

President's Address to the Nation, RE: Soviet Brigade in Cuba, 10/1/79 [3]

Folder Citation: Collection: Office of Staff Secretary; Series: Presidential Files; Folder: President's Address to the Nation, RE: Soviet Brigade in Cuba, 10/1/79 [3]; Container 133

To See Complete Finding Aid:

http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/library/findingaids/Staff_Secretary.pdf

The purpose of SALT II and the purpose of the actions I have outlined tonight in the matter of the Soviet brigade in Cuba are exactly the same.

That purpose is a just and lasting peace in the world -- a peace that brings security to our Nation and to all the nations of the earth.

~~This morning~~ Pope John Paul II arrived in our country. *He is most beloved for many reasons, not least because* He has come here, as he has traveled ~~the~~ globe, in the service *(of peace)* of world peace. ~~My fellow Americans, let us not disappoint him. Americans of all religious faiths, churches.~~ Let us show him -- let us show each other -- let us show all *that ideal* * humanity that the United States of America stands for justice, for reason, for faith and for peace.]*

Speaking to you ~~with~~ ^{this} evening of October 1, I cannot fail to mention a remarkable event of the morning of October 1.

*Again, everybody but Rick thinks this should be out.

9/28/79

Draft THREE (A-1)

Donovan's Charges

Proposed Report to the Nation on Soviet Troops in Cuba

Fellow citizens, I have asked for this television time to report to you on a number of issues connected with the presence of the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba.

This is not an easy subject. I ask you to listen patiently, because the information I want to present to you cannot be outlined in a sentence or two. I ask you to listen carefully, because the issues at stake concern the security of our country and global peace.]*

The United States and the Soviet Union are the two most powerful nations in the world. The relations between us are complex, because they ^{contain} have strong elements of both competition and cooperation.

*Some believe this is artificial; others that the public must be prepared to deal with a long and difficult speech.

My point is at South School - masterish

Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes

Militarily and politically, we compete with the Soviets around the world. Our philosophies conflict in fundamental ways, and quite often ~~so do~~ our interests *conflict so well*

On the other hand, the Soviets and ourselves share an overwhelming mutual interest in preventing a nuclear war. That is why, for a generation, the Soviets have cooperated with us, and we with them, in seeking to reduce that danger through arms control agreements. The latest such agreement -- the most important and promising so far -- is the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), which is now awaiting ratification by the U. S. Senate.

In recent weeks, a new element has been introduced into our relationship: convincing evidence that a Soviet combat brigade has been in Cuba since at least the mid-1970s.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

Tonight, I want to talk to you about the specific problem of the Soviet brigade in Cuba and the general problem of Soviet-Cuban military activism in the Third World.

I want to describe for you the actions I am taking to counter these activities.

And, I want to put these problems into the context of our overall national interest -- and to tell you why it remains essential for the United States to ratify the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and to persevere in our efforts to control nuclear weapons.

I want to reassure you at the outset that we do not at this moment confront any immediate, concrete threat that could ~~quickly~~ escalate into war. The United States is at peace tonight -- just as we have been at peace throughout the time I have been President.

But we do face a challenge. It is a challenge to our will and determination in standing up to Soviet competition. It is also a challenge to our wisdom -- our ability to act in a firm, measured way, with a reasoned understanding of our true national interests.

Here is the background on the Soviet brigade in Cuba. In one of the most dangerous confrontations of the Cold War, seventeen years ago, the Soviet Union suddenly attempted to introduce nuclear ~~arms~~ ^{missiles} into Cuba. This direct threat to the United States ended with the withdrawal of those ~~nuclear arms~~ ^{missiles}. At the time of that 1962 crisis, there were some 20,000 Soviet military personnel in Cuba. The bulk of them were also withdrawn. Those that stayed behind, we believed, were there to advise and train Cuban forces and to perform intelligence functions.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

Then, about six weeks ago, American intelligence obtained irrefutable evidence) ~~which had been accumulating for some time~~ that a Soviet combat unit was stationed in Cuba. Once we established this beyond doubt, it was possible for our experts to conclude, through a careful review of past intelligence data, that this unit had been there at least since 1976 and possibly longer.

