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THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS SPEECH:

AN ANALYSIS OF TEXT EVOLUTION

by

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Bachelor of Arts
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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ABSTRACT

**The Cuban Missile Crisis Speech: An Analysis
of Text Evolution**
by

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On October 22, 1962, President John F. Kennedy delivered a televised speech

announcing the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. This speech has been a subject of

scholarship in the field of communication, yet no critic has performed a comprehensive

analysis of its multiple drafts and their relationship to the final version. By using a

comparative analysis, one can examine the process of presidential decision-making, the

translation of those decisions into prose, and the strategic language used to communicate

a particular message. This project follows the evolution of Kennedy's address, tracing

the changes from one draft to the next, in an attempt to understand the ways in which the

administration used the art of oratory to convey a political decision of significant

consequence.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At 8:00 AM on Tuesday, October 16, 1962, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy apprised President John F. Kennedy of intelligence photos that captured images of Soviet missiles in a remote, forested corner of San Cristobal, Cuba. Six days later, on the night of October 22, 1962, President Kennedy took a final deep breath in the presence of close counsel and began an address designed to forestall the end of human civilization. In three minutes, Kennedy captured the undivided attention of a world on the brink of mutually assured destruction, and delivered a speech described as "the most alarming ever delivered by an American president."[1] The morning after, *The New York Times* reported that the speech was a "horrifying" and "warlike"[2] display of international peril. Years later, critics would consider the address "probably the most dramatic and most frightening presidential address in the history of the republic."[3]

This speech is not marked by the elegance of Kennedy's first inaugural.[4] It is not one that precedes revolutionary social change as did his civil rights address. And perhaps because of its anomalous nature, the Cuban Missile Crisis speech has not been thoroughly examined nor is it revered as one of Kennedy's most noteworthy addresses. It did, however, communicate a policy decision that likely helped prevent the onset of a nuclear exchange between two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Its message is indicative of the consequential events that followed its delivery. Had the message conveyed a decision more aggressive even in the slightest, or had the decision itself been more capricious and hastened, it is conceivable that day thirteen of the Cuban Missile

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Crisis would have marked not the end of a diplomatic struggle, but a diplomatic failure of apocalyptic consequence.

Just two years earlier, under the administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, mafia were hired to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro, and CIA operatives were instructed to train anti-Castro Cuban exiles for invasion of the small communist island. Months before the October crisis, the Kennedy administration orchestrated a failed operation to invade the Bay of Pigs with these same exiles accompanied by limited American forces. This aggression prompted Castro to seek protection from the Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev. Castro neither requested nor wanted the missiles in his country, but was assured by Khrushchev of their defense capability and bargaining power in case of another attack.[5]

On September 4, 1962, President Kennedy's brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, met with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Robert Kennedy expressed the administration's concern about the amount of military equipment being sent to Cuba. Dobrynin assured the Attorney General that neither ground-to-air missiles, nor offensive weapons of any kind, would be placed in Cuba. He continued that the Prime Minister had come to respect the president after a meeting in Vienna and that he would not trouble Kennedy with such an altercation during an election season. On September 11, Kennedy publicly declaimed the American public's anti-Khrushchev sentiment, insisting that Khrushchev had given his solemn vow against any offensive hostilities. Yet on the morning of October 16, Kennedy found that he had been played for a fool. He responded by instructing Bundy to schedule a meeting for 11:45 that morning.[6]

In addition to the President, Robert Kennedy, and Bundy, those attending included Vice President Lyndon Johnson, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Maxwell Taylor, representatives of the CIA, and primary Kennedy advisor and speechwriter Ted Sorensen. These men would come to be known as ExComm, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council. For the next four days, they met repeatedly—often going without sleep or food—to debate the multiple alternatives of action. These meetings ultimately allowed ExComm to craft a decision and draft a speech responsive to the highest possible stakes: the fate of humankind.

Robert Schlesinger recalled ExComm's heavy burden. "The lives of the world," he wrote, "hung in large part on the decisions of fifteen men." Moreover, "the right words for the speech itself helped set the terms of the international debate."[7] And in doing so, the speech likely helped prevent Soviet aggression. It is for this reason, then, that the speech is a historically significant text, a curiously overlooked presidential speech, and an untapped source for valuable criticism.

Existing Scholarship

The 1960s witnessed some of the most turbulent, violent, dynamic, and controversial changes in American history.[8] And Kennedy's oratorical legacy reflects the tenor of the times. Analysis of that legacy tends to center on his employment of traditional rhetorical strategies and tactics. Criticism of his inaugural, for example, reveals his use of metaphor, themes such as "the new frontier," and figurative techniques such as chiasmus, evident in the juxtaposition of "ask not" and "ask" as he appealed to

Americans to act on behalf of others.[9] In addition, a great deal of work traces Kennedy's

ability to overcome religious intolerance in his race for the White House. Casting

opposition to his presidency as a form of bigotry, Kennedy used a rhetoric of *apologia*

when he faced the Greater Houston Ministerial Association on September 12, 1960, to

announce that he was "Not the Catholic Candidate for President."[10] Criticism

surrounding his commencement address at American University illustrates his use of

détente with superpowers through the repetition of "peace" as a symbol threaded through

the message.[11] An eye to strategies used to overcome rhetorical barriers unearths his use

of juxtaposition in his 1963 address in Berlin and crisis management in the 1962 steel

production quagmire.[12]

Despite considerable scholarship on an array of Kennedy's speeches and

campaigns, however, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the Cuban Missile

Crisis address. The three pieces of scholarship that do examine the speech, though, are

all contextualized in relation to a broader genre of Cold War rhetoric. Perhaps the most

comprehensive analysis to date is by Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott. The authors

evaluate various facets of this "complex persuasive campaign," most notably the

influences of key personnel on the eventual address.[13] Brockriede and Scott progress

through the speech, paragraph by paragraph, highlighting key phrases and repeated

themes. The authors note certain messages that prevail throughout the speech: the

responsibility of the executive branch, the threat as an international one, the justification

of a response by international law, and the tension between peace and defense.

In addition, Brockriede and Scott point out instances of particular word choice as

a function of strategic language use. To say that Soviet forces used Cuba as an

"important strategic base"[14] suggests, according to the authors, the flagrancy of the U.S.S.R. to establish military strongholds around the world, thus requiring U.S. forces to keep the rest of the world secure from communism and a nuclear threat. The authors continue this sort of evaluation, pulling examples from the speech and evaluating what they perceive to be word choices that are made in an effort to convey a precise message.

The authors also view the juxtaposition of the U.S.-Soviet relationship as an appeal that pits angel against demon. They explain instances where Kennedy uses the threat of communism to expose Soviet duplicity and to contrast it to the U.S.'s benevolent national character. In addition, the authors suggest that Kennedy's mention of the Soviets' "special and historical relationship" with America is used to unearth sentiments of the Monroe Doctrine, which is carefully not named to avoid raising questions about U.S. authority in establishing a blockade.

Finally, the analysis suggests that Kennedy created his message with intent to deceive his audience. This is done, the authors contend, by way of strategic language use and an intentional lack of detail. "The deception theme continues for several minutes," they profess. "Nowhere in talking of the Soviet missiles does the President specify the countries in which American missiles have been placed." The president "allay[s] unfavorable answers to [important] questions" and uses "verbal strategy" to "circumvent the problems that would attend general world opinion that the United States was guilty of the first act of war."[15] This prevarication serves as a means by which the president can feature the threats posed by the Soviet Union without having to discuss instances wherein the United States may be guilty of similar indiscretions. Although the authors have sufficient evidence to make this claim, it seems they deem any language "deceptive" if it

is used in a strategic capacity. A certain refutation to this claim is that any language of a political nature is inherently strategic, but not necessarily deceptive.

In a broad analysis of 1960s rhetoric, Theodore Windt situates Kennedy's speech in relation to the Missile Crisis as an event. He extends the discussion of strategic language use initiated by Brockriede and Scott. Like his predecessors, Windt traces a rhetoric of deception, and extends an argument about character that Brockriede and Scott make only in passing. He explains how the Cold War so profoundly diluted political language that words lost traditional and legal meaning; he thereby categorizes Kennedy's speech as an engagement of Orwellian Newspeak. Citing the infant stage of missile construction as a minor cause for concern, Kennedy's speech illustrates the use of language to transform a questionable threat into one of great concern. The "secret, swift, and extraordinary," and "sudden, clandestine" deployment of the missiles is a tactic used to convince the American public that the threat was of a direct and intended nature.

Finally, Windt notes how Kennedy shifts the issue from a military and political context to one of moral implications. Using keywords designed to evoke feelings of American patriotism, Kennedy called upon the world to recognize that "the cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it."[16] In framing the debt to peace and international stability as a national attribute, Kennedy created for his audience a positive perception of American character.

Denise M. Bostdorff approaches the text from an international perspective.[17] Where Brockriede and Scott, as well as Windt, use limited outside sources to draw conclusions about the speech, Bostdorff relies heavily on extrinsic contextual factors, including other crisis documents. She, too, extends the argument of deception, and

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exposes the antithetical relationship between the U.S. and Soviet perspectives in a more explicit, detailed, and critical manner.

A Burkean analysis, Bostdorff explains, reveals how Kennedy's speech focuses on the Soviets' placement of missiles in Cuba, and deflects attention away from the placement of American missiles in Turkey.[18] She explains that "Kennedy's discourse portrayed a highly threatening scene of crisis that dictated U.S. goals and actions, which meant that the scene and the Soviets who were part of that scene, rather than the United States or its leader, has the highest degree of accountability."[19] She continues, examining how two ratios, scene-purpose and purpose-act, characterized not only this address, but all of Kennedy's crisis rhetoric. Further, she evaluates strategic language use in a manner similar to previous scholarship. Noting the ease with which Kennedy labels the weapons in Cuba as "Communist," she argues that this tactic links the missiles to a "more frightening, overarching devil" rather than simply to a single country. In addition, Bostdorff contends that Kennedy's previous rhetorical acts regarding the Soviet-America relationship effectively "boxed him in," demanding a particular and carefully-calculated address.

<div style="text-align:center">Purpose</div>

These critiques are insightful. The limits in their conclusions, however, warrant extended scholarly attention. Thus, the purpose of this project is to perform a more detailed and thorough examination of the speech's evolution through multiple drafts, in order to update and perhaps extend some of the arguments advanced in the earlier critiques. While Brockriede and Scott engage the text in a more comprehensive manner

than their successors by analyzing the speech paragraph by paragraph, the brevity of the criticism is problematic. Previous criticism provides valuable insight, but the insight is unearthed from only one text, the final draft. This project, on the other hand, will evaluate the speech based on its long-term development. This method will allow the progression and changes in language choice to be illustrated more clearly. Prior literature engages in criticism of some instances of language within the text. In doing so, these analyses draw conclusions about Kennedy's rhetorical intent based only on one example, one instance of language use. By natural consequence of their evaluative processes, the critiques fall short of examining how particular words changed in the drafting stages, and conclude with equivocal claims that could be made more cogently with the assessment of multiple drafts. A project that attends to the drafting and re-writing process, however, affords an opportunity to study the careful making of the message JFK intended to communicate, supported by evidence of what the speech didn't say or said differently.

The first draft of President Kennedy's speech on the Missile Crisis is the initial attempt to translate days of deliberation, argument, and decision-making into effective language. The third draft is cited in ExComm deliberations, for which there are audio data and transcript evidence of the draft changes each member suggested. The two versions of the fourth draft reflect the changes made after suggestions from the ExComm meeting, and the final draft reflects the concluding message that JFK decided to deliver.[20] Informed by limited but productive scholarship on this speech, the analysis aims to extend earlier critiques by rhetorical scholars, and to develop insights made possible by recent commentary.

More comprehensive conclusions about the final draft can be reached through asking the following questions: What message did the writers intend to convey? Why did the writers feel specific words, phrases, and explanations needed to be changed? What words did each draft use to convey a message? How do the changes from draft to draft illustrate a particular message that the writers intended to communicate? This process, one that utilizes multiple drafts in its evaluation, may unveil new evidence about elements of the speech that have already been critiqued. In doing so, this project may systematically alter the conclusions drawn by previous research, and provide new insight into the Missile Crisis as a rhetorical experience. Thus, an analysis of the final text—based on the evolution of word choice, structure, argument, and so on—promises a more comprehensive, illuminating, and detail-oriented means of criticism, one that both benefits from and extends previous research.

In addition to rhetorical-critical approaches to the text, indispensable literature about the speech comes from accounts written by those present in decision-making discussions, and is primarily political in nature. The intersection of political science and rhetoric is a fascinating one, and allows scholars and students alike to produce research that addresses multiple avenues of thought and divergent theories. Robert Kennedy and Theodore Sorensen produced the most comprehensive material on the creation of the final text.[21] Kennedy narrates the events of those thirteen days with valuable insight as Attorney General of the United States, and as brother of the commander-in-chief. His perspective, memories, and conclusions are invaluable to a project that examines the evolution of President Kennedy's speech. Sorensen served as special advisor to the president for over a decade, and was the primary speechwriter for many of the President's

most notable messages. Sorensen has penned a litany of work over thirty years. The time span serves to refresh and reformulate Sorensen's description of the events, with varying ends of detail, modesty, secrecy, and loyalty with each publication. Both authors contribute valuable information about the decision to enact a blockade and about the speech announcing that decision.

Method of Analysis

After visiting the JFK Library and exhausting the drafts found there, methodological questions arose. How and why is it that these particular words were used in the first place? What process was underway during the text's drafting that required this language? In answering, I found the core of the speech reflected the deliberations of the Executive Committee, and thus my methodology began to evolve. The dialogue among these men allowed the group to formulate the arguments and accompanying language use in a manner that revealed the process of presidential decision-making. The research approach taken to the first, third, and fourth drafts of the Cuban Missile Crisis address is a comparative analysis, supported by attention to groupthink, presidential speechwriting, and strategic language use.

Groupthink

The first analytical tool is an essential consideration because of its role in the decision making process that parallels the changes made in successive drafts of the speech. Groupthink, as defined by Irving Janis, is a tendency of group members to think with similar ideological perspectives or political predispositions.[22] This tendency leads actors to make headlong decisions without exploring the implications of each alternative.

In his estimation of White House decision-making, Sorensen recalls that "Group recommendations too often put a premium on consensus in place of content, on unanimity in place of precision, on compromise in place of creativity."[23] Rather, Janis contends, groups ought to be created in a manner that will overcome this tendency, with members who will not succumb to in-group pressure. The outcome of a group that can defeat groupthink is infinitely more productive in many respects. As Sorensen notes, in "a meeting representing different departments and diverse points of view, there is a greater likelihood of hearing alternatives, of exposing errors, and of challenging assumptions."[24]

Groupthink is recognizable in even the most learned and courageous circles of citizens. Ted Sorensen recounts its presence during deliberations among Kennedy's men, a group often considered the brightest in presidential history.[25] He recognizes the presence of fear and embarrassment in White House decision-making, noting that "even the most distinguished and forthright adviser is usually reluctant to stand alone."[26] The speech drafting process was one of great turbulence within the administration, especially because of the close relationships among its participants, and the need for imaginative meetings because "nearly everyone likes to feel that he, too, conferred and concurred."[27]

So was the decision articulated in the speech a good decision and devoid of groupthink? Janis establishes criteria that contribute to a successful decision. These include the canvassing of multiple alternatives; weighing the costs, drawbacks, risks, and positive and negative consequences of each; and the continuous search for new information.[28] As Sorensen points out, "The interaction of many minds is usually more illuminating than the intuition of one."[29] Janis argues that the quality of the decision is

based not on the outcome of the situation, but on whether the decision-making process adhered to these expectations and examined multiple options. Thus, the impetus for examining ExComm deliberations and their effects on the speech draft, without moving beyond October 22, is essential to ascertaining the success of the decision as devoid of groupthink.

An integral part of evaluating groupthink in a presidential administration is to ascertain how the president's character is projected onto group members, and how his leadership style impacts the decision-making process. Political scientist James David Barber discusses Kennedy's placement in the legacy of presidential character.[30] Barber offers a two-axis paradigm through which all presidents can be categorized. One axis defines leadership as passive or active, that is whether the president engages with daily decision-making and is active in creating or executing policy. The second axis, labeled positive or negative, evaluates whether a chief executive gives the impression that he enjoys his political life. This axis is dominated by his self-esteem, amicability, and perception of the office and job.[31]

Kennedy, according to Barber, was an active-positive president.[32] He had high self-esteem and success in relating to his environment. He valued productivity and was flexible in adapting his style to suit each situation. He maintained rational mastery, using his brain to move his feet. This active-positive outlook on his presidency is illustrated by the discussions JFK stressed would bring the administration to its best alternative for action during the Missile Crisis. Sorensen notes, "Whether a president is strong or weak determines if he will initiate or avoid discussion. He will undoubtedly make vital decisions, and his character and the nature of the office will inform those decisions."[33]

The ability to categorize types of presidential character is essential in understanding how a president approaches the decision-making process in his administration.

Presidential Speechwriting

Because the decisions made by a president and his advisors must often be articulated to the public, the study of presidential rhetoric has flourished in recent years. With the advent of communication technologies, the oratorical potential of a president is significant not only once in office, but on the path to the presidency. James Ceaser, Glen Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis, and Joseph Bessette explore such themes in "The Rise of the Rhetorical Presidency."[34] In examining the role of communication in this constitutionally defined office, they conclude that the president's duty has evolved into a leadership position. Rather than tend to defined responsibilities of the commander-in-chief, contemporary presidents are expected to match unrealistic expectations and to deal with problems of governance in a manner that will not jeopardize their popularity or ability to act. Jeffrey Tulis extends this observation and warns of the potential harms of persuasive rhetoric in such a leadership position.[35] The danger resides in questions regarding the soundness and validity of a presidential argument. Tulis's concern is that "persuasive power derives more from the fact that the president proclaims, or commands, than it does from a case that he builds."[36]

Paralleling Tulis, Roderick P. Hart evaluates how presidential speech has become more than just a requirement of governance. Rather, Hart holds that in contemporary presidential leadership, speaking "*is* governance."[37] Instead of tending to presidential responsibilities that are constitutionally enumerated, the president performs as a leader of

the people rather than as a head of one branch of American government. In this instance what the president decides to speak about instantly becomes policy.

