sorensen*] "Premier [Nikita S.] Khrushchev told President Kennedy yesterday he would withdraw offensive weapons from Cuba if the United States withdrew its rockets from Turkey."

McGeorge "Mac" Bundy: Hmm. He didn't.

Theodore C. "Ted" Sorensen: That's how it's read by both of the associations that have put it out so far. Reuters had the same thing.

Bundy: He didn't . . .

Sorensen: He didn't really say that, did he?

Bundy: No, no . . .

President Kennedy: They may not be—He may be putting out another letter.

Bundy: Another paper.

End of excerpt 1.

President Kennedy: But let's wait, and let's assume that this is an accurate report of what he's now proposing this morning. There may be a change over there.

Bundy: But he—I don't—I still think he's in a difficult position to change it overnight, having sent you a personal communication on the other line.

President Kennedy: Well, now, let's say he has changed it. This is his latest position.

Bundy: Well, I would answer back, saying, "I would prefer to deal with your, you know, with your interesting proposals of last night."

President Kennedy: Well, now, that's—that's what we ought to be thinking about. We're going to be in an insupportable position on this matter if this becomes his proposal. In the first place, we last year tried to get the missiles out of there, because they're not militarily useful, number one. Number

two, it's going to—to any man at the United Nations or any other rational man, it will look like a very fair trade.

End of excerpt 2.

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