This unit is a ground combat brigade of two to three thousand men. It does not resemble any of the twenty or so Soviet military advisory groups in other foreign countries. It is armed with tanks and other modern military equipment. It is organized as a combat unit, and its training exercises are those of a combat unit.

This is not a large force. It presents no direct threat to us. It has no airborne or seaborne capability. In contrast to the 1962 crisis, no nuclear threat to the U. S. is involved.

Nevertheless, the Soviet brigade is a serious matter.

It contributes to tension in the Caribbean and Central American

region. It adds to the fears of countries in that area that

they may fall ^{come under} victim to Soviet-Cuban ^{pressure} adventurism.* It is

^{one piece in} ~~part of~~ an intensifying Soviet-Cuban military relationship

^{including} the transfer of modern arms and the increased presence

^{in Cuban waters, the brigade} of Soviet naval forces. Finally, it helps support a pattern

^{military in Africa and the Middle East} of Soviet-Cuban ~~interventions and use of military force throughout~~

~~the world.~~

This pattern dates back to 1975, when the Soviet Union launched a substantial program to build up Cuba's armed forces and to back Cuban intrusions into troubled areas of the world -- Angola, Ethiopia, Yemen and elsewhere.

*Lloyd believes this word is foreign-sounding.

~~Now~~, there are some 40,000 Cuban troops overseas. These troops are supported and armed by the Soviet Union.

~~Throughout this period, Russian military support of Cuba has been increasing.~~ The Soviet Union has provided Cuba with some one and three-quarters billion dollars in military supplies. These supplies have included, for example, 280 advanced jet aircraft; some 100 naval vessels; 650 armored personnel carriers; and an entire naval port. ~~The result is that Cuba now has the largest, best equipped armed forces in the Caribbean and Central American area, except, of course, for our own.~~

~~The Cubans get this Russian military help free.~~ East Germany, ~~Bulgaria~~ and the rest of the Warsaw Pact countries have to pay for their Soviet military supplies, but Cuba does not.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

This pattern holds true for Cuba's whole economy, which the Soviets subsidize to the tune of three billion dollars a year. That is equal to a quarter of Cuba's entire gross national product.

Fidel Castro does not pay money for his Russian arms and his Russian economic subsidy. He has paid a much higher price than that. In effect, ~~Mr.~~ Castro has sold the independence of his country to the Soviet Union.

~~Mr.~~ Castro claims to be "non-aligned," but ~~this is an absurd and obvious lie.~~ In every international dispute, on every international issue, Cuba automatically follows the Soviet line. There is no more real difference between Soviet and Cuban foreign policy than between Soviet and Bulgarian foreign policy.

The Soviet brigade in Cuba is the latest manifestation of Moscow's dominance of Mr. Castro. It raises the level of that dominance -- and it raises the level of responsibility that the Soviet Union must take for Cuban military actions abroad.]*

We have been negotiating with the Soviet Union over the past four weeks for a resolution of the problems raised by the brigade in Cuba.

I regret to report to you that the overall outcome of the negotiations ~~must be viewed as~~ unsatisfactory. The existing Soviet combat capability in Cuba remains in place. ~~Together with the rapidly modernizing Cuban armed forces a shadow remains not only upon the Caribbean and Central America, but upon all the troubled areas of the world in which the Soviets and Cubans may seek to intrude.~~

*needs
we want
to know
about the
negotiations*

*Lloyd and Warren believe this whole section -- beginning on page 6 -- is given too much prominence, is peripheral or unrelated to the brigade issue and describes something we don't propose to do much about anyway.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

I have therefore decided to ^{make} ~~take~~ ^{measures} several appropriate

^{responses}
~~measures~~ -- and I am confident that in these actions I will have the support of the Congress and of you, the American people.

First, I want to affirm that it is the policy of the United States to oppose the deployment of Cuban or Soviet combat forces against any nation in this Hemisphere. Every nation in the Hemisphere can be confident that the United States will act in response to a request for assistance in meeting any such threat from Soviet or Cuban forces.