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson also address the effects of the rhetorical presidency and its power in delineating what issues appear on the policy agenda.[38] Rather than just perform the constitutionally defined acts of the office by enforcing policy, the rhetorical president can concurrently create, introduce, or support an issue by becoming a player in its birth and publicly legitimizing its purpose. Campbell and Jamieson categorize eleven genres of presidential speech, one of which is war rhetoric.[39] As a forewarning, the authors note that justifications for military action "appear less frequently in speeches seeking congressional authorization for future actions and more frequently in speeches seeking congressional ratification of actions already undertaken."[40] The crisis wavers in identical form from a few of these precepts, but strictly adheres to two: first, "every element in it proclaims that the momentous decision to resort to force is deliberate, the product of thoughtful consideration"; and second, "the audience is exhorted to unanimity of purpose and total commitment."[41]

A presidential decision is eventually crafted into a message intended to unify and persuade diverse audiences. Within a presidential administration, many individuals articulate their positions clearly. However, the ability to perform such a feat in a manner that will appease the American people is rare. For this reason, presidents as far back as Washington have sought aid in drafting important messages.[42] The speech writing process differs from the decision making process in one key way: the latter requires multiple, diverse perspectives to be deemed "good," while the former is more effective as the number of people involved decreases. As Sorensen notes,

Group authorship is rarely, if ever, successful. A certain continuity and precision of style, and unity of argument, must be carefully drafted, particularly in a public communication that will be read or heard by many diverse audiences. Its key principles and phrases can be debated, outlined, and later reviewed by a committee, but basically authorship depends on one man alone with his typewriter or pen.[43]

The skill in discovering, developing, and articulating multiple perceptions is one evidenced by the events in October of 1962. The artistic melding of abstract and concrete terms, lofty and pragmatic rhetoric, finite detail and narrative description, are discernable in the modern craft of presidential speechwriting. "White House decision making is not a science," Sorensen notes, "it is an art."[44]

Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst compiled works by multiple authors about the process of speechwriting in every administration from Franklin Roosevelt through Ronald Reagan. In the introduction and conclusion, Medhurst evaluates the role of speechwriting in a presidency, and suggests that critics focus a close eye on the implications of its role in creating policy. He explains, "By studying how speeches are produced and edited by speechwriters prior to their delivery by the president, scholars can better understand how those rhetorical dimensions of the office function."[45]

Robert Schlesinger takes a similar approach in evaluating the same administrations Ritter and Medhurst study, and adding Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. He then offers his own evaluation of the role of speechwriting. Schlesinger delves into the personal relationship between each president and his speechwriter(s) and explores its impact on the administration and its oratorical legacy. He argues that "the act of

translating policy impulses and instincts into prose policy played an important role in the deliberations before Kennedy's speech. Setting policy into words had raised new questions and exposed possible weaknesses."[46] Both Sorensen and Schlesinger argue that because the written texts of presidential speeches are attributed to the orator, scholars of presidential rhetoric must understand the nuances of each rhetorical situation and uncover any extrinsic motivations of the administrators involved. Sorensen notes, "The man who controls the pen has a great deal of influence over what ultimately becomes presidential policy."[47] If the written words used to communicate a presidential policy are not penned by the president himself, there are ample opportunities to expose the role of speech writers in creating the policy by choosing the words with which to describe and define the decision.

Strategic Language Use

Finally, the strategic language that develops following multiple drafts illustrates the precision of the message Kennedy wished to communicate. The use and misuse of symbols, most often manifested through language, is the necessary and logical starting point for any analysis that intends to unearth the implications of language. Kenneth Burke describes the process of sifting through symbols to find the most appropriate words with which to label something. One element of this process is characteristic of humans' desire for perfection. He explains, "To name something by its 'proper' name, or to speak a language in its distinctive ways is intrinsically 'perfectionist.' What is more 'perfectionist' in essence than the impulse, when one is in dire need of something, to so state this need that one in effect 'defines' the situation?"[48] Bernard L. Brock summarizes these key features of Burkean theory:

The words that one assigns to these functions [of language] and relationships not only reveal the process of sorting out the world but also communicate an attitude that is a cue for the behavior of others. Burke clearly indicates that the act of selecting one symbol over another locks the speaker's attitude into the language. For this reason verbal symbols are meaningful acts from which human motives can be derived. These motives constitute the foundation or the substance of a rhetorical act, and through the ability to identify them by the cues in verbal symbols, Burke constructs a philosophy of rhetoric.[49]

The arbitrary nature of symbols requires that their use avoid ambiguity and miscommunication, which can result in unintended interpretations. Once political and military consequences are tied to a message, the orator will surely look more closely. One may argue that any process of evaluating a rhetorical text is informed by Burkean theory.

A clear example of a rhetorical text examined for its strategic language use is Dwight Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech, delivered December 8, 1953. In his analysis of the address, Martin Medhurst concludes that the speech was part of the beginnings of the Cold War, and illustrated an American peace offensive designed to match a Soviet peace offensive. The text functioned as a psychological victory over the Soviets, and introduced a program that supplied information and technology in exchange for a limited nuclear arms build-up. Medhurst concludes that "human agents can shape language and guide perception in accordance with their own purposes. . . . Language is not self-explanatory. It is a reflection of the goals, motives, and values of those who

choose to use it as an instrument by which to realize their ends."[50] Further, Medhurst

evaluates how Eisenhower used specific language to gain a psychological victory over

the Soviet Union, to create one audience explicitly and another implicitly, and to portray

the campaign as a part of the free world's commitment to nuclear arms control. Medhurst

goes so far as to analyze the split from a traditional structure of deliberative speech.

Typically, he contends, such speeches are organized chronologically, but Eisenhower's

speech progresses from present, to past, to future.[51] In doing so, Eisenhower features the

present, rather than burying it in the middle of his deliberative speech. Featuring the past,

he argues, would result in a recitation of failure. In addition, this structure juxtaposes the

failures of the past with his plan for the future. Medhurst demonstrates "how a particular

group of rhetors used language to address multiple audiences for divergent purposes

while at the same moment, maintaining that the audience was one and the purpose

straightforward."[52]

In addition to Medhurst, Brockriede and Scott address the unique language

present in Cold War rhetoric. The authors suggest that a peculiar relationship exists

between words and actions in this period of history: "Words have often been substitutes

for actions and, as surrogates, have been shaped by the actions for which they

substitute."[53] This doctrine of inaction is peculiar, as the evolution of the rhetorical

presidency has taught us, if nothing else, that speaking is governing. And thus,

Kennedy's oratory would precede his action, and his action would be determined by his

oratory.

Plan of Development

This remainder of this project is composed of four chapters. The second chapter analyzes the decision-making process of ExComm from October 16 through late October 19, at which point the first version was drafted. The most significant elements of this section address the deliberations over which policy decision would be adopted. The proceedings of these four days informed a great deal of the political, military, and moral implications for each policy alternative, including the eventual choice. This choice, to abstain from any sort of attack and carry on with a blockade, is characterized by an absence of the groupthink tendencies that ultimately led to the failure of other Kennedy decisions, most notably the Bay of Pigs in 1961.

The third chapter is the first that employs a critical comparison of two speech drafts. The changes made between the first and third drafts illustrate the augmented decisions about policy approaches and language use. Each revision evidences the care with which ExComm approached the speech. The commentary highlights phrases that are added and deleted, jargon that is made more and less ambiguous, and audiences who are included or overlooked. All of these are adjusted for strategic purposes.

The fourth chapter analyzes the changes made between the third and fourth drafts. Changes to the third draft are reflected in a transcript from the 506th meeting of the National Security Council on October 21. A majority of this meeting was devoted to individual comments and criticisms of Sorensen's third draft. Paraphrases of such comments are listed in the transcripts provided by multiple sources, including the Kennedy Library, the National Security Council, and the Avalon Project. The cross-

reference feature is useful in comparing the draft discussed in the meeting and the fourth drafts which reflect suggestions made during the meeting.

The final chapter is a summation of the project's analysis and commentary on the implications for the study of presidential rhetoric. This section outlines how the project contributes unique insight into contemporary rhetorical theories as well as to the benefits to critical study provided through the close reading of multiple speech drafts, particularly when the speechwriting process and policy deliberations are closely linked.

Notes

[1] Ted Sorensen, *Counselor: Life at the Edge of History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008).

[2] Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott, *Moments in the Rhetoric of the Cold War* (New York: Random House, 1970), 93.

[3] Denise M. Bostdorff, *The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 40.

[4] Works on JFK's First Inaugural include Donald L. Wolfarth, "John F. Kennedy in the tradition of Inaugural Speeches," *Quarterly Journal of Speech 47* (1961): 124-132, "Vito N. Silvestri, "Background Perspectives on John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address," *Political Communication and Persuasion 8* (1991): 1-15, Theodore O. Windt, Jr., "President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, 1961," *Inaugural Addresses of Twentieth-Century American Presidents*, ed. Halford Ryan (Westport: Praeger, 1993) 181-193.

[5] Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 9.

[6] Various details of the thirteen days are well-documented in Sorensen, *Counselor;* Robert Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and their Speechwriters* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008)*;* Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965); Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Theodore C. Sorensen, *The Kennedy Legacy* (New York: Macmillian Publishing, 1969); Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October: The Declassified Story of John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

[7] Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts,* 128 and 129.

[8] David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

[9] Wolfarth, "John F. Kennedy in the Tradition of Inaugural Speeches;" Silvestri, "Background Perspectives on John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address;" Windt, "President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, 1961."

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[17] Bostdorff, *The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis, 25-55.*

[18] Bostdorff, *The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis,* 26.

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[51] Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech," 208.

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CHAPTER 2

THE CREATION OF DRAFT ONE: TRANSLATING

DELIBERATION INTO THE WRITTEN WORD

Rhetorical performance is a vital tradition of the presidency. Speeches of every kind provide forms of support for the nation's leadership. Inaugural addresses, for example, aim to create a standard for the new administration and contribute to the patriotic temperament of the day. State of the Union speeches celebrate the heroic deeds of ordinary citizens, lay out a road map for the near future, and dispel any disenchantment with the status quo.[1] Rhetorical performance, moreover, is an opportunity for the Commander-in-Chief to use oratory to display management capability; consequently citizens often look to a leader's eloquence as an indicator of the president's vigor, intuition, and style of governance.[2] Because of their power to influence citizens' perceptions of their leader's credibility, speeches are seldom absent from the rituals of American governance. Not all rituals are exclusively celebratory. Extant research on the rhetorical presidency, for instance, suggests that leaders are expected to deliver an address in the event of a disaster or threat.[3] Such addresses have instrumental as well as ritualistic or ceremonial functions.

As mentioned earlier, the underlying theme in literature from rhetorical scholars is that this office has evolved into one that presupposes public address will play a significant role. James Ceaser, Glen Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis, and Joseph Bessette suggest that the constitutionally defined office, intended originally to resemble the European monarchy, has been transformed into a leadership position. Paralleling this work, Roderick P. Hart evaluates how presidential speech has become more than just a

requirement of governance. Rather, Hart holds that in contemporary presidential leadership, speaking "*is* governance."[4] Instead of tending to presidential responsibilities that are constitutionally enumerated, the president performs as a leader of the people rather than as a head of one branch of American government. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson also address the effects of the rhetorical presidency and its power in delineating what issues appear on the policy agenda.[5] Rather than just perform the constitutionally defined acts of the office by enforcing policy, the rhetorical president can concurrently create, introduce, or support an issue by becoming a player in its development and publicly legitimizing its purpose.

Expectations like the ones explored in this literature account for the evolution of John F. Kennedy's public address during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962. Upon hearing that the Soviet Union had delivered offensive ballistic missiles to Cuba, the President convened high ranking military officers, CIA officials, and members of his administration to draw up a potential course of action. The members of this group, ExComm, met for four days before determining an appropriate retaliatory response. These meetings played a significant role in the outcome of the Crisis. The choice to abstain from any sort of attack and carry on with a blockade is characterized by an absence of the groupthink tendencies that ultimately led to the failure of other Kennedy decisions, most notably the Bay of Pigs in 1961. Groupthink, as defined by Irving Janis, is a tendency of group members to think with similar ideological perspectives or political predispositions.[6] This tendency leads actors to make decisions without exploring the implications of each alternative. As will be illustrated later, the Missile Crisis address

reflects these deliberations in a unique manner, one atypical in the legacy of presidential speechwriting.

Participant narratives and the transcripts of the meetings suggest that Kennedy anticipated addressing the public from the very beginning of the Crisis. Internally, this expectation was recognized early on. State Department records show that within three hours of apprising Kennedy of the situation, Secretary of State Dean Rusk advised, "I think we do have to announce this development at some time this week."[7] And Robert Schlesinger notes in his study of presidential speechwriting that "[w]hatever action Kennedy settled on, he would have to explain it to the American people and the world."[8] The role of speechwriting in the White House is one that has long occupied rhetorical scholars' attention. Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst evaluate the role of speechwriting in a presidency, and suggest that critics ought to attend closely to the implications of its role in creating policy. They explain, "By studying how speeches are produced and edited by speechwriters prior to their delivery by the president, scholars can better understand how those rhetorical dimensions of the office function."[9] Thus, the strategies employed in the Cuban Missile Crisis speech's creation reflect the policy-making processes of the Kennedy White House, and may characterize Kennedy's rhetorical presidency in its entirety.

This chapter evaluates the first draft of this speech, a document completed in the early hours of Saturday, October 20, 1962. The analysis proceeds chronologically through the draft's development to reveal the process of invention that underlay the creation of this surprisingly little-studied text. This includes a brief background of the speechwriting process, which is important for understanding the draft's inherent

uniqueness. All interpretive claims are supported by ExComm transcripts, narrative accounts from participants in the deliberations, and scholarly commentary on the week's events.

Before moving to a comparative analysis of this document, however, it is imperative to establish that the creation of this speech's first draft is unique, particularly in the atypical method of its crafting. For in presidential decision-making and speechwriting, it is less common for a speech to be written *while* a course of action is decided upon, than for a speech to be written *after* that course is determined. Further, the drafting of the first version of this speech served as a means by which the committee finally decided upon a response. Although it is not replete with artistic techniques similar to those used in Kennedy's more notable speeches, it exhibits extreme precision and care in its message. In fact, the first draft reflects a process that was underway from the first ExComm meeting on the morning of October 16 to its submission to President Kennedy on the morning of October 20. An eye to the contextual factors surrounding its drafting reveals an unfamiliar process in presidential decision-making and speechwriting. As substantiated by Kennedy speechwriter Ted Sorensen, the process is usually chronological. That is, first the administration decides on a course of action, then drafts a message adhering to the specifics of that course.[10] The uniqueness of both the Crisis decision and the speech resides at least partly in a process in which policy deliberations and the invention of the text coincided.

In his memoirs, Sorensen recalls the impending responsibility of creating a first draft. Inconsistent with his previous speechwriting experiences, Sorensen approached the

task with a muddled impression of what exactly it ought to communicate. As he describes the events of October 19:

> Finally, the blockade/quarantine group, recognizing that whichever path the president ultimately selected would require a televised address to the American people, asked me to formulate a draft speech as a means of articulating, for the consideration of the group and the president, all the components of the course we were recommending.[11]

In a different memoir, Sorensen recalls the challenges he encountered in drafting the speech:

> But back in my office, the original difficulties with the blockade route stared me in the face: How should we relate it to the missiles? How would it help get them out? What would we do if they became operational? What should we say about our surveillance, about communicating with Khrushchev? I returned to the group late that afternoon with these questions instead of a speech; and as the concrete answers were provided in our discussions, the final shape of the President's policy began to take form.[12]

He concludes this discussion by summarizing the impact of the speechwriting process on the eventual decision. The first draft, he notes, "provided a framework of basic policy around which an ExComm consensus could be formed and a presidential decision made."[13]

The first draft of this speech was a preliminary attempt to translate days of deliberation into effective language, and to lay the groundwork for Kennedy's precise

response to news of the missile build-up. The purposes of this message were multiple: to explain the situation to the American public, to communicate the recourse decided upon by the committee, and to make the world—including Cuba and the Soviet Union—aware that America recognized the missiles' presence.

The rhetorical significance of this draft, then, centers on the process of invention. In performing this comparative analysis, the implications of studies in groupthink, speechwriting, and strategic language use are indeed useful. They can help illuminate the importance of the message's intricacies: the most discrete language choices; the rationale behind adding or eliminating particular thoughts; the organization and style of the speech as a whole. And these theories will undoubtedly prove fruitful in analyzing this and subsequent drafts. An even more productive criticism of the first draft, however, reveals itself through the use of an invention-centered apparatus.

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle defines rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion."[14] As Aristotle's treatise progresses, he provides a systematic *techne* (or productive art) for crafting a compelling message. Part of this skill is derived from, as directed by the definition, the ability to locate topics (or *topoi*) based on existing material or material that must be "created" by the orator. The former proofs are outlined as laws, witnesses, contracts, tortures, and oaths.[15] The latter are categorized as appeals to an orator's character *(ethos)*, appeals to the audience's emotions *(pathos)*, and appeals to argument *(logos)*.[16] In combining both extrinsic and intrinsic material, an orator is better equipped to locate and employ effective means of persuasion.

This chapter, then, pursues an invention-centered form of analysis. While subsequent chapters will benefit from the comparison of multiple drafts in revision, this

draft should only—and can only—be considered rhetorically significant as an initial

attempt to translate discussion and deliberation into effective prose.[17] The first draft is

divided into two sections based on the message's organization. The opening section of

the speech announced the missiles' presence, discussed why their presence contradicted

previous Soviet statements, and explained why this deception warranted a retaliatory

response by the U.S. The closing section of the speech outlined the steps demanded of

the Soviet leadership and addressed those audiences directly affected by the crisis.

Part One: Demonstrating the Threat

The draft of the address began, "Within the last week, unmistakable evidence has

been gathered by this Government establishing the fact that a series of offensive nuclear

missile bases is now under intensive preparation on the communist island of Cuba."[18]

Overt phrases like "unmistakable evidence" and "establishing the fact" conveyed the

administration's assuredness of their intelligence, that these claims were accurate and had

been thoroughly vetted. The administration was, in fact, hesitant to pursue any recourse

that might escalate into a conflict. Previous calls for an invasion of Cuba—fueled by

hawkish Senators like Kenneth Keating, Strom Thurmond, and Barry Goldwater—were

rejected daily by the administration in order to avoid hasty and unsubstantiated actions

against Cuba.[19]

Growing suspicions about the movement of Soviet personnel and equipment sent

to Cuba motivated the administration to begin surveillance of the island on August 27.

Within days, photographs provided the first "hard intelligence" that surface-to-air

missiles, torpedo boats, and substantial numbers of personnel were present on the

island.[20] The evidence, then, was indeed unmistakable. The speech implied that

unsubstantiated charges of Cuba's offensive capability played no role in this decision,

that the government had taken the utmost care in assuring the intelligence was legitimate

and warranted immediate action.

The draft continued, "Three of these missile sites contain launchers, 4 to a site, to

be loaded with Medium Range Ballistic Missiles, two for each launcher, for a total of 24.

Each of these 24 missiles is capable of carrying a 3000 pound nuclear warhead of up to 2

megatons in yield or 100 times as destructive as the bomb which destroyed Hiroshima—

for a distance of more than 1000 nautical miles."[21] This description, replete with

numerical data and military jargon, reflects ExComm deliberations from October 16 to

October 19. Discussions are frequently dominated by highly specialized language, prose

commonplace to the men present. For example, in transcripts from the evening of

October 16, CIA Deputy Director Marshall Carter described the capabilities of various

weapons and explained to President Kennedy, "these are solid propellant, inertial

guidance missiles with eleven-hundred-mile range rather than the oxygen propellant."[22]

Additionally, on October 19, CIA Operative Arthur Lundahl examined the markings on

aerial photography and informed the President that "We [found] 22 of those crates, some

60 feet long. We definitely have not yet seen the Beagle IL28. 1 fuselage has been taken

from 1 of the boxes."[23] During the first four days of the crisis, the members of ExComm

participated in nearly a dozen meetings, all packed with information similar in nature.

Thus, it is understandable that any communication reflecting ExComm's

deliberations contains highly specialized information. In turn, the nature of the language

during the discussions helps explain why a speech addressing the situation takes care to

articulate the details of this intelligence. This portion of the text is saturated with numbers, and expresses the Soviet threat in terms of concrete data. In doing so, the draft leaves no room for disagreement or subjective interpretation. These are facts, confirmed by the most skilled and seasoned intelligence representatives.

Next, the speech declared that the presence of missiles in Cuba "constitutes a threat to the peace and security of this Hemisphere—in naked and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and hemisphere, [and] the Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress."[24] The central principle of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, or Rio Pact, was an agreement among American countries that an attack on one is considered an attack on all. It is based on the "hemisphere defense" doctrine, a theme that is invoked often in this speech.[25] In addition, the Arms Control and Disarmament Act passed on September 26, 1961, is a Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress. The goals of this legislation are "formulating, advocating, negotiating, implementing and verifying effective arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament policies, strategies, and agreements."[26] The Pact and the Act reflected Aristotle's inartistic proofs of, respectively, law and contract. Both were treated in relation to each other, "so that any one who disregards or repudiates any contract is repudiating the law."[27] The speech utilized them as a source of legitimacy. They were not based on persuasion created through the use of the artistic proofs, but rather on the absolute quality provided through the law. The guidelines outlined in the speech draft provided an international, legal justification for American surveillance of the island and any subsequent action by the U.S. that were within the parameters of appropriate response.

