

From Letter, 9.18.72 to Graham Allison (Harvard) in response to conversation and pp. 141-2 of his book "Essence of Decision" concerning President Kennedy's policy on the siting of Jupiter missiles in Turkey prior to the Cuban missile crisis.

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Sardonivich Papers

The following fragments are of uncertified authenticity.

The ROOK organization which Sardonivich heads is a hitherto undetected strategic analysis and intelligence group reporting to the Chief of Staff, Soviet Armed Forces.

From Director, ROOK (Sardonivich)

Date: ? August 15 1962

To COSSAF

Reports #3 and #4.

This is the third report of our special group whose mission was a re-evaluation of the meaning and potential consequences of "nuclear inferiority". Our intelligence in Washington has been most successful in penetrating the strategic planning functions of the Pentagon. We believed we had equally reliable sources in the White House, but the reports we have received have been so contradictory that they may have to be discounted as intentional "plants" by U.S. Counter Intelligence.

Resume of Reports 1 and 2.

In report #1 we confirmed the gravity of the situation that led to the formation of ROOK. The U.S. strategic reconnaissance has indeed located most of our missiles; and American political and military authorities have agreed that the USSR could not hope to mount a successful first strike against the U.S. This obviously will hinder the achievement of political objectives in Europe. Not only are we unable to coerce the West into agreeing to our demands, they will also stiffen their position on the premise that raising the general (and ill-defined) risks of nuclear war will be more disadvantageous to the USSR than to the U.S. This asymmetry is based on the logic that a U.S. first strike

has a finite, if low, probability of succeeding (i.e. of completely destroying our retaliatory force), whereas this is mathematically impossible ^{an attack on} for the U.S. At that time, however, we believed the U.S. had not yet detected [^] our reserve missile forces, code CAVEBAT. We had of course taken care that U.S. Intelligence was aware of the existence of CAVEBAT, so that it could function as an effective deterrent; its location is assuredly secure from aerial reconnaissance; and needless to say our recent knowledge of its technical reliability is a state secret of such priority that we are forbidden to retain any written documents about it.

Report #2 was an analysis of the speech by Deputy Defense Secretary Roswell Gilpatric on 10/2/51^{*} and further signals evidently planted by the U.S. among our contacts. They are evidently claiming that they have located CAVEBAT and can neutralize it. As this assuredly cannot have been done by aerial reconnaissance (Gilpatric's overemphasis on this technique ~~is~~ the reality) we must assume that their espionage in the USSR has been greatly advanced. Their claim to have penetrated CAVEBAT is therefore internally consistent.

However, since Gilpatric is a civilian official responsible to President Kennedy, and we believe no U.S. president would place the citizens of his country even at a small risk of annihilation except for the most urgent purposes of national survival, the neutralization of CAVEBAT was not believed to constitute a national emergency. On the other hand, the belief by U.S. officials that their nuclear superiority approaches the first strike threshold - and the peculiar advertisement of this by Gilpatric's speech - obviously pose grave obstacles to our defensive consolidation in Europe.

* see, vol. 1
10/2/51
21/10/51

Report #3.

(For background, see Reports #1 or #2 or resumé attached).

We have now received new intelligence so alarming that we transmit it only after the most searching evaluation of its accuracy. The situation summary of Report #2 was based on the conservative behavior that could be expected from a democratic civilian regime in the U.S.

However it has become evident that the President has lost control of his own administration and that major decisions will be made by a clique of militaristic hawks closely tied to the fascistic forces that confront us on the Turkish border. Months ago the President had ordered the removal of the provocative Jupiter missiles from Turkey, correctly viewing them as capable of no strategic function except a first strike against the USSR. His personal commitment to this policy was one of the main arguments for the conclusions of Report #2.

It now appears that the President's instructions on this point have been blatantly disregarded and that the Jupiter missiles will remain in Turkey for the indefinite future! Furthermore this news, both of the President's wishes and of the failure to implement them are widely known in Washington, except only the President himself!

Why is the hawkish clique so desperate to keep the Jupiters in Turkey? We must give high ~~evi~~^{evi}dence to the possibility that they are planning a provocation intended to catalyze a "defensive war" of the U.S. against the USSR, possibly including a coup d'etat.

In any event, since the civilian authority is now so precarious, we urgently recommend strenuous measures to restore the strategic balance of the USSR with the U.S., in particular to give the USSR a credible and highly visible capability of response so as to deter a U.S. first strike.

We therefore withdraw our reservations about the plans to deploy a missile deterrent in Cuba. Owing to the difference in missile flight , a preemptive attack by the U.S. on Cuba will give us ample time to deploy CAVEBAT. The Jupiters will add to our losses, but they cannot prevent us from inflicting unacceptable damages on the U.S. cities. Knowing that the U.S. cannot succeed in a first strike will then deflate blustering postures like Gilpatric's and hinder their use of nuclear blackmail in enforcing a settlement of European problems.

However, in view of the risks that a sudden confrontation with the confused power structure of the U.S. might entail, we believe that a stagewise progression is preferable to a sudden fait accompli; and we should signal the U.S. that we would be willing to settle for secondary objectives

- (1) Removal of Jupiters from Turkey
- (2) Guarantees of Cuba against U.S. invasion
- (3) Clearcut and effective of civilian control of U.S. policy.

Report #4

Date: November 16, 1962

It is plain that we have achieved all of the secondary objectives outlined in Report #3. Although our basic strategic posture must still be repaired, which will require large new expenditures in new missiles programs, the scare which the U.S. populace has experienced will make it difficult for any American diplomat to threaten us with nuclear braggadacio.

We have of course complied with your instructions to limit information given to diplomats and political bodies to the minimum they "need to know". (Their lack of technical education makes this easy to enforce). However, we believe that this may generate risks of such magnitude - there were several near mis-steps last month - that this policy needs reexamination. We should pay more heed to the principle that American perceptions of our policies - which our politicians influence greatly - are as important as the objective realities.