This policy is consistent with our responsibilities as a member of the Organization of American States and ^{as} a party to the Rio Treaty ¹⁹⁴⁷. It is an affirmation in new circumstances of John F. Kennedy's declaration on April 19, 1963, "that we would not permit any troops from Cuba to move off the Island of Cuba in any offensive action against any neighboring countries."⁷*

*Zbig and Harold Brown believe this detracts from the uniqueness of your statement and can be used in the background. Warren and Lloyd think it is important to establish continuity with the past. *So does HC*

Second, to improve our capacity to support this policy, I am ordering the following steps:

We will form a permanent, full-time Caribbean Joint Task Force Headquarters at Key West, Florida. Forces will be assigned to this headquarters as necessary from all the military services. With this new headquarters permanently responsible for expanded planning, exercising, and, if required, employment of designated forces, we will gain a substantially improved capability for rapid response to any attempted encroachment in the region by Cuban or Soviet armed forces.

^{RC 110}
~~As a companion-measure, I have ordered an expansion of military exercises in the region. As a first step, I have added to a previously planned naval training exercise an additional phase in the region of our base in Guantanamo, Cuba. As a further step, I have ordered the conduct of an amphibious~~

reinforcement exercise into Guantanamo in the near future,
about 3,500
involving ~~approximately 1500~~ marines and 2000 naval personnel,
~~for a total exercise force of about 3500.~~ A few years ago,
the United States withdrew ~~approximately~~ *about* 1000 marines from the
base and planned to substitute periodic reinforcement exercises
to assure the security of Guantanamo. Subsequently, however,
in an effort to improve relations with the Government of Cuba,
a decision was made to suspend these planned exercises. In
view of the Soviet combat presence *in Cuba,* these exercises will be
conducted regularly from now on.

These and other measures which we will adopt as necessary
will insure our continued capability to respond to any regional
or external interference with nations of the Western Hemisphere.

~~More important, they underscore a crucial message -- the United~~
in relation to
~~States will~~ stay in Guantanamo.

But the threat to the stability of the Caribbean and Central America comes not merely from the ^{danger} ~~menace~~ of Soviet and Cuban arms, it also comes from the social turmoil caused by unmet economic and human needs. Therefore, as a crucial element of ^{our} ~~these~~ efforts, I will be asking the Congress for a supplemental appropriation for economic and security assistance to the nations of Central America and the Caribbean.

Beyond the Hemisphere, the United States has acted to meet the broader challenge to our interests from Cuban intervention. We helped block the invasion of Shaba in Africa. We helped thwart the attack on North Yemen. We will shortly announce an important ~~continuing~~ reinforcement of our naval presence in the Indian Ocean ~~which we have been preparing for some time.~~

But if we are to compete effectively with the Soviet Union and be prepared to protect our global interests, we must have

a world-wide capacity to project our military forces. We must be able to move our ground and sea units to distant areas -- rapidly and with adequate supplies.

We have already begun ^{enlarging} upgrading our ability to do this.

I have directed the Secretary of Defense, in the course of preparing the budget for the next year, to insure that we accelerate these efforts.

For example, we will increase our capacity to airlift without extensive reliance on staging bases, and to escort our sea-lifted forces. We will, of course, maintain the amphibious assault capability of the Marine Corps.

To supplement it, we will proceed with a program to procure so-called forward equipment ships, which can provide our forces with heavy equipment in areas far from American bases.

he will step up

I also intend to increase the level of exercises for

training and readiness of forces in the rapid deployment category.

what was 1st?

Second, we must intensify our intelligence effort in regard

to Soviet and Cuban activities throughout the world. ~~To~~

~~strengthen our capabilities in this area,~~ I will be making

specific requests of the Congress in this sensitive area. We

are expediting our study of legislation to guard against damage

to our crucial intelligence sources and methods, without impairing

civil and constitutional rights.

*is this
wise policy?*

Third, I am modifying our policy of restraint on arms

sales to exempt from the restrictions any country menaced by

Soviet and Cuban military activities.

These steps reflect my determination to defend the interests of the United States. In developing them, I consulted with

?

Congressional leaders, with my own advisers, and with a bipartisan

group of distinguished American citizens.