The Soviet Union was portrayed as a country that defied legal doctrine and disregarded international laws that were designed to maintain peace and political balance.

The draft then highlighted instances of Soviet leaders offering assurances to Kennedy that any installation of Soviet weapons in Cuba would be purely defensive. One such assurance was from Chairman Khrushchev: "[T]he Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union."[28] Another quotation from Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko reads, "assistance [is] pursued solely [for] the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba."[29]

Repeating Soviet assurances that offensive missiles would not find their way to Cuba is one way that the speech engaged its listeners to accept the accusation of dishonesty. This rhetorical strategy of reluctant authority works to elicit a similar awareness of the Soviets' deceptive nature, the same awareness that provoked the U.S. to react. By using explicit statements that contradicted the Soviets' activities, the text justified American actions as necessary and appropriate for dealing with a country that acted irresponsibly.

The speech then included a statement consistent with existing rhetorical theories about Cold War rhetoric. It read, "We no longer live in a world where only an actual 'armed attack' . . . represents a challenge to a nation's security. Nuclear weapons are so destructive . . . that any increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in the nature of their threat, may well require an act of self-defense."[30] Various entries of ExComm transcripts suggest that many participants adhered to this frame in gauging the threat. President Kennedy observed, "the existence of this presents the gravest threat to

our security . . . appropriate action must be taken."[31] Vice President Johnson concurred, noting that "we're committed at any time that we feel that there's a build up that in any way endangers to take whatever action we must take to assure our security."[32] Secretary McNamara reminded the group, finally, that "if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the U.S., the U.S. [said it] would act."[33]

Scholars Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott note that there exists a "particular relationship between words and actions in the Cold War. Words have often been substitutes for actions and, as surrogates, have been shaped by the actions for which they substitute."[34] In the Cold War era of military and diplomatic struggle, attacks, increased possibility of attacks, *and* words served similar if not identical functions. Therefore the intent of the draft's message was clear: it is to align more closely the possibility of an attack with an actual attack, making the former appear to be just as much of a danger as the latter. The strategy thereby engenders approval of Kennedy's proposed course of action and public support for the rationale behind it.

Next, the initial draft established a moral contrast between the U.S. and the Soviet Union by explaining each nation's philosophy of deploying weapons:

> For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States have
>
> deployed such weapons around the world with great care, never upsetting
>
> the precarious status quo which balanced off the use of those weapons in
>
> the absence of some vital challenge. These deployments are not
>
> comparable. Our own weapons systems . . . have always emphasized
>
> invulnerability because they are intended to be retaliatory not offensive.[35]

There is a history of U.S. deployment of missiles in international locations[36] and acknowledging this fact is a necessary step in creating an impenetrable argument, whether the statement is true or false. It aimed to circumvent any charges that Kennedy admonished other nations for pursuing an arms buildup identical to the nation's own.

During ExComm discussions, while the group questioned what motivation Khrushchev had to import offensive missiles to Cuba, Secretary Rusk suggested what "Khrushchev may have in mind": "[W]e don't really live under fear of his nuclear weapons to the extent that he has to live under fear of ours. . . . Khrushchev may feel that it's important for the U.S. to learn about living under medium-range missiles, and he's doing that to sort of balance that political, psychological [plank]."[37] Additionally, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy asked Secretary McNamara, "How gravely does this change the strategic balance?"[38] McNamara responded, "substantially."[39] These estimations are equally reflected in the first draft. The draft suggested that this Soviet deployment results in an imbalance of the "precarious status quo." This strategy placed importance on the difference between American defensive missiles and these new Soviet offensive missiles. The difference was heightened by Kennedy's *ethos*. Aristotle contends that "We believe good men more fully and more readily than others."[40] The difference between the American and Soviet histories of missile deployment is not hard and fast. This statement relies on an assumption that a dependence on Kennedy's character is sufficient enough to absolve him, his administration, and the United States of any wrongdoing. According to Aristotle, an orator's character is a feature that can produce acquiescence out of the most dubious claims: "His character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses."[41] Thus, the section aims to

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achieve persuasion by contrasting America's peaceful nature, as embodied by Kennedy's credibility, with a hostile and cantankerous Soviet Union.

The text continued, "Our answering objective, in short, must be to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country, and to secure the withdrawal or elimination of these missiles from within the Western Hemisphere."[42] A noticeable element in the group's decision-making process included the canvassing of all alternatives available for a retaliatory response. At the close of the first meeting on the morning of October 16, Secretary McNamara concluded, "It seems to me that there are some major alternatives here that I don't think we've discussed them fully enough today, and I'd like to see them laid on paper."[43] This canvassing process continued for four days, with participants often switching sides between the blockade and air strike scenarios multiple times in one meeting.[44]

The decision to preclude any air-strike with diplomacy and a blockade allowed the group to pursue military options of removing the missiles in the event that initial actions proved unsuccessful. This latitude in subsequent actions was a direct result of the absence of groupthink in the ExComm deliberations. Again, Irving Janis establishes criteria that contribute to a successful decision, one devoid of groupthink tendencies. These include the canvassing of multiple alternatives; weighing the costs, drawbacks, risks, and positive and negative consequences of each; and the continuous search for new information.[45] While the decision was successful in providing a malleable response, the speech communicated a prose translation of that policy decision. Therefore, the rhetoric took care to communicate a less aggressive decision, while maintaining the authority to

conduct "whatever steps are necessary" if the Soviet government did not respond as hoped.

At this point, the speech draft diverged into an enumeration of America's retaliatory demands, marking an organizational shift. The rhetoric used in the second half is noticeably more abrupt, punctuated, and direct, lacking the stylistic qualities dominant in earlier passages. This second section outlined the steps demanded of the Soviet leadership and addressed those affected by the crisis.

Part Two: Outlining America's Response

After an explanation of the crisis situation, the first draft of the speech embarked on a multi-faceted response. The draft made demands of the Kremlin and suggested what consequences might follow if the state did not acquiesce. The draft introduction qualified this list by including a statement explicating the legal justification upon which the legitimacy of America's response rested.

In the interests of both national and hemispheric defense, the draft read, the President directs action to be taken, "with the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution."[46] Concern with having legal and political authority to pursue a blockade is evident throughout the draft; this, however, is the first explicit reference to a governing document that authorizes the executive branch to act. The discussions of ExComm participants reflect this concern. Records of an October 19 meeting read as follows:

> Secretary Rusk then said he thought there should be an exposition of the legal framework surrounding possible military measures by the United States. . . . [Deputy Attorney General Nicholas] Katzenbach said he believed the President had ample constitutional and statutory authority to

take any needed military measures. . . . From the standpoint of international law, Mr. Katzenbach thought United States action could be justified on the principle of self-defense.[47]

The administration, then, clearly recognized the need to have a legal justification for pursuing the blockade. The administration's commitment to legal principle combined with the Soviets' previously delineated disregard for international law put the U.S. on higher ethical ground in two ways. First, Kennedy sought to align America's practice with its avowed commitment to justice and fair treatment under the law. In turn, that position accentuated the divide between U.S. habits and the Soviets' contempt for international law. The first order of action the draft specified resulted from four days of deliberation. This is the first mention of a strategic blockade, "on all offensive weapons under shipment to Cuba, including any materi[a]l such as petroleum which is essential to the operation of those weapons."[48] Following immediately after, another justificatory appeal appears: "Such a blockade can clearly be authorized both by the requirements of U.S. self-defense and by the Organ of Consultation of the Organization of American States."[49] From that point on the draft continues to outline the particulars of the blockade.

The organization of this section is clearly important. It is yet another reminder of America's legal basis for blockading Cuba, and suggests that the administration expected the decision to provoke uneasy reactions. The requirements of U.S. self-defense provided reason enough to support the President's decision. If his credibility was not enough, however, the Organization of American States (OAS)—an entity at least ostensibly separate from American influence—would provide supplementary support for

the blockade decision. In the beginning hours of ExComm deliberation, discussants referred repeatedly to the OAS as an outside source of support. Secretary Rusk suggested that the administration ought to "stimulate the OAS procedure immediately for prompt action to make it quite clear that the entire hemisphere considers that the Rio Pact has been violated."[50] The announcement of a blockade, accompanied by ample legal justification for it, constituted the first element of America's retaliatory response.

Featuring the most aggressive action first served as the speech's climax, and the balance of the speech functioned as the denouement. This organizational technique allowed the remainder of the draft to quell uncertainties and to help the audience through what they had just heard. It functioned to calm tensions, to use the rest of the speech to justify the blockade. If the decision were left for the final moments of the speech, then the beginning and middle would build anticipation for a decision announced at the end. Communicating that decision without spending time to enumerate its particulars or to assure the public that the proposed course is the most sound, would signal an unsatisfactory appreciation for the world's ability to handle bad news calmly.

The next section began with a notification that Khrushchev would arrive shortly in New York, and that Kennedy wished to speak with him regarding the missiles. It continued, "We do not wish to war with the Soviet Union—we are a peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples. I am prepared to discuss with the Soviet Chairman how both of us might remove existing tensions instead of creating new ones."[51]

This echoed the perspectives articulated by several ExComm participants. Their assessments of the situation included:

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President Kennedy: "He's initiated the danger really, hasn't he? He's the

> one that's playing [his card], not us";

National Security Advisor Bundy: "[W]e are doing only what we warned

> repeatedly and publicly we would have to do";

Secretary Rusk: "If they could provoke us into taking the first overt action,

> then the world would be confused."[52]

Clearly, the group was convinced that the proposed response was retaliatory, and that any communication they might fashion for public consumption ought to convey that view. Here, the role of strategic language use in presidential rhetoric provides an opportunity to understand how word choice may overcome the impasse of convoluted, contingent, and sensitive information. As Martin Medhurst writes, "Language is not self-explanatory. It is a reflection of the goals, motives, and values of those who choose to use it as an instrument by which to realize their ends."[53] The intended message of the draft was that the Soviets' actions were deemed unprovoked and unwarranted, and American actions in no way led to the crisis. Unfortunately, the daily intelligence given to the White House is not made public, which demands that the most precise and effective language be used to convey ExComm's reasoning and presuppositions regarding the Soviets' actions. Through using strategic language to create that vivid dichotomy between the two superpowers, the message came closer to communicating the intended meaning.

The last line of that section subtly, carefully, and creatively charged Khrushchev with being a trouble-maker, an international instigator with sights set on provocation, not peace. By explicitly claiming that the American people would never initiate such hostilities, the draft created a vivid dichotomy between the two superpowers. The

document accused the Soviet government of creating unnecessary turmoil. In direct

contrast, the American leadership sought to calm international tensions and to pursue

mutual prosperity. This section spoke to the ExComm discussions that focused on the

need for communicating to the world that America was predisposed to peace, and thus

the response was retaliatory rather than pre-emptive.

The next section of the speech resulted in a direct line of communication between

Kennedy and the people of Cuba, urging their cooperation in eliminating Soviet

dominion over the island. It read:

> We have no quarrel with the Cuban people, only sympathy and hope.
>
> They did not consent to the building of this target for nuclear war. Their
>
> lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny them freedom.
>
> We have no wish to war on them, or impose any system upon them. Our
>
> objective, on the contrary, is to give them back the dream of their own
>
> revolution—the dream which Fidel Castro repudiated when he sold them
>
> out to the communists who may now sell him out in turn.[54]

In the first meeting of October 16, Secretary Rusk maintained that, "this is no longer

support for Cuba. . . . Cuba is being victimized here. . . . [T]he Soviets are preparing

Cuba for destruction or betrayal."[55] At a meeting later that night, Assistant Secretary of

State for Inter-American Affairs Edwin Martin captured the poor judgment of Castro's

regime when he concluded, "by this action the Soviets [have threatened] him with an

attack from the United States. . . . [They] used his territory . . . to put him in jeopardy."[56]

Additionally, "the Soviets are talking to other people about the possibility of bargaining

this support and these [missiles against] concessions in Berlin and elsewhere, and therefore are threatening to, to bargain him away."[57]

Such descriptions of Castro's leadership capabilities inform a well-staged description of the Soviets' treatment of the island. The Cuban people were mere pawns being played in defense of a regime leader destined to fail. This metaphor seeks to achieve persuasion by describing Castro's treatment of the Cuban people in a manner that will be universally understood. The technique is a common one in public address, as substantiated by the frequency with which Aristotle provides an orientation to its uses. "Metaphor," the *Poetics* describes, "consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy."[58] In this case, the comparison was between the Cuban people and pawns in a chess game, both manipulated by one playing a game. By comparing the citizens to expendable capitol in a board game, the draft illustrated how Castro debases his populace and subjects them to the whims of a distant Soviet government, one unconcerned with the country's well-being. The Kremlin was a more powerful nation, using Cuba's proximity to the U.S. to advance its own political agenda and exercise its own military might. The Cuban people had been deceived in this sleight of hand. America was therefore acting in the interest of world peace and the freedom of Cuba to eliminate these offensive weapons.

The final section of the draft reverted to more elevated prose, similar to the language employed in the first half. It abandoned military jargon and numerical data, relying instead on overarching themes. The draft warned that the road ahead would include "months in which both our will and our patience will be tested by those who

would have us do more and those who would have us do less."[59] The course of action

decided upon, the draft explained, was reached by "my principal military and foreign

policy advisers."[60] This explanation suggested that the policy decision could well be

questioned by proponents of all military, political, and moral perspectives. Of course,

after the Bay of Pigs—wherein the judgment of these same advisers eventuated in a

failure of epic proportions—this announcement was cause for hesitation by even the most

ardent Kennedy supporters.

The lines that followed provided reason for entrusting these men: the course of

action was "consistent with our character and courage as a nation, and our commitments

around the world. The cost of freedom is always high—but Americans have always paid

it. One path we shall never choose—the path of surrender or submission."[61] If a

blockade was indeed consistent with American character, courage, and commitments,

then surely no American or American ally would criticize the U.S., unless they wished

concurrently to question those values.

The draft concluded with a simple yet profound statement describing the

goal of this blockade, and the value-laden motivations which underlay it. It read,

"Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right—not peace at the

expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this Hemisphere and

hopefully around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved."[62] With a

cadence matched nowhere else in this draft, the concluding line utilized a simple

syntax—short, unencumbered language—to convey a message that defined the

American position and American response in a comforting and well-mannered

closing. The juxtaposition and subsequent rejoining of "peace" and "freedom"

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attempted to engage the audience again in creating an internal perception of the differences between the U.S. and other nations. While others exude hubris in achieving one or the other, the U.S. emphasized both values for a working nation. Kennedy reiterated the distinction between the two countries, leaving the audience to decide which path, which lifestyle, which course of action they found more compelling.

Conclusion

This chapter pursued an invention-centered analysis of President Kennedy's first draft of the Cuban Missile Crisis speech. This version of the text is particularly important because of the absence of critical attention in rhetorical-critical scholarship.[63] Additionally, the process by which it was created differed markedly from the traditional processes used in the White House. The method of comparative analysis allows a critic to move through each section, highlighting the implications of word choice, language use, structure and organization, and most importantly in this draft the origin of the ideas behind the words. Use of ExComm transcripts, narratives written by the men involved, and existing scholarly commentary are all integral elements of this critique. In addition, a variety of prior studies informs the significance of particular passages and illustrates how their evaluation contributes to more informed theories of critical analysis. The most consequential conclusions drawn here are those that illuminate how scholars can better understand public address through the evaluation of primary documents and relevant rhetorical theories that unearth the importance of the processes of rhetorical invention.

Since the foundation of these ideas is set in the first draft, subsequent chapters focus more intently on the comparison of two drafts, highlighting the implications of word choice and strategic language use. These changes in additional drafts illustrate the added pressure of communicating a precise message that is intended to convince the world that the Soviet Union had, indeed, violated international law and that the U.S. course of action was justified and necessary.

Notes

[1] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Presidents Creating the Presidency: Deeds Done in Words* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008).

[2] Celeste Michelle Condit, "The Functions of Epidictic: The Boston Massacre Orations as Exemplar," *Communication Quarterly 33* (1985): 284-298.

[3] Campbell and Jamieson, *Presidents Creating the Presidency*.

[4] Roderick Hart, *The Sound of Leadership: Presidential Communication in the Modern Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 14.

[5] Campbell and Jamieson, *Presidents Creating the Presidency*.

[6] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 9.

[7] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/01_25.html. 19.

[8] Robert Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and their Speechwriters* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 122-129.

[9] Martin Medhurst, "Enduring Issues in Presidential Speechwriting," in Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst, *Presidential Speechwriting: From the New Deal to the Reagan Revolution and Beyond*, eds. Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 220.

[10] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Decision-Making in the White House: The Olive Branch or the Arrows* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 19. In enumerating the typical steps of the speechwriting process, Sorensen writes the following: "sixth: a recommendation and final choice of one alternative; seventh: the communication of that selection."

[11] Ted Sorensen, *Counselor: Life at the Edge of History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 293.

[12] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 692.

[13] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 293.

[14] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics*. Trans., W. Rhys Roberts and Ingram Bywater (New York: The Modern Library, 1954), 1355^b 26.

[15] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 1375^a 23.

[16] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 1356^a 1.

[17] This project fully intends to produce an argument similar to that found in Martin J. Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech: A Case Study in the Strategic Use of Language," *Communication Monographs 54* (1987): 204-219. This article examined the role of implicit and explicit messages based on the comparison of multiple drafts. A chapter on the first draft cannot produce that type of criticism. To that end, other chapters will be more "criticism-heavy" than the first.

[18] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, Oct. 20, 1962. Box 48, Theodore Sorensen Papers, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 1.

[19] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 670.

[20] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 670.

[21] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1. Shifting use of numerals and numbers that are spelled out appears in the original.

[22] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 25.

[23] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 27.

[24] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1.

[25] U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian. "Containment and Collective Defense." Accessed 10 Feb 2009. http://www.history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/containment.

[26] Arms Control and Disarmament Act, JR 631, 87th Cong., 2nd sess.

[27] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 87.

[28] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 2.

[29] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 2.

[30] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3.

[31] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 41.

[32] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 1-25, 26.

[33] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 1-25, 62.

[34] Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott, *Moments in the Rhetoric of the Cold War* (New York: Random House, 1970), 118.

[35] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3.

[36] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 294.

[37] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 26-30, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/26_30.html. 3. The transcript reads that the words are unintelligible, and [plank] is the most likely word to have been used.

[38] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 1-25, 38.

[39] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 1-25, 38.

[40] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 25.

[41] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 25.

[42] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 4.

[43] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 1-25, 61.

[44] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 679.

[45] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 142.

[46] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 5.

[47] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," *Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI*: 26-50, 10.

[48] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 5.

[49] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 5.

[50] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 19.

[51] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 7.

[52] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 20.

[53] Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech," 218-219.

[54] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 8.

[55] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 19.

[56] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 34.

[57] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 1-25, 34.

[58] Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics,* 251.

[59] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 8.

[60] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 8.

[61] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 8.

[62] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 9.

[63] This speech has been the subject of few criticisms, including those by Scott and Brockriede, Bostdorff, and Windt.

CHAPTER 3

DRAFTS ONE AND THREE: A COMPARISON

The first draft of the Cuban Missile Crisis speech was completed at 3:00 A.M. on the morning of Saturday, October 20. In his first memoir, Ted Sorensen writes, "At 9:00 A.M. Saturday morning my draft was reviewed, amended and generally approved—and, a little after 10:00 A.M. our time, the President was called back to Washington." Kennedy returned to the White House shortly after 1:30 P.M, at which time he met with Sorensen and together they reviewed the speech.[1]

At 2:30 P.M., ExComm convened, this time formally as the 505th meeting of the National Security Council. State Department memoranda show that the first draft was discussed towards the end of the meeting, which closed at 5:10 P.M.[2] Sorensen writes that afterwards, "The speech was circulated and redrafted."[3] The first draft shows handwritten revisions made with regard to style, organization, and subject matter. There are additions, deletions, changes, and marks indicating new paragraphs.

Chapter two of this project analyzed the first draft of the Crisis speech. Criticism and commentary attended to the relationship between the text and other documents, including State Department memos, meeting transcripts, and memoirs of those present. The chapter focused on the process of invention. It demonstrated how deliberation and policy creation influenced the speechwriting process, and conversely, how the speechwriting process influenced deliberation and policy creation. It also illustrated how the speech served as the chief document for outlining the American position as the Crisis continued.

The criticism in chapter three, in contrast, compares two drafts. A text marked "3rd Draft" is the next in succession of the drafts found at the JFK Library in Boston. By looking at the first draft and third draft side by side, one can see the principles of groupthink, presidential speechwriting, and strategic language use in practice. Revisions to the first draft provide insight and a more thorough understanding of how the speechwriting process influenced Kennedy's decision. The changes were not intended to enhance the speech's eloquence, cadence, or oratorical beauty—as is so often the case in presidential address. Rather, they signaled transformations in political, military, and moral approaches to a potentially catastrophic event. Comparing these rhetorical texts thus presents an opportunity to study existing theories about language use, about crafting persuasive messages, and about the rhetorical presidency.

The changes to the first draft signal four major concerns that are of interest to rhetorical scholarship. First, the third draft used particular language to explain why the movement of missiles posed a grave threat. Second, the third draft placed more emphasis on the President as a source of American leadership and an example of national character. Third, the third draft used identification appeals to expand geographically the targeted area. Finally, the third draft addressed the Cuban audience more directly to stress their victimization.

Exaggerating the Threat Through Strategic Language Use

The language changes between the first draft and the third draft signal an increased care in framing the movement of missiles as a legitimate threat. ExComm undoubtedly believed the events posed a serious hazard to world peace. During one

meeting President Kennedy observed, "the existence of this presents the gravest threat to our security . . . [so] appropriate action must be taken."[4] Vice President Johnson concurred, noting that "we're committed at any time that we feel that there's a build up that in any way endangers to take whatever action we must take to assure our security."[5] Yet after reading the first draft, the group felt that extra precautions ought to be taken to stress the danger of the Soviets' actions.

This was done through the addition of emotive adjectives in sentences that described the build-up. The draft used words like *sudden, urgent, false, misleading, dishonest,* and *dishonorable* to describe the Soviet actions. Qualifying the missiles with strong prose made the threat of the missiles more immediate and severe, thereby inducing skeptics to believe in the magnitude of this danger. Kenneth Burke, perhaps the preeminent twentieth century American theorist of language and rhetoric, explained the importance of such word choices. Burke described the process of sifting through symbols to find the most appropriate language for a rhetorical situation. One element of this process is characteristic of humans' desire for perfection. He explained, "To name something by its 'proper' name, or to speak a language in its distinctive ways is intrinsically 'perfectionist.' What is more 'perfectionist' in essence than the impulse, when one is in dire need of something, to so state this need that one in effect 'defines' the situation?"[6]

The clearest example of criticism featuring the use of strategic language to achieve a desired political effect comes from Martin Medhurst. In a study of President Dwight Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech, delivered December 8, 1953, Medhurst evaluated how language changes in speech drafts can illustrate the orator's motives.

"Human agents," he argued, "can shape language and guide perception in accordance with their own purposes. . . . Language is not self-explanatory. It is a reflection of the goals, motives, and values of those who choose to use it as an instrument by which to realize their ends."[7]

Medhurst also advanced his thoughts on the power of language in the foreword to *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency.* Persuasion, he argued, is the result of careful deliberation and thoughtful consideration of all elements of the rhetorical situation. "What distinguishes the skilled rhetorician from others who attempt to persuade is not the tools or even the outcomes of such attempts, but rather the judgment and powers of interpretation that the speaker displays in assessing the situation and in selecting the appropriate language. . . ." In addition, Medhurst claimed that the "art of rhetoric lies not in whether persuasion actually happens, but in the intellectual powers displayed by the rhetorician in the selection of what to say, [and] how to say it. . . ."[8]

These commentaries on the use of language help in evaluating the rationale behind changes to the first draft of President Kennedy's Cuban Missile Crisis speech, particularly changes made to clarify the threat. The first draft read, "*The presence in Cuba* of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden destruction constitutes a threat to the peace and security of this Hemisphere." A handwritten revision appeared on the draft above this line. The change suggested that the line instead read, "*This urgent transformation of Cuba into a prime strategic base* -- by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden destruction . . ." constitute a threat.[9] This change was found typewritten into the third draft, with "prime" changed to "important,"[10] suggesting that the threat was not constituted just by the

missiles' *presence in Cuba*. Rather, the threat was significant because it was the result of an *urgent transformation*. If the Soviet Union moved missiles to Cuba conspicuously, and informed the world leaders of that movement, then this particular address would not have been necessary. The addition of *urgent transformation* signaled that the move was hasty. The Soviets' decision was poorly crafted and was subject to being overturned as a violation of international law and hemispheric doctrine.

The first draft's recitation of statements given by Soviet authorities was another element that suggested the missiles' movement was a threat. The assurances that no offensive missiles would be placed in Cuba were separated into two paragraphs. In the third draft, each of those paragraphs was edited to close with lines that summarized the flagrancy of public Soviet statements. The first one read, "That statement was patently false and misleading." The second echoed, "That statement also was dishonest and dishonorable."[11] These adjectives characterized the Soviet leadership. A government that provides *false, misleading, dishonest,* and *dishonorable* communication to an international foe surely could not be trusted. Further, a government with *false, misleading, dishonest,* and *dishonorable* intentions could not be allowed to deploy offensive nuclear missiles to other nations. The addition of these two lines reflects a purposeful use of language to frame the threat as a serious one.

Generally, the third draft used more frequent and more vivid adjectives (as compared to the first draft) to describe the threat. This was done to make the American response seem more pressing. A handwritten edit to the first draft read that the Soviets' actions were inconsistent with their previous practices of "stationing strategic weapons only on Soviet Soil." This change translated into an addition to the third draft, describing

the Soviets' "suddenly stationing strategic weapons for the first time outside of Soviet soil."[12] The *sudden* movement of missiles for the *first time* was a cautionary sign to peaceful nations that the Soviet Union decided to deviate from its promises in a hasty and unwarranted show of nuclear power.

Minor yet important changes permeated the third draft. A "sudden and extraordinary build-up" highlighted in the first draft was changed to a "secret, swift and extraordinary build-up" in the third draft.[13] This build up was "provocative" in the first draft, and "deliberately provocative" in the third.[14] In the first draft, the United States would not tolerate "deception," and in the third draft, this deception was qualified as "deliberate."[15] "Any increased possibility" of the use of nuclear weapons warranted attention in the first draft. In the third draft, the possibility of the Soviets' nuclear use was "substantially increased."[16]

All of these word choices contributed to a particular message, to a carefully crafted approach in defining the Soviet threat. Language use was strategic and purposeful. Every word was included or excluded for a reason. The changes between the first and third draft exemplified how the writing was edited to portray a more offensive Soviet Union. This illustration aided the president when the time came to solicit public support. The defensive measures the administration took were substantiated as attempts to prevent the Soviet threat from becoming anything more than a threat.

Presidential Leadership: The Rhetorical Presidency and Presidential Character

In 1981, James Ceaser, Glen Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis, and Joseph Bessette explored the role of oratory in the presidency. In "The Rise of the Rhetorical Presidency," the

authors warned of the potential harms posed to constitutional balance by chief executives' increased use of public address to engage in popular leadership. With this seminal essay, the authors began a trend in communication studies that aimed to analyze the effects of rhetorical discourse on the role, responsibilities, and decisions of U.S. presidents.[17] By 1987, presidential rhetoric scholar Roderick P. Hart observed that speech no longer operated as an aide in governance; instead, "[speaking] *is* governance." In effect, he argued, the act of oratory supplanted constitutional governance.[18]

In the same year, Jeffrey Tulis examined how a president's rhetorical practices influenced other elements of the political process. Further, Tulis analyzed the role of "presidential skill or character" in the quality or effectiveness of a president's leadership. Here, a pivotal observation was made, one that significantly influenced the study of political communication: character is a key constituent of a rhetorical presidency.[19] Glen Thurow in his 1996 essay "Dimensions of Presidential Character," considered the implications of character in an increasingly visible leadership office. Thurow cited the Aristotelian concept of *ethos* in explaining what can be deduced to a simple conclusion: ethos equates to persuasion, persuasion equates to power and success.[20]

This concept helps to illuminate the rationale behind language changes that Kennedy made between the first and third drafts of the Crisis speech. These revisions suggest that the president was concerned about the character of his decision. These choices highlight two conclusions regarding the effect of presidential character on the rhetorical presidency. First, Kennedy pursued this political response in defense of the world. National security was a primary responsibility bestowed upon him by the American people. And second, he was mindful of limiting any panic that could result

from particular language use. He took care to describe clearly the threat, but without inciting alarm.

The third draft began with a line written in on the first draft. It read, "This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba." In contrast, the first draft read, "Within the last week, unmistakable evidence has been gathered by this government. . . ."[21] This addition communicated that the government kept watch on the island because it promised the American people it would do so. The speech itself told the country that it demanded surveillance of Cuba. Of course such a remark was never explicitly communicated by citizens to the government, or to the President. The line read more like a request from one friend to another, evoking a familiar and entrusted relationship. As such, it provided a sense of the White House's commitment and responsibility. It told of an administration that anticipated the country's concerns. The President protected his constituency and fulfilled his constitutional duty to keep the country safe.

In the first draft, the "evidence has been gathered by this government." In its successor, "This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance."[22] This shifted the burden of requesting the intelligence information onto the American people. The government was simply meeting the demands of its citizenry. Thus, the threat was more credible because the American people requested the *closest surveillance,* and insisted that the Soviet-Cuban relationship be treated seriously.

The introduction of the third draft was closely followed by this added line: "Until less than a week ago, no reliable information of this nature had been received -- but, having now completed its evaluation and our determination upon a course of action, this

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Government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail."[23] The

information being communicated was a commodity that the American people requested.

The government pursued this information not for its own purposes, but rather the

leadership acted on the full faith of the people in reporting the results of the recent

inquiry.

A significant change reflected in the third draft was the addition of an entire

paragraph outlining a communal understanding of American character. It read:

> Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and
>
> powerful nation. We had no wish to be diverted from our central efforts
>
> by mere irritants and fanatics. But further action is now required and
>
> underway; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not
>
> prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in
>
> which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our hands -- but neither
>
> will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.[24]

This statement is applicable to an examination of the rhetorical presidency, not because it

reflected Kennedy's character, but because it allowed him to embody the national

character. Through these words he appealed to an American credo that eschewed pre-

emptive action. Kennedy was the leader of a free world that did not wish to engage in

nuclear war, but would not back down from a hostile nation that did.

In addition, the President took precaution in limiting unnecessary fear. This is

evident from the changes made in describing the impending destruction from a nuclear

exchange. The first draft read that jet bombers were capable of "devastating most of the

United States." The third draft read that the jets were capable of "striking almost any city

in the Western Hemisphere."[25] Similarly, the first draft noted that each of the twenty-four missiles visible by intelligence photos was capable of "wiping out" Washington, D.C. The third draft employed the term "striking" instead.[26] Finally, a line describing a Soviet nuclear bomb as "100 times as destructive as the bomb which destroyed Hiroshima," was noticeably absent from the third draft.[27] All of these changes suggest that Kennedy aspired not to alarm the public, either at home or abroad.

In his memoir, Ted Sorensen recalled Kennedy's decision to refrain from showing pictures of the missile sites during his televised speech. The goal, Sorensen maintained, was to limit chaos. "Rather than incite fear, he wanted to reassure Americans and the world that the president knew what was happening, that the missiles would not be permitted to stay, and that a prudent, limited response had been formulated and was ready to be implemented."[28] This reassurance ultimately allowed listeners and viewers to maintain a relative state of composure, while still attending to the information and course of action that Kennedy announced.

All of these examples extend the scholarship that supports current estimations of the rhetorical presidency's power and influence. The messages conveyed Kennedy's personal character, but his character was one that embodied a communal and national identity. The third draft illustrated a better focus in the message's evolution, a focus that featured a President who valued his responsibilities. Kennedy met the demands of, and avoided the civil unrest of, an innocent public.

Expanding the Threat Through Identification Appeals

The third draft of the Cuban Missile Crisis speech reflected a deliberate attempt to expand the Soviet threat to nations other than the United States. It marked another element of this persuasive message, framing the American decision to enact a blockade as a move of hemispheric as well as U.S. defense. This type of persuasion reflects the teachings of Burke's theory of "identification."[29]

Identification is presupposed by the emotional connection a rhetor aims to make with his or her audience before attempting to sway their convictions. Burke's theory begins with the idea that humans are more divided than united by demographic and psychological traits. Consequently, rhetors must create identification among listeners and/or readers, by stressing the salience of those traits common to source and receiver. Burke noted that human division, whether of general or particular matters, is a product of symbol using. The use of abstractions to represent intangible ideas results in multiple interpretations of meaning-laden symbols. These symbols, most often characters of language, elicit different responses and allegiances to opposing sides of any concept. He explained how a rhetor must overcome this division to persuade an audience. To do so, he or she must call upon commonalities that unite an audience with him or herself. These similarities must be, linguistically, more powerful than the many points of opposition.[30]

The Crisis speech had to convey the threat's enormity to audiences outside the U.S. To create a personal, psychological connection with those audiences, Kennedy names exact locations that were in range of the missiles' striking capability. These efforts at inclusion saturated the third draft, and they ranged in geographic scope. The

areas outside of the United States that were mentioned vary in proximity to the country, from the entire globe to individual nations close to America, such as Panama and Mexico.

The third draft was edited to include the broadest of these when it asserted that threats and deception would not be tolerated. In the first draft, the "United States of America" was identified as the sole entity that would not tolerate deception. This was changed to, "Neither the United States of America nor the world community."[31] The United States, of course, was a leader in the world community and spoke accordingly. The Soviet Union had the diplomatic capacity to be included in this community as well, but would be excluded until it abandoned its ambitions to establish and sustain a stronghold in Cuba.

The scope of destruction contracted in this next example. The third draft explained the "special and historical relationship" Cuba had with "the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere." The first draft mentioned only the United States.[32] The third draft included the hemispheric reference in order to assert its authority in defense of the safety of peaceful nations. These nations did not provoke the Soviet Union to export nuclear weapons. Instead, surely they were exempt from living under the Soviet bull's eye as the United States had become accustomed to doing.

The last example, also the most direct and unequivocal, weighed heavily on the third draft as a profound change. The first draft explained the "precarious status quo" of the 1960s.[33] It announced that both the United States and the Soviet Union had long deployed missiles to international locations for defensive purposes. Additionally, American's had always been at risk from medium-range ballistic missiles inside the USSR. "In that sense," the first draft read, "our danger has not been greatly increased."

Speechwriters edited the third draft to reflect a similar sentiment, albeit in more aggressive language: "In that sense, missiles in Cuba simply add to an already clear and present danger."[34] The line continued with a message of grave consequence: "Although, it should be noted, the nations of Latin America have never previously been included as communist nuclear targets."[35] The line implicitly suggested that Latin America was a Soviet target. This revision was not merely an addition that named a particular region. Rather, the language choice suggested that the Cold War had evolved to include regions previously considered neutral. The word selection heightened the significance of the Soviets' placement of missiles in Cuba. It imparted a warning that their actions were characteristic of a Cold War that was no longer Cold.

Comparative criticism coupled with theories about language use and suasory appeals reveals that President Kennedy and his advisors added identification appeals to solicit general approval from other countries. Citing hemispheric and global defense, as well as naming particular regions, enlarged the target audience. The information conveyed was more likely to resonate with skeptical viewers and listeners if their lives were in peril. The only way to persuade these audiences was to create a commonality between them and the President and his perspective, the shared interest of eliminating the threat of nuclear exchange. Surely this, more than any similarity, was enough to overpower the many differences between the U.S. and other nations.

Communicating with the Cuban Audience

Ted Sorensen recalled the "many different audiences" addressed in the speech. Of the eight distinct groups mentioned, two were Chairman Khrushchev and the Cuban

people. The speech included Khrushchev as a target audience, "lest he believe America would yield to his threats or at most seek a summit meeting, warning him that, while we seek to avoid the risk of nuclear war, 'neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.'" A second audience was the Cuban people, "lest they feel targeted by the United States."[36]

When Martin Medhurst analyzed President Dwight Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech, he argued that the text spoke to two audiences, one addressed explicitly and the other implicitly. The implicit message was couched in the explicit one. Medhurst examined "how a particular group of rhetors used language to address multiple audiences for divergent purposes while, at the same moment, maintaining that the audience was one and the purpose straightforward."[37] This criticism of Kennedy's Cuban Missile Crisis speech identifies a similar approach in the third draft of the text.

In the first draft, twelve lines are explicitly directed at Khrushchev, and eleven are directed at the Cuban people. In the third draft, the section on Khrushchev is twenty-three lines, the Cuban people, twenty-nine.[38] This significant increase signals a more precise estimation of audience, or more accurately, audiences: who they were, how far-reaching they were, and what the implications of this speech were for each.

Originally, the language used to address the Cuban people was indirect and generalized, with a noticeable absence of first person singular pronouns. The text used first person plural pronouns throughout the draft, citing "we" repeatedly as the source of wishes and intentions, and "the Cuban people" or "they" or "their" or "them" as the object of those wishes and intentions. Lines from the draft include the following: "We have no quarrel with the Cuban people." "We have no wish to war on them, or impose

any system upon them." "They did not consent . . . ."; "their lives and land" were left uncared for.[39] Each line approached the Cuban people from an unfamiliar distance, an informal reference reserved for strangers and foes. They were not dignified with direct conversation, but rather passed over with ambiguous reference.

The third draft, in direct contrast, employed language that deviated from the indirect style used up to this point. The text carried a message directly from the President. "I want to tell them this," the text began. Kennedy continued:

> Do not permit yourselves to become involved in the grim confrontation of
>
> nuclear weapons. Do not become the first Latin American country to have
>
> these weapons on your soil. Do not become the first Latin American
>
> country to be a necessary target for massive destruction. These weapons
>
> cannot contribute to the security of Cuba; they can only undermine it.
>
> They can contribute nothing to your peace and well being.[40]

This language gave the President an opportunity to be assertive and authoritative, and to demand inaction from the Cuban people. This lack of agency echoed the point that Kennedy's language intended to communicate, that the Cuban people had done nothing wrong, would not be punished by the Americans, and ought to be resolute in their stand against the Soviet quest for empire.

The next section used similar direct language, the substance of which was more empathetic than the previous. It read, "We know you did not consent to the transformation of your island into a target for nuclear war. We know your lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny you freedom. We have no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any system upon you."[41] This line used repetition of personal

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pronouns such as "you" and "your" more frequently and noticeably, perhaps to evoke sympathy. The implications of this language change were multiple. First, the choice to place these more sympathetic statements after the authoritative ones was strategic. The organization provided for a display of leadership, of zeal, followed by an outreach of emotional support. If the more emotive message preceded the authoritative, the psychological response may have been less persuasive. By establishing his leadership first, followed by a show of human charity, the President created a personal relationship with those Cuban citizens who felt targeted by the U.S.

In addition, personally addressing the Cuban people, rather than the Chairman, diminished the chance that Soviet leadership would perceive the information as aggressive in nature. Kennedy could use more aggressive language towards the Cuban people because they were not in charge of the missiles' deployment. He and his aides carefully crafted the language to place blame where blame was deserved.