*does this provoke those who
disagree to say so?*

go for to

I am convinced that these measures will meet the challenge symbolized by the Soviet brigade in Cuba.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

arises

But a larger question has arisen. What does the presence

of the combat brigade mean for our relations with the Soviet

Union? *Can we continue to see the relationship as a* ~~Is it part of the long-standing~~ mixture of competition

and cooperation, *requiring* with the Soviet Union which requires vigilance,

firmness and flexibility on our part? Or should it be the

occasion for a fundamental change in that policy -- *this* ~~a moving~~ *and a move*

away from efforts to build cooperation and ~~a return to a policy~~

to a state

of across-the-board confrontation -- a return to the Cold War?

I have considered this question carefully, ~~as well.~~ ~~I~~

and have consulted on it ~~just as~~ widely.

7 ~~And I have concluded~~ -- with a sense of absolute certainty --

that the brigade issue is not the occasion for a return to the

Cold War. It is not the occasion for a policy of total

confrontation. Such a policy might be emotionally satisfying for a few days or a few weeks. But it would be enormously destructive to the ~~overall~~ national interest and the ~~overall~~ national security of the United States.

We must continue the basic policy that the United States has followed for twenty years, under six Administrations of both parties -- the policy of ~~both competition and cooperation~~ with the Soviet Union

That recognizes we must compete with the Soviet Union

and we must cooperate with the Soviet Union

Obviously, the Soviet brigade in Cuba increases the competitive aspect of the U.S.-Soviet relationship. The Soviets have shown themselves insensitive to a number of our concerns; and in addition to the steps I have outlined tonight, we will respond in kind to that insensitivity. 7*

*Lloyd, Warren and Hedley think this is too threatening and breaks the flow of this section. Zbig and Harold Brown believe it is important to lay down this marker both with the Soviets and with the American people.

But the effort to reduce the chances of nuclear war must continue.

The greatest danger to American security tonight is not a brigade of Soviet troops in Cuba. It is not Cuban divisions in Africa. The greatest danger to all the nations of the world -- including the United States and the Soviet Union -- is the threat of nuclear holocaust.

That is why tonight I renew my call to the Senate of the United States to ratify the SALT II Treaty.

SALT II is a solid treaty. It is verifiable. It is the most important step ever taken in controlling strategic nuclear arms. It permits us to strengthen our defense and preserve the strategic balance at lower risk and cost. It permits us to concentrate our defense budget -- which we are increasing at 3% per year, -- on areas of greater need.

**Electrostatic Copy Made
for Preservation Purposes**

after conference

Finally, SALT II is the absolute prerequisite to further negotiations aimed at deep, mutual cuts in nuclear arsenals. All this has been established in months of exhaustive Senate hearings.

*Please stop insisting
the citizens have to listen*

Furthermore -- and I ask you to listen particularly
closely to this -- the abandonment of SALT would seriously compromise our security.

Of course we have disagreements with the Soviets. Of course we have conflicts with them. If we did not have those disagreements and conflicts, we would not need a treaty to reduce the possibility of nuclear war between us.

/If SALT II is rejected, a difficulty such as the one I have discussed tonight -- the matter of the Soviet brigade in Cuba -- would take a whole new ominous dimension.7* Against

*Lloyd believes this greatly exaggerates the importance of the brigade issue. Hedley and Warren also favor removal. Claytor, Aaron and Hertzberg believe it helps tie the speech together and uses the SALT budget argument against the SALT opponents.

the background of an uncontrolled, unlimited nuclear arms race, every competitive element of U.S.-Soviet relations would carry the seeds of the ultimate horror.

In addition, SALT II is crucial to American leadership of the Western Alliance.

The leaders of our European Allies support SALT II -- unanimously. I have talked to a number of those leaders in the past several days. And I must tell you tonight that if the Senate rejects SALT II, they and their countries would react with incomprehension and concern.^{*} The effort to build up and modernize NATO -- an effort in which we have invested so much time, money and attention -- would lose momentum.

I know that for Members of Congress, this is a troubling and difficult issue in a troubling and difficult time. But

*Rick Hertzberg favors "fright."

the actions I have outlined tonight deserve their support. So
does SALT II.

I say to the Senate and I say to you, the American people,
with all the urgency and conviction at my command, that the
ratification of this treaty is in the interest of the United
States.