Conclusion

This chapter used a comparison of two drafts of President Kennedy's Cuban Missile Crisis address to speculate on the strategy of language choices made in the speechwriting process. The speech helped to define Kennedy's rhetorical presidency in a manner conducive to soliciting public approval. The first section analyzed how particular words and phrases were supplanted, added, and deleted in attempts to achieve desired effects of exaggerating the threat posed by Soviet missiles in Cuba. The second evaluated how President Kennedy controlled the language in the speech to overshadow the government's goals in obtaining intelligence, and to limit the panic that might ensue

from the use of intimidating word choices. The third portion of this argument illustrated how the third draft incorporated significantly more references to hemispheric doctrine in order to expand the audience that would be prompted to support his policy decision. Finally, the attention placed on addressing the Cuban people in the third draft suggested that Kennedy wanted to refrain from placing blame on them.

Each of these arguments incorporated and extended significant rhetorical theories of strategic language use, speechwriting, and the rhetorical presidency. The decision-making process was well underway even into the drafting of the third draft. Comparing the first and third drafts revealed the symbiotic relationship between policy creation and speech development. More importantly, it demonstrated how using multiple drafts of a text in criticism can unearth accurate, substantiated, and useful critical claims about the rhetorical significance of a discursive experience.

Notes

[1] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 693.

[2] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-50, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/26_50.html. 15.

[3] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 697.

[4] Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/01_25.html. 41.

[5] Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 26.

[6] Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 16.

[7] Martin J. Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech: A Case Study in the Strategic Use of Language," *Communication Monographs 54* (1987): 218-219.

[8] Martin J. Medhurst, "A Tale of Two Constructs: The Rhetorical Presidency Versus Presidential Rhetoric," in *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency*, ed. Martin J. Medhurst (Texas A&M University Press, College Station: 1996), xvi.

[9] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, Oct. 20, 1962. Box 48, Theodore Sorensen Papers, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, Oct. 21, 1962. Box 41, President's Office Files: Speech Files, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 1.

[10] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[11] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 2.

[12] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[13] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[14] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[15] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 3.

[16] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 3.

[17] James Caesar, Glen Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis, and Joseph Bessette, "The Rise of the Rhetorical Presidency," *Presidential Studies Quarterly 11* (1981): 158-171.

[18] Roderick Hart, *The Sound of Leadership: Presidential Communication in the Modern Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 14.

[19] Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1987), 146.

[20] Glen E. Thurow, "Dimensions of Presidential Character," in *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency*, ed. Martin Medhurst (Texas A&M University Press, College Station: 1996), 15. Thurow writes, "If they perceive him to be prudent, virtuous, and to have good will toward them, they will be likely to be convinced."

[21] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[22] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[23] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[24] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 5.

[25] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[26] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 1.

[27] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1.

[28] Ted Sorensen, *Counselor: Life at the Edge of History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 300.

[29] Bernard L. Brock, "Rhetorical Criticism: A Burkeian Approach Revisited," in *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective,* 3rd ed., eds. Bernard L. Brock, Robert L. Scott, and James W. Chesebro (Detroit: Wayne Stare University Press, 1989), 187.

[30] Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action*, 16; Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "Kenneth Burke and the 'New Rhetoric'," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 38 (1952): 133-44.

[31] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 3.

[32] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[33] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3.

[34] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 3; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[35] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 4.

[36] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 299.

[37] Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech," 219.

[38] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 7; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 7.

[39] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 8.

[40] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 9.

[41] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 9.

CHAPTER 4

DRAFTS THREE AND FOUR: A COMPARISON

If the third draft of the Cuban Missile Crisis speech had been read aloud on the

night of October 22, 1962, it is conceivable that a different history would be recorded.

The recurring theme of this project is that drafts of presidential speech texts are often as

worthy of critical examination as the final versions. Study of the differences between

multiple drafts of President Kennedy's speech lends credence to this argument. The

previous chapter compared the first and third drafts of the address, noting the importance

of language choice in communicating a precise message. This chapter advances a similar

comparison, this time of the third and fourth drafts. The revisions to draft three presented

more serious implications, however, as the fourth draft was the final version prior to the

speech's presentation.

Analysis of these documents is informed by two areas of established research.

This chapter uses theories of groupthink and commentary on the practice of presidential

speechwriting to examine the changes made to the third draft. Irving Janis defined

groupthink as a tendency of group members to think with similar ideological perspectives

or political predispositions.[1] This tendency leads actors to make hasty decisions without

exploring the implications of each alternative. Janis contended that groups ought to be

created in a manner that will overcome this tendency, with members who will not

succumb to in-group pressure. The outcome of a group that can defeat groupthink is

infinitely more productive in many respects. Janis' criteria for examining decision-

making processes include the canvassing of multiple alternatives; weighing the costs,

drawbacks, risks, and positive and negative consequences of each; and the continuous

search for new information.[2] As noted earlier, Janis writes that a key component of the theory is that the quality of the decision is reliant on an open, critical decision-making process.

Scholarship on presidential speechwriting, the second area that guides the analysis here, is robust, but concrete theories about the topic are less so. The reason for this is not simply inattention on the part of critics, but the closed-door nature of the presidential institution. One comprehensive guide is Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst's *Presidential Speechwriting*. In this book's conclusion, Medhurst explains that, "By studying how speeches are produced and edited by speechwriters prior to their delivery by the president, scholars can better understand how those rhetorical dimensions of the office function."[3] Their book consists of essays about the speechwriting of eight 20th century presidencies. The essays are sandwiched between an introduction aptly titled "Ten Myths that Plague Modern Scholarship," and an afterword, "Enduring Issues in Presidential Speechwriting," both written by Medhurst. The observations in these two chapters made up a comprehensive commentary on the topic.

The conclusion reached in this chapter is about process. Traditionally, the practices of decision-making and speechwriting are separate. Kennedy speechwriter Ted Sorensen explains that in White House decision-making, there is a clear chronological progression from the creation of policy to writing the speech. First, the administration decides on a course of action. Then, they draft a message attempting to sell that policy to the public.[4] The uniqueness of both the Crisis decision and the speech resides at least partly in a violation of what Sorensen describes as a typical speechwriting process. In the Crisis speech's creation, the two processes coincided.

Janis, again, contends that the Cuban Missile Crisis decision was devoid of groupthink. The decision-making process canvassed multiple alternatives; it weighed the costs, drawbacks, risks, and positive and negative consequences of each; and it continuously searched for new information.[5] A unique observation about the Cuban Missile Crisis speech, however, is that all of these "good qualities," according to Janis, inherent in decision-making were practiced even up to the creation of the fourth draft. The revisions noted from comparing the third and fourth drafts illustrated an extraordinary melding of decision-making and speechwriting, of policy and prose.

Integral to the analysis in this chapter was a memo released by the State Department that recounted the 506th Meeting of the National Security Council. This was a formal meeting of ExComm that took place October 21 from 2:30-4:50 P.M., ending 26 hours before the speech was delivered.[6] A rather significant portion of this memo identified individuals and their suggestions for editing the third draft. The changes between draft three and draft four, coupled with this memo, led to the dominant argument of this chapter: that the processes of decision-making (creating policy) and speechwriting (creating prose) were one and the same. Analysis of the two documents suggests that changes between the third and fourth drafts were made for three reasons: political, military, and moral concerns.

Political Ambiguity, Transparent Language, and Strategic Political Purpose

This section examines decision makers' strategies in addressing issues of diplomatic and legal consequence. The examples outlined pertain to the tactics JFK used to garner international support for his course of action, the quality of American

intelligence, and the policy choices made by the Soviet Union. The ambiguity and transparency of language became relevant upon examining the changes made between the two drafts. These changes were purposeful and reflect conventional wisdom about the importance of language. In a study of President Dwight Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech, delivered December 8, 1953, Martin Medhurst evaluated how language changes in speech drafts can illustrate the orator's motives. "Human agents," Medhurst argues, "can shape language and guide perception in accordance with their own purposes. . . . Language is not self-explanatory. It is a reflection of the goals, motives, and values of those who choose to use it as an instrument by which to realize their ends."[7] In this case, ExComm's "end" was the elimination of the Soviet missiles in Cuba. The group considered certain elements of the third draft problematic in achieving this goal, and changes were made. In this section, these illustrated how both policy and prose were changed to recast statements as more or less ambiguous. The speech itself was a foreign policy tool and the Soviet leadership was a target audience.

The first example concerned ExComm efforts to eliminate uncertainty and discordant claims about the strength of American intelligence. The third draft read, "Until less than a week ago, no reliable information of this nature had been received -- but, having now completed its evaluation and our determination upon a course of action, this government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail."[8] In contrast, the following appeared in the fourth draft: "Upon receiving the first preliminary hard information of this nature last Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. -- I directed that our surveillance be stepped up. And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence and our decision on a course of action, this government feels obliged to

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report this new crisis to you in full detail."[9] The State Department memo documented the point at which this change was suggested. It read, "There was some discussion of the date when positive information as to the existence of strategic missiles in Cuba became available. The draft was revised to state that such information became available Tuesday morning, October 16th."[10]

Both of the drafts communicated that hard evidence had only recently become available. The third draft used language that suggested information may have been presented before the previous week, but that it was unreliable. The fourth draft was devoid of any mention that *unreliable* information existed at some point before Tuesday. The third draft shared the existence of hard evidence through the negative—that no hard evidence existed a week ago. The fourth draft abandoned this approach and introduced the information through its positive existence, providing a more assertive, aggressive, forthcoming, and confident position. It was transparent, leaving little room to question whether this information was similarly unreliable. The decision to announce the date that the information was received bypassed ambiguous prose that otherwise could have left the decision vulnerable to criticism. This exemplifies how the inclusion of a date transformed the tone of the prose. The decision to give the public that information caused a shift in syntax, one that dramatically influenced how the speech began. The President therefore began his message with a more assured introductory line. Had the decision of concealing or announcing intelligence details been made before the speech was drafted, or without input from group deliberation, it may have been left a lackluster opening.

A second example reflected how the organization of prose can have serious consequences for political policy. In outlining what he considered the fundamentals of the art of structure, Ted Sorensen cited "organiz[ing] the text to simplify, clarify, and emphasize" as a necessity of effective speech composition.[11] This precept translated into a change that affected the enumeration of components of the American response. In draft three, the fourth item listed read, "We shall urge the UN and the OAS to demand removal of these offensive weapons, and the prompt dispatch of an international inspection team to make certain that this is done." Item five discussed Guantanamo Bay. The sixth read, "Our allies in both NATO and OAS have been alerted; the call for the OAS meeting to which I referred has already gone out; our case against this serious threat to peace will be presented, as required by the Charter, to which we subscribe, to an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council."[12] Mentions of both the OAS and the UN were split on either side of the Guantanamo Bay section.

The State department memo recalled a discussion regarding how the administration ought to go about dealing with both the OAS and the UN:

> Secretary Rusk raised the question of whether we should move first in the United Nations or first in the OAS. He said our United Nations actions should be aimed at removing the missile threat while our objective on the OAS would be to persuade other Latin American countries to act with us under the Rio Treaty. In response to the President's question, Assistant Secretary [of State for Latin America Edward] Martin said that if there were a United Nations action before the OAS acted, the usefulness of the OAS would be seriously affected. Secretary Rusk felt we should act first

in the OAS, then in the United Nations where our actions program could

be more flexible.[13]

The chronological progression of dealing with these different agencies was critically

important to the President's response. Without support from both, Kennedy's course of

action may well have been considered a violation of hemispheric and international law.

As it stood, the organization of the prose was faulty. It called on action from the UN

before announcing the OAS meeting; but to be successful, a request for help from the UN

had to be followed by a favorable OAS vote. The third draft reflected an order of

operations that would be ineffective in garnering international support based on the

United States' need to have international support *before* it approached the UN. Sorensen

recalled that the speech "served as the basic briefing document in all capitals of the world

and in a series of ambassadorial meetings in the State Department."[14] The policy

decision had to be employed in a timely fashion in order to be helpful. And if the speech

served as a briefing document for that course of action, it too must clearly outline the

appropriate steps to be taken and the order in which they were to be taken.

The fourth draft, then, reflected those changes. The prose from the third draft

sparked discussion that clarified a policy change. That change was evidenced in the

fourth draft. The section on Guantanamo was moved to point four. Point five called for

"an immediate meeting of the Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American

States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke Articles 6 and 8 of the

Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action." Point five then included a transitional

bridge from the OAS to the UN, reflecting the discussion about the importance of getting

OAS support before facing the UN. "The United Nations Charter allows for regional

security arrangements -- and the nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers." The sixth point then built upon the anticipated result of an OAS resolution to ask that "an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace."[15]

The result of the exchange among the President, Rusk, and Martin was a more transparent outline of the events to follow. Without the inclusion of multiple perspectives, the interactions of many participants, this mistake could easily have been overlooked due to groupthink tendencies. The ambiguous organization in the third draft revealed questions about the legality of Kennedy's course of action. The policy discussion prompted the change, thereby communicating a more comprehensive description of America's response to the Soviet missiles in Cuba. In this instance, the decision to include the OAS and UN in the American response had already been made. The more important decision—*how* it was to be used—was clarified only through the speechwriting process.

A third example explores how the fourth draft better utilized the "repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen" to frame the Soviets' actions as deceptive and dishonest. In the third draft, these spokesmen are quoted as telling President Kennedy that "Soviet missiles would never be stationed on the territory of any other nation." Upon reading this line in the ExComm meeting, participants stopped to discuss how the speech ought to emphasize Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's responsibility for the missiles in Cuba. According to the State memo:

> The question was raised as to whether the speech should emphasize Soviet
> responsibility for the missile deployment or [Prime Minister of Cuba

Fidel] Castro's irresponsibility in accepting them. Secretary [of State

Dean] Rusk argued that we must hold the USSR responsible because it is

important to emphasize the extra-hemispheric aspect of the missile

deployment in order to increase support for our contemplated actions.[16]

ExComm took the issue of assigning culpability one step further. The State memo read:

The president said we should pin the responsibility for the developments

in Cuba directly on Khrushchev. In response to the President's question,

[former Ambassador to Moscow Llewellyn] Thompson agreed—naming

Khrushchev would make it harder to reverse his actions in Cuba, but such

reference to him would be more effective in producing favorable actions.[17]

Both entries clarified that that blame ought to be placed on the USSR rather than

Castro. The deliberations resulted in a fresh line with multiple implications.

The fourth draft conveyed a similar message, but was influenced by the group

interaction illustrated above. The line was recast with language that implicated the Soviet

Union as having harmful intentions. It read that Soviet representatives told President

Kennedy that "the Soviet Union had no need or desire to station strategic missiles on the

territory of any other nation."[18] This change warranted attention for two reasons.

A distinct difference was the absence and presence of a subject. In draft three,

"Soviet missiles would never be stationed on the territory of any other nation." "Soviet

missiles" was followed with an ambiguous identification of the Soviet Union's presence

in their place. The line simply stated that they "would never be stationed." There was no

mention of who, if anyone, would never station them. Alternatively, the focus of this line

in draft four was the "Soviet Union," as it was the subject who "station[ed] strategic

missiles on the territory of [another] nation." This change in prose befitted exactly the policy suggestion advanced by Kennedy, Rusk, and Thompson. The passive language was replaced with an explicit identification of the Soviet Union, placing emphasis on the subject who stationed the weapons.

In addition, the prose change also placed focus on the Soviet Union's reason for sending the missiles to Cuba. Draft three simply stated that the missiles would never be placed extra-territorially. It was devoid of highlighting the Soviets' rationale for not placing them outside the USSR. Draft four, however, provided an explanation by assigning a motive to the Soviets' inaction: they had no need or desire to station missiles extraterritorially. Incorporating this element allowed the prose to suggest what the Soviets' grounds were for sending missiles to Cuba; they now had a need or desire to place offensive weapons outside the USSR, and more consequentially, close to the United States.

Each participant—President Kennedy, Secretary Rusk, and Ambassador Thompson—contributed policy questions, the answers to which better clarified the American response. The decision-making process resulted in the need to make Khrushchev's role in sending the missiles more transparent. This need was fulfilled by a change in prose that worked doubly to identify the Soviets' responsibility for the missiles as well as advancing a possible basis for that decision. The change left little room for the line to be interpreted ambiguously; it clearly identified a perpetrator and a motive.

A final example was different in that it showed *more* ambiguity and *less* transparency in the policy and prose. Draft three read, "I trust that both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at these sites will recognize in time our inability to tolerate this

threat." The two State memo excerpts above suggested that Kennedy, Rusk, and Thompson thought it a good idea to focus blame on the Soviet leadership instead of Fidel Castro. This decision was contrary to draft three. In it, the "Cuban people and Soviet technicians" are expected to recognize the American "inability to tolerate this threat." The line read as if the Cubans and Soviets at the missile sites had the capability or authority to withdraw the weapons in response to American intolerance. Of course, this was not the case.

The third draft suffered from faulty construction to begin with. The result was that the policy seemed to require action on the part of powerless workers on the ground in San Cristobal. In addition, the draft had to be modified to include the admonishment of Khrushchev specified in the State memo. The document indeed reflected a different message in stating, "I trust that, in the interest of both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at these sites, the hazards to all concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized."[19]

In an effort not to implicate Castro or Cuba in wrongdoing, the prose in the new document was dramatically altered in its treatment of "recognition." In the third draft, the "recognizers" were the Cuban people and Soviet technicians, and what they recognized was an American inability to tolerate the threat of missiles in Cuba. This placed the focus of the message on something the U.S. could or could not do, suggesting that the country was the entity capable of action or inaction. It placed responsibility for peace on America, not the Soviet Union, and asserted that the U.S. alone had the burden of backing down or pursuing its course. The policy communicated through this prose was counterproductive and wrongly placed a responsibility to act on America, the Cuban

people, and the Soviet technicians. The fourth draft was more pointed, and the revised syntax communicated the idea as intended. To have left this line as is was troublesome as it shifted the focus of blame away from the Soviet leadership and onto defenseless workers.

The first section of this chapter explored changes made to the third draft for political reasons. Each passage of the speech was edited either to increase or to decrease ambiguity, to make the message's intent more or less transparent. The changes reflected a joint process, one that combined policy-making and prose writing. The unique circumstances of these texts make them valuable pieces of rhetorical criticism and illuminating examples of the political concerns ExComm voiced at the October 21 meeting.

Creating Military Policy, Drafting Military Language

This section examines elements of the third draft that dealt with military matters. Although the Crisis itself was militarily complex, the speech aimed to avoid using jargon that might confuse or even frighten listeners. This approach was a conscious one used in the speechwriting process, as signaled by the less frequent military references from draft to draft. By draft four, military language had been thoroughly vetted and received little attention in the final editing stages. As a result, few changes to the third draft are subject to noteworthy rhetorical interpretation.

The focus of this segment was one departure from that observation. As distinguished from the previous section, this portion of the chapter concentrates on a single revision of draft three: the replacement of "blockade" with "quarantine." The

significance of this discussion raises new insight for both groupthink and speechwriting. Janis' scholarship paid special attention to the impact of groupthink on military matters. He noted that he selected particular fiascoes for analysis because of "the grossly inadequate way the policy-makers carried out their decision-making tasks."[20] For a variety of reasons, Janis categorized the decisions made during the Cuban Missile Crisis into what he called a "counterpoint" group, those that avoided the plagues of groupthink. Janis' chapter on the Crisis focused on the decision-making process that led to the blockade scenario. The Kennedy group, on Janis' reading, practiced similar techniques to achieve consensus both before and after the blockade decision was reached. The decision-making process used during the editing of draft three was identical to the process before it, but was invariably altered by the need to craft the existing message into a better one. Thus, quality decision-making practices resulted in an opportunity for ExComm members to reexamine their military concerns, and to address those issues by revising the prose.

Extant rhetorical theory regarding speechwriting also helped explain the significance of this example. Sorensen recalled the first discussion of the "blockade" issue from a late night meeting of ExComm members, after which he suggested a memo be drafted outlining basic information about the term.[21] On one hand, perhaps this opportunity arose as the result of what Janis called "the forging of many minds," as the concern presented itself during an interchange of ideas.[22] On the other, this detail may have emerged as a direct result of the speechwriter's intuition and experience.

In the introduction to *Presidential Speechwriting*, Medhurst advocated respect for the profession based on these qualities when he suggested that "history has demonstrated

the wisdom of having presidential speechwriters and advisors." He continued, "Presidential speechwriters have served the nation well. Presidents know that, which is why they continue to use them."[23] One unique talent of the presidential speechwriter, Medhurst points out, is that he or she often anticipates the process, knowing ahead of time what problems might arise. He argued that the craft "is a sort of processual invention whereby ideas become transformed in the process of working with them in a written text."[24] Hence the speechwriter, perhaps more so than any other advisor, foresaw the obstacles of using language intended to evoke strong memories or feelings.

Medhurst counters a common criticism of the profession: "the reduction of speechwriting to mere wordsmithing." He asserts that the power of wielding policy language is not to be underestimated. Persuasion, he argues, is the result of careful deliberation and thoughtful consideration of all elements of the rhetorical situation, most importantly, a keen awareness of audience. "What distinguishes the skilled rhetorician from others who attempt to persuade is not the tools or even the outcomes of such attempts, but rather the judgment and powers of interpretation that the speaker displays in assessing the situation and in selecting the appropriate language . . ." In addition, Medhurst posits that the "art of rhetoric lies not in whether persuasion actually happens, but in the intellectual powers displayed by the rhetorician in the selection of what to say, [and] how to say it. . . ."[25]

The quarantine/blockade issue was the central component of the American response during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Thus, it was listed as the first "step" outlined in the third draft: "There is to be initiated a *blockade* on all *military equipment* under shipment to Cuba. . . . All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if

found to contain cargoes of *weapons*, be turned back. Such a *blockade* will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers." [26] The importance of understanding groupthink and speechwriting in the context of this passage becomes even clearer when a critic considers what has already been said about it.

This project previously argued that few rhetorical critics produced comprehensive scholarship on this address. In that scholarship, the "blockade versus quarantine" issue is represented more amply than any other passage. Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott noted that, "The word 'quarantine' introduced in paragraph 19 is an essential part of the verbal strategy." They continued, "A blockade is generally considered an act of war. Labeling the action a 'quarantine' was an attempt to circumvent the problems that would attend general world opinion that the United States was guilty of the first act of war."[27] Theodore Windt added, "the president had to justify his initiation of an act of war against another nation, for that is what a blockade is: an act of war. Kennedy did what other presidents have done. He engaged in Orwellian Newspeak. He described the blockade as a 'quarantine,' denied that this act of war was actually an act of war, and insisted instead that it was a step toward 'peace and freedom.'"[28] And Denise Bostdorff contended in her analysis that through the use of "quarantine," the President "simultaneously sidestepped questions of legal propriety and portrayed U.S. actions as defensive rather than offensive. . . . [Quarantine is] a term that historically had referred to preventative isolation intended to stave off epidemic. Kennedy's terminological choice described U.S. actions not as a blockade, an act of war, but as a defensive step that would prevent the contagion of nuclear missiles in Cuba from spreading."[29]

These criticisms provided valuable insight into ExComm's policy and prose decisions. For years they constituted the dominant rhetorical perception of what the language choice intended to accomplish. As with all criticism, new insight can uncover new meaning. One such insight was provided by the State Department memo which reads as follows:

> The question of whether our actions should be described as a blockade or quarantine was debated. Although the legal meaning of the two words is identical, Secretary Rusk said he preferred "quarantine" for political reasons in that it avoids comparison with the Berlin blockade. The President agreed to use the word "quarantine" and pointed out that if we so desired we could later institute a total blockade.[30]

The "Berlin blockade" here referenced an event also known as the "German hold-up." After World War II, multinational forces occupied German territory. Allied forces controlled the sector of the country known after the war as West Germany. In 1948, the Soviet Union attempted to cut off access to the area by blockading railways and roads that provided a route for bringing supplies to the German people in Berlin. Their aim was to force Berliners to rely on the Soviet Union for food and fuel, thereby causing Berlin to relinquish power over its land to the Soviets.[31]

Rusk's affinity for the word "quarantine," as it precluded a comparison of the United States to the Soviet Union, was designed at least in part to avoid the drawing of negative parallels. Rusk's suggestion, then, was that the word choice be appropriate in naming the American action, as the label ought to avoid any unfounded or misunderstood suggestions about the intent or nature of the response. In short, replacing "blockade"

with "quarantine" created tactical distance between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The significance of this language choice is evidenced further through the examination of another element of ExComm's deliberations. Rather than simply choosing "quarantine" out of fear that "blockade" would evoke an undesired association, data suggested that ExComm was aware of a fundamental difference in the two scenarios, and the two terms. The *materials* subjected to interference provided the common point in distinguishing between 1948 and 1962. ExComm anticipated a variety of weapons would be exported to Cuba. Their conversations provided insight into their approach towards this concern. The State memo read as follows:

> Both Secretary Dillon and Director McCone urged that the speech state
>
> that we were seeking to prevent all military equipment from reaching
>
> Cuba. They argued that later we might act to prevent all equipment from
>
> reaching Cuba even though at present our objective was to block offensive
>
> missile equipment. The president preferred the phrase "offensive missile
>
> equipment" on the grounds that within forty-eight hours we will know the
>
> Soviet reaction. At such time we will know whether, as is expected, the
>
> Soviets turn back their ships rather than submit to inspection. Secretary
>
> McNamara agreed we should proceed in two stages. Initially our
>
> objective is to block offensive weapons and later we can extend our
>
> blockade to all weapons, if we so decide.[32]

These deliberations significantly affected both the decision-making and speechwriting processes that were underway before the fourth draft's creation. The language and arguments in ExComm's meeting resulted in the following passage:

> A strict *quarantine* on all *offensive military equipment* under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found to contain cargoes of *offensive weapons*, be turned back. This *quarantine* will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berline [sic] blockade of 1948.[33]

The changes from the third draft included all mentions of the American "blockade" being supplanted with "quarantine," and all mentions of military equipment and weapons being qualified with the modifier "offensive." The last line was an addition that succinctly communicated the goodwill of the American people, justified the use of the word "quarantine," and further distanced the United States' approach from the Soviet Union's. In addition, the word "blockade" was used only once in this passage, to describe the Soviets' actions in 1948. In applying the word to a major event with which it was traditionally identified, the draft illustrated a powerful use of language.

The central difference between the Soviet Union's actions in 1948 and the United States' actions in 1962 was the type of materials being sequestered. The first memo passage highlighted above noted that "the legal meaning of the two words is identical." Yet, despite the position that they were indistinguishable, ExComm created new meaning for one of them. The new "quarantine" policy

distanced the two terms based on the premise that a "blockade" only applied to offensive materials. Without the ability to cite a precedent wherein an action labeled "quarantine" had actually pertained to offensive military equipment, a charge of committing the first act of war was unfounded.

This skilled judgment accounted for ExComm's anticipation that a critical audience might misinterpret the word "blockade." To circumvent any problems that might arise from the word's use, the men decided to label their action a "quarantine." This change in policy and prose exhibited ExComm's awareness of the interconnected relationship of decision-making and speechwriting. The meaning elicited from "quarantine" was more favorable because it was devoid of any hostile connotations.

Extant rhetorical scholarship on this address attended to the quarantine/blockade issue, but scholars all attributed the word choice to Kennedy's fear that the United States would be charged with the first act of war. Evidence from a comparison of drafts three and four, coupled with the State memo, illustrates that this conclusion was not entirely warranted. With this new evidence, the fear of war no longer sufficed as the sole explanation for the adoption of the term "quarantine." First, if any fear existed, it was the fear that the administration's actions would seem similar to the Soviets' actions in 1948. After all, the Berlin blockade was never viewed as an act of war, nor an act intended to provoke war. Second, the word was carefully chosen to represent the precision of Kennedy's choice of action. The speech outlined a policy for which no name existed. The policy and the prose created a new meaning for the word "quarantine," a term no longer simply a synonym for blockade. The authors' criticisms suggested that the word was primarily intended to obfuscate the difference between offensive and defensive

actions. Instead, the current analysis shows that it was intended to emphasize Kennedy's goodwill in allowing Cuba to import materials that could not be used for military offense. This created a clear distinction between the United States and the Soviet Union. Finally, it was meant to symbolize, as by definition language often does, an action for which there was no existing label.

The Ethics of Retaliation: Addressing Cuba, Uniting the Globe

In his memoir, *Thirteen Days*, Robert Kennedy described the moral trepidation that ExComm participants faced in outlining a response that could precipitate nuclear war.[34] A variety of scholarly work painted the Attorney General as the most pacifistic participant in ExComm, other than the president himself. Ted Sorensen substantiated this portrayal, noting that "RFK advised the ExComm that a surprise bombing strike on island military installations—killing innocent civilians—would be compared to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, thereby tarnishing America's place in history."[35] RFK himself wrote, "Our struggle against Communism throughout the world was far more than physical survival—it had as its essence our heritage and our ideals, and these we must not destroy. We spent more time on this moral question during the first five days than on any other single matter."[36]

The concern for preserving America's reputation and acting with moral conviction was paramount in the drafting of Kennedy's speech. The changes made to the third draft showed evidence of this concern. Editing reflected the last opportunity for ExComm members to voice their ethical concerns. Those anxieties were predominantly presented by two men, the President and his brother.

In his evaluation of the Crisis, Irving Janis took note of RFK's role in pressing ethical matters. One component of ExComm's behavior that, according to Janis, resulted in their triumph over groupthink tendencies was an "explicit discussion of moral issues."[37] He contended, "During the Cuban Missile Crisis, members of the Executive Committee explicitly voiced their concerns about the morality of the policy alternatives they were considering, thus forestalling deceitful clandestine actions. They maintained an attitude of vigilance toward the moral risks as well as toward the military ones."[38] The ability openly to debate policy questions as they arose in the third draft resulted in a more finely honed message in the fourth draft. Although the Attorney General remained the principal advocate of ethical considerations, his contributions to speech editing made those concerns more prominent to other group members. As Janis explained, "The debate on these moral issues and related questions of the legality of possible United States actions in the eyes of other nations continued [throughout the Crisis] with marked effects on other members of the group."[39]

The ethical concerns that mounted during the October 21 meeting resulted in a clearer, sharper policy. The questions raised represented a host of ideologies, of military and political predispositions, a varied range of attitudes and opinions regarding the President's chosen path. Despite a consensus that a quarantine was the most proportionate response, ExComm remained aware that the nation and the world might have different opinions. As such, this speech illustrated the delicate balance between reproach and empathy, between unity and dissent—two tensions inherent in the policy.

As Medhurst pointed out, few have the talent to craft such a precise message. "The job of a speechwriter is precisely to mess with language—to try to improve it,

sharpen it, clarify it."[40] The differing treatment of ethical subjects in the third and fourth

drafts reflected what Medhurst considered a key component of speechwriting.

"Presidents represent the nation, not merely themselves," he began.

> They speak on behalf of the people and represent the views of the nation
>
> as refracted through the lenses of party, ideology, political and economic
>
> constraints, and situational variables. They do not—and cannot—simply
>
> state their own personal views. They need good advisors and
>
> speechwriters precisely for this reason—so that their discourse represents
>
> the best articulation of policy or position possible. The nation expects—
>
> and deserves—no less.[41]

This treatment of a presidential message reflected the same conclusions that

prevent a policy from succumbing to groupthink. Despite a president's individual

perspectives on any occasion, his job—first and foremost—is to represent the American

people. Thus, his policy decisions must be made with the inclusion of multiple avenues,

constant re-evaluation, and a commitment to the values and circumstances of the present.

Some speeches, Medhurst noted, "must be produced under great pressures, both

chronological and psychological." On these occasions, "speechwriters more than earn

their keep; they help the president express the emotions of an entire nation."[42] The

changes in the Cuban Missile Crisis speech's ethical treatment reflect a keen awareness

of these responsibilities. Two examples in particular illustrate the ways in which policy

and prose intertwined to create a morally sensitive draft.

The first example of changes made to draft three based on ethical concerns

reflected estimations by the President and Attorney General regarding the Cuban people's

fear of war. The additions and deletions between the third and fourth drafts revealed a sincere sense of obligation to the Cubans' happiness and freedom. Changes to the third draft resulted in large deletions and rearrangements that exposed an entirely new approach in addressing the population.

The third draft opened this section by explaining, "I have directed the United States Information Agency to use all available resources in making clear our position to the captive people of Cuba. My words tonight are being carried directly to them -- and I want to tell them this. Do not permit yourselves to become involved in the grim confrontation of nuclear weapons." The message continued with two more demands similarly introduced with "Do not." These were followed by, "These weapons cannot contribute to the security of Cuba; they can only undermine it. They can contribute nothing to your peace and well being."[43] It read like a warning or an admonition to a people who already engaged in foul play; one could see a pointed finger wagging or hands held out in a forbidding gesture. The language created a policy that replaced empathy with accusation and prematurely assumed that it must be on the defensive against a hostile enemy. The State memo noted that during the October 21 meeting, "The Attorney General felt that the paragraphs in the President's draft speech addressed to the Cuban people were not personal enough. The President asked that these paragraphs be rewritten."[44] They were.

Sorensen noted that in preparation for the fourth draft, "a direct appeal to the Cuban people was expanded considerably by one of Kennedy's top appointees in State from Puerto Rico, Arturo Morales Carrion, who understood the nuances in Spanish."[45]

Carrion's insight resulted in a sympathetic and embracing message of hope, opportunity, and security. The fourth draft read:

> Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba, to whom this speech is being directly carried by special radio facilities. I speak to you as a friend, as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland, as one who shares your aspirations for liberty and justice for all. And I have watched with deep sorrow how your nationalist revolution was betrayed -- and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are no longer Cuban leaders inspired by Cuban ideals. They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which has turned Cuba against your friends and neighbors in the Americas. . . .[46]

The fourth draft used direct and intimate language, abandoning mention that the message was filtered through a government agency. This created a conversational tone. The new draft approached the Cuban audience as equals, as friends for whom the President would risk nuclear war to protect. The prose was heartfelt, using strong, emotive language like "deep sorrow" and "betrayed." Rather than engaging the Cuban people with demands to prevent nuclear catastrophe, the fourth draft eliminated their responsibility in the situation and placed all blame on the Cuban leadership. This created a distinction between the Cuban leadership and the Cuban people. In doing so, the objective was to align the Cuban people more cohesively with American leadership than their own. The draft attempted to convince the Cuban nationalists that they were not the targets of any forthcoming actions. The fourth draft's prose was edited to meet the request from the President and Robert Kennedy for a friendlier policy toward the Cuban people. The

message was tailored to resonate more favorably with the Cuban audience lest they feel disenfranchised by both Cuba and the United States.

The second example of a revision made for moral ends came toward the end of the draft. As has been previously noted, ExComm anticipated that some nations would disagree with Kennedy's retaliation. Other countries had become accustomed to living under the threat of proximate offensive weaponry, and thought the United States ought to do so as well.[47] In addition, nuclear war would likely be avoided if America did nothing. ExComm encountered most of its moral dilemmas when they discussed the more hostile alternatives—however risky the consequences of an air strike were, the destruction of Soviet missiles was an attractive option. War hawks in Congress long advocated military action in Cuba. Even after the Bay of Pigs, Republican leadership pushed for more attempts to overthrow the Castro regime. The third draft communicated this imbalance of opinion:

> Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which
>
> both our will and our patience will be tested by those who would have us
>
> do more and those who would have us do less. But the path we have
>
> chosen for the present is consistent with our character and courage as a
>
> nation, and our commitments around the world.[48]

The line communicated that despite dissent on both sides of the divide, the administration decided on a course of action that best represented America's (and Kennedy's) benevolent defensive stance.

The problem with the language used in draft three was that it prematurely admitted to the volatile nature of this crisis and the inconsistency of world opinion.

Throughout the speech, Kennedy argued that the Soviets' actions violated hemispheric and international laws, that they moved the world closer to nuclear destruction, and that they flagrantly participated in a defiant and deceptive build-up that violated the honor and dignity of diplomatic international relations. To admit that opinions were still divided—even after the President advanced a compelling argument—was to admit that his argument was flawed, that the situation was nuanced, and that the American response could be different.

Sorensen recalled Kennedy's reaction to this section in the third draft, noting the President's awareness that the speech seemed to admit defeat. Kennedy averred, "The worst course of all would be for us to do nothing. . . . There isn't any good solution. . . . Whichever plan I choose, the ones whose plans we're not taking are the lucky ones—they'll be able to say 'I told you so' in a week or two. But this one seems the least objectionable."[49] As a result, the President suggested a different approach in acknowledging the threats that come from parties opposing the American response. The State memo read, "He asked that the draft speech emphasize his belief that the greatest danger to the United States in the present situation is doing nothing but acknowledging that in days to come we would be seriously threatened."[50]

Draft three revealed that there was an inconsistency in the policy. An admission of dissent weakened the American position, and thus the language had to be changed to reflect better the message's intent. Thus, draft four read:

Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which both our will and our patience will be tested, months in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our danger. But the

greatest danger of all would be to do nothing. The path we have chosen

for the present is full of hazards, as all paths are -- but it is the one most

consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our

commitments around the world.[51]

This revision took a more careful approach in admitting opposition from "those who

would have us do more and those who would have us do less." By using "who" in the

third draft, the message gave a human identity, albeit an ambiguous one, to people who

objected to the administration's decision. In the fourth draft, faceless "denunciations"

were featured and the dissenters were overshadowed and forgotten. This signaled an

obligation to acknowledge dissenting opinion, but to refrain from identifying its

source(s). It highlighted the draft's creative use of strategic prose to obfuscate the

inconsistency of world opinion and strengthen Kennedy's argument for his policy.

Another addition to the fourth draft was the line, "But the greatest danger of all

would be to do nothing. The path we have chosen for the present is full of hazards, as all

paths are. . . ." This was a modification that came directly from Kennedy. For days

ExComm weighed the benefits and drawbacks of each alternative advanced by its

members. The moral concerns advanced primarily by the President and his brother

resulted in the blockade scenario. This was the second least aggressive alternative; the

first was doing nothing.[52] The President, Attorney General, and all ExComm participants

felt that to do nothing would endanger the country and the world, and leave the

hemisphere vulnerable to nuclear exchange. This addition communicated the severity

with which the group weighed each path, and signaled awareness that their decision was

guided by concerns for the moral consequences of policy.

These examples illustrate the challenges posed to ExComm as the decision makers faced a choice that would characterize the moral authority of an administration. Their decision would be subject to both domestic and international reaction, and carried with it the sheer power of redefining 200 years of national history. America had long been viewed as a country committed to justice and moral convictions, and any alternative more egregious than a quarantine posed a very real potential detriment to that reputation. Moreover, ExComm's ethical concerns permeated the policies created. Many were advanced in the October 21 meeting while the group reviewed the third draft of Kennedy's address. Thus, the draft's prose prompted valuable discussions about the ethical components of Kennedy's choice. In turn, the fourth draft used more precise prose to communicate accurately the administration's stance on a variety of dilemmas.