X X X X X

~~/And I call upon you -- the American people -- to demand
of your Senators that they move swiftly to approve this absolutely
crucial bulwark against nuclear war.~~

~~/I call upon each and every one of you -- not as Republicans
or Democrats, but as Americans -- to write to the Senators from
your state and tell them that you want the SALT II Treaty
ratified./*~~

*Everyone but Rick Hertzberg thinks these two paragraphs should
be deleted.

Speaking to you this evening of October 1, I cannot fail to mention a memorable event of the morning of October 1. Pope John Paul II arrived in our country. He is welcome for many reasons, not least because he has come here, as he has traveled elsewhere, in the service of world peace. Americans of all religious faiths cherish this ideal.

The purpose of SALT II and the purpose of the actions I have outlined tonight in the matter of the Soviet brigade in Cuba are exactly the same.

That purpose is a just and lasting peace in the world -- a peace that brings security to our nation and to all the nations of the earth.

Cambridge Survey Research

Suite 1250 1775 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20006 Telephone (202) 223-6345

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM PATRICK H. CADDELL

RE CUBA

EYES ONLY

DATE SEPTEMBER 25, 1979

I have given careful thought to our conversation as well as to yesterday's discussion with Zbig and Jody. My reactions are as follows.

I. Our Problem

Whether justified or not, the impression of the American people is that this Administration is "not tough enough" on the Russians. This, in part, reflects the general uneasiness of the times vis a vis the Soviets, and the persistent drumbeat of the hawks over our geo-political/military situation, i.e. decline. These perceptions have weakened the support for SALT to a degree.

On the other hand, it is crucial to remember that the public has little interest in a major confrontation with the Soviet Union. The preoccupation with domestic matters and the lingering reactions to the Cold War, truly mitigate against a public outcry for "taking on the Russians." This was surely evident during the Horn of Africa situation in 1978. Peace is still an overwhelming and powerful appeal-- as long as it also reflects strength and toughness.

The final component of our problem is the general concerns raised over the question of your leadership.

II. The Need

Our needs in the current situation beyond resolution are threefold:

- 1) To take charge of the situation as the Firm but Responsible Leader;
- 2) In accomplishing (1) to make opposition positions and criticisms border on irresponsible political behavior;
- 3) To give a needed boost to the larger peace issue -- SALT.

IN CAMBRIDGE
10 Moulton Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
(617) 661-3212

III. Unique Timing Problem

As to timing, we are caught in a peculiar bind. The Pope's visit will dominate the news entirely. The actions envisioned are really not compatible with the Pope's visit. Therefore we must go before or after, and the circumstance clearly dictate to action prior to Monday. Action before the Pope's visit will make opposition noise more difficult and cut losses publicly if we sustain them. As you already know, each day -- Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday -- involves its own unique problems. Frankly, if we were sure that Portillo would not react strongly, if we could act without appearing rash, and if we could get everything together, Thursday would be the better day. That just may not be feasible. Saturday brings enormous press cycle problems and Sunday puts on the vorge of the Pope's arrival.

The closer to the Pope's arrival we move, the more crucial that the tone of the speech be less "war" and more "peace."

IV. The Basket of Options

Zbig suggested essentially nine items for the basket. I realize we have three constituencies here to satisfy: (1) The public -- general and Democratic liberal elites; (2) The Congress; and (3) The Press and foreign policy elites. To me, it seems crucial that the actions we take have these two criteria in mind:

- 1) THAT THEY BE COMPARABLE - That the actions relate in a logical way to containing or reacting against the Soviet brigade. Actions, even large ones that do not, may be ineffective.
- 2) THAT PROPOSALS NOT CREATE OTHER MAJOR DIFFICULTIES IN SUPPORT GROUPS THAT OUTWEIGH THE POTENTIAL GAIN.

Therefore as to Zbig's shopping list:

1. Announce increased military and naval presence in the Caribbean.
2. Commit the U.S. to firm principle of action to counter any Soviet troop involvement in Latin America internal conflicts -- Assurance of support to allies in Latin America.
3. Authorize and deploy the RDF and increased defense spending to protect our interests.