Conclusion

This chapter utilized concepts of presidential speechwriting and groupthink to argue that revisions of the third draft reflected policy and prose changes, each mutually reinforcing the other. The changes evident between the third and fourth drafts fit within three major concerns: political, military, and ethical. Each revision highlighted in this chapter was intended to address one or more of these concerns. A comparative analysis revealed the mutually interdependent relationship between policy and prose changes within each category. Political questions were raised in response to ambiguous and transparent messages in the speech. As they were addressed, both the prose and the policy were augmented to complement each other. A weak element of the speech's initially militaristic prose pertained to the policy of "blockading" Cuba. To circumvent

the use of a term with negative connotations, ExComm used the term quarantine to describe the administration's approach to Cuba, thereby creating a new policy and new prose in one turn. The ethical considerations of the speech's treatment of the Cuban people and the disunity of world opinion were similarly affected by the interdependent relationship between policy and prose. Through careful speechwriting and an avoidance of groupthink tendencies, the speech addressed audiences in a more empathetic and compelling fashion.

The Cuban Missile Crisis speech is unique for a variety of reasons that have been argued throughout this project. The importance of comparing drafts three and four is that the comparison provides a rare glimpse into what could have been, what Kennedy might have said, and what might have transpired had there been no October 21 meeting. ExComm reviewed the third draft in an effort to clarify both their policy and their prose, each affecting the other. They used sound decision-making skills to discuss the importance of the address, and offered suggestions to sharpen the message. Their canvassing of all options, their continuous search for relevant information, their need for detailing provisions of the plan are all qualities that resulted in a text characterized by care and finesse. The argument in this chapter remains that because of the Crisis' circumstances, and because this speech served as a formal outline of United States executive orders, the creation of both prose and policy were inextricably interwoven.

Notes

[1] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 9.

[2] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 142.

[3] Martin Medhurst, "Enduring Issues in Presidential Speechwriting," in Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst, *Presidential Speechwriting: From the New Deal to the Reagan Revolution and Beyond*, eds. Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 220.

[4] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Decision-Making in the White House: The Olive Branch or the Arrows* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 19. In enumerating the typical steps of the speechwriting process, Sorensen writes the following: "sixth: a recommendation and final choice of one alternative; seventh: the communication of that selection."

[5] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 142.

[6] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/26_30.html.

[7] Martin J. Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech: A Case Study in the Strategic Use of Language," *Communication Monographs 54* (1987): 218-219.

[8] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, Oct. 21, 1962. Box 41, President's Office Files: Speech Files, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 1.

[9] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, Oct. 21, 1962. Box 48, Theodore Sorensen Papers, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 1.

[10] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 25.

[11] Ted Sorensen, *Counselor: Life at the Edge of History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 139.

[12] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 6-7.

[13] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 26-27.

[14] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 701.

[15] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 6-7.

[16] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 25.

[17] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 27.

[18] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 2.

[19] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 6; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 6. (Italics added.)

[20] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 10.

[21] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 694.

[22] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 142.

[23] Martin Medhurst, "Presidential Speechwriting: Ten Myths that Plague Modern Scholarship," in *Presidential Speechwriting: From the New Deal to the Reagan Revolution and Beyond*, eds. Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 11.

[24] Medhurst, "Presidential Speechwriting," 7.

[25] Martin J. Medhurst, "A Tale of Two Constructs: The Rhetorical Presidency Versus Presidential Rhetoric," in *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency*, ed. Martin J. Medhurst (Texas A&M University Press, College Station: 1996), xvi.

[26] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 5.

[27] Wayne Brockriede and Robert L. Scott, *Moments in the Rhetoric of the Cold War* (New York: Random House, 1970), 88.

[28] Theodore Windt, *Presidents and Protesters: Political Rhetoric in the 1960s* (The University of Alabama Press: Tuscaloosa, 1990), 56.

[29] Denise M. Bostdorff, *The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 40.

[30] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 26.

[31] Thomas Parrish, *Berlin in the Balance, 1945-1949: The Blockade, the Airlift, the First Major Battle of the Cold War* (Jackson: Da Capo Press, 1999), 22-36.

[32] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 26.

[33] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 5.

[34] Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999).

[35] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 291.

[36] Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 30.

[37] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 157.

[38] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 157.

[39] Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 158.

[40] Medhurst, "Presidential Speechwriting," 13.

[41] Medhurst, "Presidential Speechwriting," 10.

[42] Medhurst, "Enduring Issues in Presidential Speechwriting," 219.

[43] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 8-9.

[44] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 27.

[45] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 700.

[46] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 8-9.

[47] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 30.

[48] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 10.

[49] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 694.

[50] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 26-30, 28.

51 "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 10.

52 Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 682.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This project began as an attempt to understand the merits of a "good" presidential speech. The Crisis speech is not Kennedy's most notable, a provision that seemingly excluded it from thorough treatment.[1] Publications about the event often forego any explanation about the speech, aside from the date and time of its delivery. Yet of all his orations, this speech is arguably among the most important. It addressed a wide range of audiences, its subject was of significant global impact, and it doubled as a presentation of the American case to heads of every government, including the Soviet Union.[2]

This project found that the Crisis speech's merit may be attributed at least in part to the uniqueness of its drafting. Without understanding the remarkable features of its composition, one cannot fully appreciate the text's importance. The composition process helped to prevent the Crisis from worsening. ExComm's inability to draft a different speech, one that outlined a more belligerent alternative, decreased the prospect of a nuclear exchange between two world superpowers. President Kennedy recognized the need to address the public, and the speechwriting process precluded more aggressive plans from being pursued.[3] In a very real sense, ExComm's ability to draft a speech while deliberating policy contributed to a peaceful resolution of a potentially volatile situation.

Each chapter of this thesis contributes useful ground for arguing that the Crisis speech merits rhetorical examination. This final chapter serves two purposes. First, it reviews the project's analysis to highlight the news that emerged from the study. Second,

it explores the implications of the analysis for future research in political rhetoric generally, and presidential persuasion in particular.

The Analysis

Chapter One introduced the Cuban Missile Crisis speech. The historical context was primarily important for understanding the sheer significance of any speech of international consequence during the Cold War. The context of the speech—the ExComm meetings, the participants and their backgrounds, and the circumstances of the speech's drafting—were all integral markers for understanding the nuances of the speechwriting process. Clearly, an important component of the analysis stemmed from the examination of multiple drafts of the text. This chapter explained the benefits of using multiple texts for analysis and how that use leads to a productive project. The literature review concentrated first on the extant scholarship on the Crisis speech, arguing that while these criticisms are productive and insightful, they focus entirely on the speech's final draft. The chapter then outlined the conventional wisdom pertaining to groupthink, presidential speechwriting, and strategic language use in order to illustrate how each would be helpful in approaching a comparative criticism of the speech's multiple drafts.

The first draft of the Crisis speech, as explained in Chapter Two, yielded insightful news based on the application of an invention-centered approach. The draft was the result of ExComm's first attempt to translate days of deliberation into succinct prose that could outline and concurrently justify the American response to the Soviet threat. The chapter followed the text chronologically as it was divided into two sections

based on the message's organization. The opening section of the speech announced the presence of Russian missiles in Cuba, discussed why their presence violated previous Soviet statements, and explained why this deception warranted a retaliatory response by the U.S. The closing section of the speech outlined the steps demanded of the Soviet leadership and addressed those audiences directly affected by the crisis. The chapter used this text and State Department transcripts of ExComm meetings to identify the impact of deliberation on policy and prose creation.

Chapter Three was the first of two that compared speech drafts to locate changes in language use. The chapter focused on four examples wherein language changes signaled important features of the speech's persuasive capability. The third draft used particular language to explain why the movement of missiles posed a grave threat, placed more emphasis on the President as a source of American leadership and an example of national character, used identification appeals to expand geographically the targeted area, and addressed the Cuban audience more directly to stress their victimization. All of these changes constituted evidence of an intention to gain a psychological victory over the audiences by way of persuasion. The chapter highlighted these techniques, each documented in varying degrees in communication literature. Here, the language changes were strategic and designed with a specific goal in mind.

A comparative approach also produced noteworthy analysis in Chapter Four. Here, contrasts between drafts three and four revealed that policy and prose considerations alike urged changes to the speech. Political, military, and ethical concerns motivated the revisions that were made to the third draft. Each highlighted passage contributed some ground to the argument that the processes of creating policy and prose

were indistinguishable from each other. These changes were particularly significant as the fourth draft was identical to the one Kennedy read aloud on October 22. Both the first and last working documents were influenced by deliberation more than those in between.

Implications for Critical Studies of Presidential Rhetoric

Research on groupthink, language strategies, and presidential speechwriting both inform and are informed by the Kennedy Administration's response to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Although the theory of groupthink derives from Irving Janis's research in psychology and from the social scientific study of group communication, its teachings combine with rhetorical principles in some cases to explain important dynamics of political speech. The Missile Crisis is such a case. Time and time again, examples illustrate how passages from each speech draft were added, deleted, or revised because a new component of the American response to international crisis was added, deleted, or edited. The best decisions are reached by canvassing alternatives; weighing the costs, drawbacks, risks, and positive and negative consequences of each, and continually searching for new information.[4] These practices were embraced in ExComm's decision-making in October of 1962. The policy process was inextricably linked to the speechwriting process, as neither happened independently of the other.

The best examples of groupthink avoidance, and its impact on the speechwriting process during the Missile Crisis, came in the second and fourth chapters. The first draft is a mere echo of those positions advanced during ExComm's first meeting. The divergence of different opinions and the language with which those opinions were

advanced created both the policy and the speech. Every spoken thought translated in one way or another into the first written version of the speech.

An example of groupthink avoidance comes from an exchange during ExComm's first meeting wherein multiple participants said the same thing, but in varied language. President Kennedy observed, "the existence of this presents the gravest threat to our security . . . [and] appropriate action must be taken."[5] Vice President Johnson concurred, noting that "we're committed at any time that we feel that there's a build up that in any way endangers [the country] to take whatever action we must take to assure our security."[6] Secretary McNamara reminded the group that "if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the U.S., the U.S. [said it] would act."[7] The result was the following line from the first draft: "We no longer live in a world where only an actual 'armed attack' . . . represents a challenge to a nation's security. Nuclear weapons are so destructive . . . that any increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in the nature of their threat, may well require an act of self-defense."[8]

This example was chosen specifically because it differs from what Janis might consider as a consummate reflection of his ideal process. Janis advanced his argument by explaining what characteristics led to a good decision. By canvassing alternatives and weighing positive and negative consequences, a group can judge each option on its own merit, and submit a recommendation that has been thoroughly vetted. This project, though, illustrates a particular point that builds upon Janis' work. When good group decision-making strategies are employed for presidential policy deliberations that need no formal announcement, the process comes to a halt; the evils of consensus were avoided, and participant interaction resulted in a positive outcome. However, the influence of

groupthink is an even more influential factor for decisions that do require an accompanying address, the significance of this factor shining through in the writing process.

Language choices, like decision-making processes, can be similarly canvassed, weighed, and evaluated for their respective merits. The example advanced above included three perspectives:

President Kennedy: "the existence of this presents the gravest threat to our security . . . [and] appropriate action must be taken."[9]

Vice President Johnson: "we're committed at any time that we feel that there's a build up that in any way endangers [the country] to take whatever action we must take to assure our security."[10]

Secretary McNamara: "if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the U.S., the U.S. [said it] would act."[11]

In what Janis might consider an appropriate model of his argument, those statements would represent multiple perspectives. This example, however, shows three participants, each with similar yet distinctive statements that contributed to the conservation. The line in the speech that is attributed to that conversation communicates all three perspectives in a coherent sequence. Without the input of many, the line might have read differently, and international response might also have differed. One of those thoughts might be absent, rendering the sentence weaker and less persuasive. In short, the interaction of many minds is not only an integral component of good decision-making, but can also contribute to good speechwriting. In this instance, the product of multiple perspectives, the

articulations of ideas from varied offices and professions, resulted in a finely honed version of what ExComm wanted to say.

Some of the most compelling observations in this project substantiate the importance of studying presidential speechwriting. Surprisingly, few comprehensive analyses of the theory and practice of presidential speechwriting are in place. Although scholars have made some strides in delineating speechwriting practices, comparatively few journal articles or books attend specifically to this practice.[12] This is curious, as a generous amount of classical theory concentrates on speech composition, technique, and devices.

The conclusions reached in this project, although substantiated by primary and secondary documents, would be better informed with a comprehensive theory of this kind. There is much to be said about what could comprise such a theory, and questions that are unanswered about the speechwriting process. What qualities do speechwriters possess that make them proficient in the craft? How closely does a speechwriter's prose need to mirror his or her principal in order to be believable? Where do speechwriters look for—and how do they employ—outside material such as biblical quotations, historical data, or universal anecdotes? How does the process work? How many drafts are produced? What government agencies have authority to revise and what are the dynamics of interagency relationships?

Published answers to these questions are generally contextual and tend to the specifics of each administration. Comparatively little research addresses consistencies across cases or establishes principles of presidential speech composition that hold from one administration to another.[13] A concrete, frequently-applicable theory of

speechwriting is lacking in rhetorical studies. Rather than simply dismissing the need or the practicality of such a theory, the conclusions from this project clearly suggest that scholarship on presidential speechwriting would be better-informed with an exhaustive search for theoretical underpinnings of the practice.

This project identified what may be two starting points for building a rhetorical theory of speechwriting. One entry point is a contradiction that arises when a speechwriting theory answers the question, "how many writers does it take to compose a speech?" As argued earlier, an avoidance of groupthink not only benefits the decision-making process, it also enables a draft to convey a more complete message. Ted Sorensen's opinion of this interaction of mind's does not, however, hold true with the practice of speechwriting:

> Group authorship is rarely, if ever, successful. A certain continuity and precision of style, and unity of argument, must be carefully drafted, particularly in a public communication that will be read or heard by many diverse audiences. Its key principles and phrases can be debated, outlined, and later reviewed by a committee, but basically authorship depends on one man alone with his typewriter or pen.[14]

Surely, the presidential speechwriting process must be sensitive to nuance; each situation, administration, and president approaches public address differently. The findings of this project, though, suggest that differences can be catalogued. Time, secrecy, resources, previous commitments, intelligence, and personnel were all factor in the composition of the Cuban Missile Crisis speech. If this speech is unique, then these elements can be applied to the breadth of presidential speeches at large.

A second consideration questions the relationship between policy and prose. Ted Sorensen recalled that he was asked to draft a speech outlining the "air strike plus invasion" scenario on the night of October 18: "When I reported to the ExComm that no draft could meet all its contradictory conditions, that diminished the number of supporters."[15] The speech as delivered communicated a vast number of conditions, all of which were succinctly organized into an understandable plan. On multiple occasions, the earlier drafts contained contradictory elements that had to be edited for clarity. Those drafts, if delivered as written, would not likely have been as effective without revision. Perhaps this suggests that any executive policy that requires an accompanying address might benefit from collective input, even if Sorensen is correct that consecutive drafts become the responsibility primarily of a central speechwriter. As Martin Medhurst explains, an enduring issue in presidential speechwriting is the relationship between policy makers and speechwriters.[16] It seems, then, that the key component of any productive speechwriting theory is the relationship between policy and prose. Surely, the U.S. response to the Cuban Missile Crisis exemplified the value of such a relationship.

Another component of speechwriting theory would likely include considerable insight about language use. Any sort of research that pursues a comparison-based analysis has the potential to teach students and scholars of rhetoric about language designed to persuade. The changes made in these speech drafts exhibited a keen awareness of how some words better communicate a message than others, how phrases are made to convey a different tone by adjusting syntax.

This awareness is echoed in Medhurst's evaluation of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech,[17] the conclusions of which helped guide the

analysis in this thesis. Speech is used strategically to enact a specific response from an audience and achieve a particular end. Presidents, who wield their power through the spoken word must be especially careful in their speech composition. They must be aware that their every utterance is synonymous with public policy. In Eisenhower's speech, the evolution of language changes suggested that the President intended to communicate two messages—one implicit, the other explicit. A key difference between the conclusions reached in that article and this project surrounds the intent of the language changes.

The sharpest example of this argument is the use of "quarantine" instead of "blockade."[18] The "quarantine" policy placed distance between that term and "blockade" based on the premise that a "blockade" only applied to offensive materials. Without the ability to cite a precedent wherein an action labeled "quarantine" had actually pertained to offensive military equipment, a Soviet charge that the U.S. committed the first act of war was unfounded. This example illustrated how strategic language use not only applies to choosing the most appropriate word for describing something, but also relates to the ways in which words and definitions can be recast to convey a particular idea.

Additionally, this project illustrates how comparing multiple speech drafts clarifies the evolution of language choices and the relationship of language to policy. One such theme in the Crisis drafts was hostile language, belligerent and frightening words and references. This project began with a quotation from historian Michael Beschloss who called the speech "probably the most alarming ever delivered by an American president." To this, Sorensen replied, "I regret that judgment. That was neither JFK's intention nor mine."[19] And, indeed, this project confirmed the speechwriter's reservations regarding Beschloss's conclusion.

From the first draft to the last, the language became increasingly conciliatory. The sheer magnitude of the threat, communicated through military jargon and numerical data in the first draft, was noticeably absent in the third. In addition, this threat originally could "wipe out" Washington D.C., but was only capable of "striking" the capitol in the third draft.[20] The modifying adjectives in the "dark and awful abyss of destruction" were removed between the third and fourth drafts. In addition ExComm participants criticized a reference to Hiroshima in an early draft, so the reference was deleted in subsequent versions of the text.[21] It is clear from these and other examples that Kennedy and ExComm participants thought carefully about the text, eliminating combative vocabulary in an effort not to incite panic and fear. Political rhetoric is often criticized for using language maliciously, to obfuscate the truth. This project serves as a reminder of the ways in which that stereotype can be combated. Evaluating any presidential message and its creation can add to a more accurate portrait of his character and rhetorical legacy.

The Cuban Missile Crisis Speech is an invaluable presidential address. Despite its infrequent mention as one of Kennedy's masterpieces, the Crisis speech retains a uniqueness unmatched by those more commonly referenced. The arguments advanced in this project benefited from well-developed rhetorical constructs that helped to explain the origin of this remarkable text. The conclusions reached provide new insight with which to understand established theory and to project the pursuit of original theory. Ted Sorensen noted that "that first draft ultimately went through more changes in the following forty-eight hours than any speech I wrote in my life."[22] To the events of that forty-eight hours, to the best and brightest who overcame the temptation to pursue swift

consensus, to the words that captured a world and prevented nuclear catastrophe the study of presidential rhetoric is indebted.

Notes

[1] Stephen E. Lucas and Martin J. Medhurst, *Words of a Century: The Top 100 American Speeches, 1900-1999* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). The Crisis speech is ranked 49th behind the Inaugural Address (2nd), the Houston Ministerial Association Speech (9th), the "Ich bin ein Berliner" Speech (22nd), the American University Commencement Address (37th), and the Civil Rights Address (48th).

[2] Ted Sorensen, *Counselor: Life at the Edge of History* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 298.

[3] Sorensen, *Counselor,* 292. An excerpt reads, "When I reported to the ExComm that no draft could meet all its contradictory conditions, that diminished the number of supporters for the 'air strike plus invasion' option."

[4] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 142.

[5] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, Department of State United States of America, 1961-63, http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/01_25.html. 41.

[6] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 26.

[7] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 62.

[8] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, Oct. 20, 1962. Box 48, Theodore Sorensen Papers, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 3.

[9] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 41.

[10] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 26.

[11] "Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath," Foreign Relations of the United States Volume XI: 01-25, 62.

[12] A search of the term "speechwriting" in Communication and Mass Media Complete (confined to only scholarly, peer-reviewed journals) returned 54 results, as compared to 251 for "visual rhetoric," 354 for "classical rhetoric," 575 for "contemporary rhetoric," 1,355 for "political rhetoric," and 11,231 for "rhetoric." A search in the same data base, confined to the same criterion, but only including results that contained the term

"speechwriting" in the title returned nine results, as compared to 4,177 with "rhetoric" in the title.

[13] See previous note. Of the nine results, three pertained to presidential rhetoric. Of those three, two dealt with individual administrations.

[14] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Decision-Making in the White House: The Olive Branch or the Arrows* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 61.