Comment - These three items logically seem to hang together quite well and in my mind are the strong Apples to Apples comparative actions needed. My only concern is making a strong pitch for our "allies" in Latin America -- if this is perceived to mean corrupt rightwing dictatorships, then the reaction at home, in Latin America, etc. could be counter productive. Important that it not smack of interventionism. Other than that, a strong reasonable package.

4. Enhance Intelligence Capabilities and budget - rebuild intelligence systems with safeguards.

Comment - Important to elites, not that strong with the general public. On the whole, a positive.

5. Explore Congressional Action to lift restrictions against U.S. activities in countries where Cubans operate (Clark Amendment).

Comment - After careful thought, I believe this would be a grave error. Whatever the merits of lifting the Clark Amendment to use this incident to seek repeal it seems to me opens up great Liberal/Democratic/Press opposition that is needless at this time. This is an example of the Big Orange to Small Apple situation that buys us much grief but little public benefit.

6. Increase Economic Assistance and military aid to countries in Latin America to offset Cuban influences.

Comment - Good points and bad. Economic aid is generally popular. Military aid, particularly to dictators is very unpopular.

7. Postpone MFN indefinitely.

Comment - Not very good. Too complicated for the public -- big risks with the Soviets. Another Big Orange-Small Apple mismatch.

8. Reassess technological and computer transfers reflecting Soviet response to our concerns.

Comment - Much better than #7.

9. Appoint Presidential Commission on Draft.

Comment - Politically, only 50-50. I realize crucial to Nunn. Commission far better than registration at moment should study all options including universal national service.

V. Speech/Theme

It goes without saying that the speech to the nation can be a crucial opportunity to get Presidential control of the issue, to boost SALT, and to show strong leadership. While the speech must show strong decisive Presidential action -- it must put the matter in proper perspective -- to reassure is crucial as well -- and it must end on a strong positive hopeful note.

Zbig has outlined his initial draft which makes a number of the key perspective/foreign policy points. Zbig heartily agrees that the speech must be not only an effective national security speech, but a strong political speech as well.

Zbig's outline to me covered the following points:

First - Lay out the facts of the Brigade.

Second - Explain the importance, history, etc. of the brigade and Soviet military presence, agreements, etc. Explain why not a threat to U.S. security but problem nonetheless.

Third - Explain Cuba simply Soviet puppet and tool. Economic and military dependence.

Fourth - Explain how sought to handle problem responsibly in negotiations.

Fifth - Announce actions.

Sixth - Explain need for mature foreign policy -- differentiate three themes -- (a) strong defense, (b) competition, and (c) control arms race -- SALT as in our interest.

I think, however, that some stronger political points must be made particularly after the Fifth point -- the announcement of actions. The points I would suggest are as follows:

- That we have taken the responsible equivalent actions. We have not over reacted to escalate a hair beyond what it is.

- That we have not yielded to the temptation to take actions for political purposes. Our foreign policy must be mature (Zbig's Sixth point). Foreign policy is too crucial, the stakes too absolute for people to play politics with foreign policy. To make irresponsible statements, etc.

- One political course would be to delay or pull back SALT. That road, while politically attractive, would be a great mistake. The stakes are too great, its in our national interest, etc. It is an issue of life or death for the whole planet. History and future generations severely judge our failure in this area. Goes beyond politics, beyond partisanship, beyond re-election -- yours or the Senate's.

- We are at a crossroads with SALT. Down one road lies abandonment of SALT and process with consequences. Down the other road lies eventual control and reduction of nuclear arms. One road points to confrontation, the other to peace. The road to peace is hard and risky but it is the only way.

- JFK analogy to the Presidential Seal -- one of Eagle's falon clutches arrows, the other olive branches -- the face is pointed toward peace. Today, we have given attention to both. We have taken strong, responsible action as we will in such situations. We also reaffirm our committment to a larger peace and a safer world. We have told the truth. We have acted. Let us continue down the road to peace. Ask for their support.

VI. Signals/Drama

We should send signals that indicate that we are considering serious action, consulting everywhere, and moving to resolution. This should indicate to the public that it is serious and merits their attention. In doing so, it will help prepare the public for a positive response.