[15] Sorensen, *Counselor,* 292.

[16] Martin Medhurst, "Enduring Issues in Presidential Speechwriting," in Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst, *Presidential Speechwriting: From the New Deal to the Reagan Revolution and Beyond,* eds. Kurt Ritter and Martin Medhurst (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 218.

[17] Martin J. Medhurst, "Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' Speech: A Case Study in the Strategic Use of Language," *Communication Monographs 54* (1987): 204-220.

[18] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, Oct. 21, 1962. Box 48, Theodore Sorensen Papers, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA., 5.

[19] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 300.

[20] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 1st Draft, 1; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 3.

[21] "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 3rd Draft, 7; "Cuban Missile Crisis Speech," 4th Draft, 7.

[22] Sorensen, *Counselor*, 293.

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APPENDIX I

DRAFT ONE

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Communist military buildup on the island of Cuba.

Within the last week, unmistakable evidence has ~~been gathered by this~~ Government establishing the fact that a series of offensive nuclear missile bases is now under intensive preparation on ~~the communist island of Cuba~~ that unhappy island.

¶ Four and possibly five ~~Three~~ of these ~~missile~~ sites, contain launchers, ~~4 to a site, to be loaded~~ four each, with ~~Four are~~ Medium Range Ballistic Missiles, missiles to be loaded on two for each launcher, ~~for a total of 24.~~

Each of these ~~24~~ 32 missiles is capable of carrying a 3000 pound nuclear warhead of ~~up to~~ 2 megatons in yield or more or at least 100 times as destructive as the bomb which destroyed Hiroshima -- for a distance of more than 1000 nautical miles.

Each of these ~~24~~ 32 missiles, in short, is capable of wiping out Washington, D.C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Florida, Mexico City, or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, Central America or the Caribbean area. ¶ Eight ~~Twelve~~ other launch pads now under construction (in two separate sites) appear to be designed for sixteen Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles -- capable of travelling more than twice as far and causing several times as much destruction -- and thus capable of devastating most of the United States mainland, most of Latin America and most of Canada. In addition, large numbers of medium range jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated on Cuba, while appropriate air bases are being prepared.

¶ This urgent transformation of Cuba into a prime strategic base by the presence of ~~The presence in~~ Cuba of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden destruction constitutes an open ~~a~~ threat to the peace and security of all the Americas ~~this Hemisphere~~ -- in naked and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947,

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the traditions of this nation and Hemisphere, the Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress and my own warnings to the communists on September 4 and 13. This action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet and Cuban spokesmen, both publicly and privately delivered, that the arms build-up in Cuba would retain its original defensive character. The size of this undertaking makes clear that it had been planned some months ago. Yet only last month, after I had clearly stated that ground-to-ground missiles would be regarded as an offensive threat, the Soviet Government stated that "the armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes," there is no need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons ~~for the repulsion of aggression~~, for a retaliatory blow (that is, its strategic or offensive weapons) to any other country, for instance Cuba, the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." Only last Thursday, as this offensive build-up went on, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office that, ~~to Soviet assistance to Cuba~~, he was instructed to make it clear, as the Soviet Government had already done, that such assistance pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba, Training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive, If it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would have never become involved in rendering such assistance."

The United States of America need not and cannot tolerate defiance,

deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or small.

We no longer live in a world where only ~~an actual "armed attack", as~~

~~Article 51 of the UN Charter originally intended the phrase,~~ represents a

challenge to a nation's security. Nuclear weapons are so destructive, and

ballistic missiles are so swift, that any increased possibility of their use or

any sudden change in the nature of their threat, may well require an act of

self-defense. For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States,

have deployed such weapons ~~around the world~~ with great care, never

upsetting the precarious status quo which balanced off the use of those weapons

in the absence of some vital challenge. These deployments are not comparable.

Our own weapons systems, such as Polaris and Minuteman, have always

emphasized invulnerability because they are intended to be retaliatory not

offensive, and because our history, unlike that of the Soviets since World

War II demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer other

nations or impose our system upon them. Nevertheless, American citizens

have become adjusted to living daily on the bull's eye of Soviet missiles

located inside the USSR or in submarines. In that sense, our danger has not

been greatly increased.

But this sudden and extraordinary build-up of communist missiles in

an area well-known to have a special and historical relationship to the United

States, in violation of Soviet assurances, and in defiance of American and

hemispheric policy, is a provocative and unjustified change in the status quo

which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments

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are ever to be believed in the future, by either friend or foe.

If the 1930's taught us any lesson at all, it was that aggressive
conduct, if allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, will ultimately
lead to war. This nation is opposed to war, but it is true to its word.
Our unswerving objective, in short, must be to take whatever steps are
necessary to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other
country, and to secure the withdrawal or elimination of these missiles
from within the Western Hemisphere. I am so informing President Dorticos
of Cuba and Soviet Chairman Khrushchev by separate messages already
dispatched.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and that of the entire Western Hemisphere, and with the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

1) First, to halt this offensive build-up, there is to be initiated a full blockade on all offensive weapons under shipment to Cuba, including any material such as petroleum which is essential to the operation of those weapons. Such a blockade can clearly be authorized both by the requirements of U. S. self-defense and by the Organ of Consultation of the Organization of American States, acting under Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty and this year's Punta del Este Resolution. All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will be halted and searched -- and those containing cargoes of weapons, or refusing to halt, will be dealt with appropriately under the rules of international law. Such a blockade may be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carrier. And let me make it clear that it will not only prevent completion of the current offensive build-up. It will also require the Soviet Union to choose between fighting the American Navy in American waters, or abandoning its obligations to Mr. Castro. It will also have, in a comparatively short time, a profound effect on the military, economic and political underpinnings of the Castro regime; and it will be continued with all until missiles and offensive bases are gone from that island.

2) Second. I have directed our military forces to continue and
increase their close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up, as
contemplated in the OAS Communique of October 6; to take further military
action if that build-up continues, ~~greaters~~ threatens and so requires; to include
these air and missile bases on the targeting system of our strategic and retaliator
forces, ~~and, finally,~~ to regard any missile launched from Cuba as an attack by the
Soviet Union requiring a massive retaliatory response upon the Soviet
Union.

Third, to bring further economic pressure on the Castro regime,
and increase its heavy cost to the Soviet Union, I am issuing a directive --
following up the embargo on U. S. trade which I imposed last February --
designed to deter the ships of all nations which trade with the United
States from ferrying arms or communist cargoes of any kind to Cuba.
Tight restrictions on American flag ships went into effect last month.

Fourth, as a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced
our base at Guantanamo, evacuated the dependents of our personnel there
and ordered additional military units to stand by on an alert basis.

Fifth, our allies in both NATO and the OAS have been alerted;
the call for the OAS meeting to which I referred has already gone out;
our case against this threat to peace will be presented to the UN; and we
shall, in addition, shortly convene a ~~Caribbean~~ Caribbean security meeting to work
out cooperative means of halting the clandestine movement of subversive
agents and materials between Cuba and Latin America.

~~Sixth~~, I am asking Soviet Chairman Khrushchev, who will

shortly be coming to the United Nations meeting in New York, to meet with

me at the earliest opportunity with respect to this provocative threat to

world peace and the relations between our two countries. We do not wish

to war with the Soviet Union -- we are a peaceful people who desire to

live in peace with all other peoples. I am prepared to discuss with

the Soviet Chairman how both ~~of us~~ might remove existing tensions instead

of creating new ones. ~~Our attitude on this~~ was ~~only~~ recently shown in

our acquiescence in the Iranian Government's announcement that it would

not permit the establishment of foreign missile bases upon its territory

and in our efforts to halt the testing and spread of nuclear weapons, and

to end the arms race and all overseas bases in a ~~lockout~~ fair and effective treaty.

But ~~the~~ we will not negotiate with a gun at our heads -- a gun that imperils

innocent Cubans as well as Americans. Our byword is: "~~Negotiate yes~~

Negotiation yes, intimidation no". That is why this threat -- or any other threat which

is made either independently or in response to our blockade -- must and will

be met with determination. And, therefore, while any talks go on, our

forces all over the world will be alert -- and the blockade will remain.

Any Soviet show of force at Berlin, for example, will be met in Berlin

by whatever action is needed -- although such a response could not be

justified, inasmuch as the Western Allies have never imported strategic

weapons into West Berlin.

Finally, I have directed the United States Information Agency

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to use all available resources in making clear our position to the ~~happy~~ people of Cuba. We have no quarrel with the Cuban people, only sympathy and hope. They did not consent to the building of this target for nuclear war. Their lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny them freedom. We have no wish to war on them, or impose any system upon them. Our objective, on the contrary, is to give them back the dream of their own revolution -- the dream which Fidel Castro repudiated when he sold them out to the communists who may now sell him out in turn.

Our objective in the world is peace and freedom -- ~~including~~ the peace and freedom of the Cuban people.

＊ ＊ ＊

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which both our will and our patience will be tested by those who would have us do more and those who would have us do less. But the path we have chosen for the present, as recommended by my principal military and foreign policy advisers, is consistent with our character and courage as a nation, and our commitments around the world. ~~Onexpx~~

The cost of freedom is always high -- but Americans have always paid it. One path we shall never choose -- the path of surrender or submission. I tell you, therefore, that these missiles now in Cuba will someday go -- and no others will take their place.

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Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of ~~might~~ right --
not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace _and_ freedom, here
in this Hemisphere, and hopefully around the world. God willing, that
goal will be achieved.

APPENDIX II

DRAFT THREE

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba. Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive nuclear missile sites is now in preparation on that unhappy island. Until less than a week ago, no reliable information of this nature had been received -- but, having now completed its evaluation and our determination upon a course of action, this Government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail.

Four and possibly five of these sites, containing 4 launchers each, are Medium Range Ballistic Missile sites, with two missiles to be loaded on each launcher. Each of these 32 missiles would be capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more than 1000 nautical miles. Each of these 32 missiles, in short, is capable of striking Washington, D.C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City, or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, in Central America or in the Caribbean area.

Two additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for sixteen Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles -- capable of travelling more than twice as far and thus capable of striking almost any city in the Western Hemisphere, ranging as far north as Hudson's Bay, Canada and as far south as Lima, Peru. In addition, medium range jet bombers, capable of

carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated on Cuba, while appropriate air bases are being prepared.

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base -- by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden destruction -- constitutes an open threat to the peace and security of all the Americas, in naked and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and Hemisphere, the Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations, and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both publicly and privately delivered, that the arms build-up in Cuba would retain its original defensive character, and that Soviet missiles would never be stationed on the territory of any other nation.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it had been planned some months ago. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government publicly stated that "the armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes", that "there is no need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons . . . for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance Cuba", and that "the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." That statement was

patently false, ~~and misleading.~~

Only last Thursday, as this rapid offensive build-up continued, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said the Soviet Government had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba", that "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive", and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would have never become involved in rendering such assistance." That statement also was dishonest ~~and dishonorable.~~

Neither the United States of America nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute an "armed attack" under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Nuclear weapons are so destructive, and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in the nature of their threat may well require an act of self-defense.

For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States -- recognizing this fact -- have deployed nuclear weapons with great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which ensured that these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge. Our own weapons systems have never been secretly transferred to the territory

of any other nation; and our history -- unlike that of the Soviets since
World War II -- demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or
conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people. Never-
theless, American citizens have become adjusted to living daily on the
bull's eye of Soviet missiles located inside the USSR or in submarines.
In that sense, missiles in Cuba simply add to an already clear and present
danger -- although, it should be noted, the nations of Latin America have
never previously been included as communist nuclear targets.

But this secret, swift and extraordinary build-up of communist
missiles in an area well-known to have a special and historical relationship
to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere -- in
violation of Soviet assurances, in suddenly stationing strategic weapons
for the first time outside of Soviet soil, in defiance of American and
Hemispheric policy -- is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change
in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage
and our commitments are ever to be believed again by either friend or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if
allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war.
This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our
unswerving objective, therefore, must be to take whatever steps are
necessary to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other
country, and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western
Hemisphere. I am so informing Soviet Chairman Khrushchev and

President Dorticos of Cuba by separate messages already dispatched.

Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and powerful nation. We had no wish to be diverted from our central efforts by mere irritants and fanatics. But further action is now required and underway; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our hands -- but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and that of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

1) First: to halt this offensive build-up, there is to be initiated a blockade on all military equipment under shipment to Cuba. Such a blockade can clearly be authorized both by the requirements of U. S. self-defense and by the Organ of Consultation of the Organization of American States, acting under Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty and this year's Punta del Este Resolution. All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found to contain cargoes of weapons, be turned back. Such a blockade will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. In short, it will not only prevent completion

of the current offensive build-up on Cuba. It will also require the Soviet Union to choose between fighting the U. S. Navy in American waters or abandoning its build-up on Cuba. And it will require Cuba to choose between pursuing the interests of her own people or subjecting them to great dangers in the interests of a distant power.

2) Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of the OAS in their communique of October 6 rejected secrecy on such matters in this Hemisphere. Should offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, appropriate action will be undertaken at a time and in a manner of our own determination. I have directed the armed forces to prepare for such eventualities, ~~including the targeting of these bases by our strategic forces~~; and I trust that both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at these sites will recognize ~~in time~~ our inability to tolerate this threat.

3) Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

4) Fourth: We shall urge the UN and the OAS to demand removal of these offensive weapons, and the prompt dispatch of an international inspection team to make certain that this is done.

5) Fifth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced

our base at Guantanamo, evacuated the dependents of our personnel there
and ordered additional military units to stand by on an alert basis.

6) Sixth: Our allies in both NATO and the OAS have been alerted;
the call for the OAS meeting to which I referred has already gone out; our
case against this serious threat to peace will be presented, as required
by the Charter, to which we subscribe, to an emergency meeting of the UN
Security Council; and we shall, in addition, convene immediately a meeting
of countries in the Caribbean area to work out cooperative means of halting
the clandestine movement of subversive agents and materials between
Cuba and Latin America.

7) Seventh: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate
this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to
stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to
abandon this course of world domination, and to join with me and others
in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the
history of man. By his action last week the world has moved a step
closer to the brink of that dark and awful abyss of destruction. It is time
for both sides to step back from that brink -- to refrain from any action
which will widen or deepen the present crisis -- and to resume the search
for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This nation is prepared to present its case against this threat to
peace and our own proposals for a peaceful world at any time, in any forum,
to any figure -- in the OAS, in the United Nations, and to Chairman Khrushchev

in person. We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread

of nuclear weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and

overseas bases in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are

prepared to discuss new proposals for the removal of tensions on both

sides -- including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free

to determine its own destiny. We have only recently supported the

announcement by the Iranian Government that it would not permit the

establishment of foreign missile bases upon its territory. We have no

wish to war with the Soviet Union; for we are a peaceful people who desire

to live in peace with all other peoples.

But we cannot settle these problems under threats -- negotiation

yes, intimidation never. That is why this latest Soviet threat -- or any

other threat which is made either independently or in response to our

blockade -- must and will be met with determination. And that is why,

should any talks develop, our forces all over the world will be alert --

and the blockade will remain. Any Soviet show of force anywhere in the

world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed --

including the brave people of West Berlin -- will be met by whatever action

is needed; and we are ready, if tensions are increased over Berlin, to

send additional ground and air forces to Europe.

8) _Finally_, I have directed the United States Information Agency to

use all available resources in making clear our position to the captive

people of Cuba. My words tonight are being carried directly to them --
and I want to tell them this. Do not permit yourselves to become involved
in the grim confrontation of nuclear weapons. Do not become the first
Latin American country to have these weapons on your soil. Do not
become the first Latin American country to be a necessary target for
massive destruction. These weapons cannot contribute to the security of
Cuba; they can only undermine it. They can contribute nothing to your
peace and well being.

This nation has no quarrel with the Cuban people, only sympathy
and hope. We know you did not consent to the transformation of your island
into a target for nuclear war. We know your lives and land are being used
as pawns by those who deny you freedom. We have no wish to cause you
to suffer or to impose any system upon you.

Our objective, on the contrary, is to give back to the Cuban people
the dream of their own revolution -- the dream of "liberty and justice
for all" which Fidel Castro repudiated when he sold you out to the Soviets.
Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw out tyrants --
foreign and domestic -- who destroyed their liberty. And I have no doubt
that the vast majority of Cubans today looks forward to the time when
they will once again be free -- free to choose their own leaders, free to
select their own system, free to own their own land, to speak and write
and worship without fear or degradation. And when foreign domination is

ended, and the use of Cuba as a base of subversion and aggression has ceased, we shall gladly welcome her back to the society of free nations and to the associations of this Hemisphere. For the basic objective of the United States in the world today is peace and freedom -- and that includes the peace and freedom of the Cuban people.

*   *   *

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which both our will and our patience will be tested by those who would have us do more and those who would have us do less. But the path we have chosen for the present is consistent with our character and courage as a nation, and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high -- but Americans have always paid it. One path we shall never choose -- the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right -- not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this Hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.

APPENDIX III

DRAFT FOUR (A)

NOTE: While final details remain to be settled concerning the text
of the President's address to the Nation, its substance will
finally reflect the following draft.

TCS - 4th Draft
10/21/62

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest

surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba. Within

the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series

of offensive ~~nuclear~~ missile sites is now in preparation on that ~~island~~ *IMPRISONED*

The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike
capability against the Western Hemisphere.

~~When these were received~~ I directed that our surveillance be stepped up.

And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence

and our ~~determination upon~~ *decision on* a course of action, this Government feels

obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail.

The characteristics of these new missile sites indicates two distinct types of
installations.

Missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more

than 1000 nautical miles. Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking

Washington, D. C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City,

or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, in Central

America or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for

Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles -- capable of travelling more than

twice as far and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the

Western Hemisphere, ranging as far north as Hudson's Bay, Canada and

as far south as Lima, Peru. In addition, ~~////////////~~ jet bombers,
capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated and assembled
on Cuba, while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent tranformation of Cuba into an important strategic
base -- by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive
weapons of sudden mass destruction -- constitutes an explicit threat to
the peace and security of all the Americas, in flagrant and deliberate defiance
of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and Hemisphere, the
Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations,
and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This
action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both
publicly and privately delivered, that the arms build-up in Cuba would
retain its original defensive character, and that the Soviet Union had no
need or desire to station strategic missiles on the territory of any other
nation.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it had been planned
some months ago. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the
distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and
the existence of defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government
publicly stated on September 11 that "the armaments and military equipment
sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes", that "there is no
need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons . . . for a retaliatory blow
to any other country, for instance Cuba", and that "the Soviet Union has

so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need

to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union."

That statment ~~was sold to~~ was ~~wholly~~ false.

Only last Thursday, as evidence of this rapid offensive build-up

was ALREADY in my hand, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office

that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said his Government

had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose

of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba", that "training by

Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments

was by no means offensive", and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet

Government would never become involved in rendering such assistance."

That statement also was ~~dishonest and dishonorable.~~ FALSE.

Neither the United States of American nor the world community

of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part

of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world where only the

actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's

security to constitute a ~~breach of Article 51 of the UN Charter~~ MAXIMUM PERIL. Nuclear

weapons are so destructive, and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any

substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in

their deployment ~~will~~ MAY WELL be regarded as a definite threat to the peace.

For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States --

recognizing this fact -- have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with

great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which ensured that

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these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge. Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory of any other nation under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history -- unlike that of the Soviets since World War II -- demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people. Nevertheless, American citizens have become adjusted to living daily on the bull's eye of Soviet missiles located inside the USSR or in submarines. In that sense, missiles in Cuba add to an already clear and present danger -- although, it should be noted, the nations of Latin America have never previously been subjected to a potential nuclear threat.

But this secret, swift and extraordinary build-up of communist missiles -- in an area well-known to have a special and historical relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere -- in violation of Soviet assurances, ~~in suddenly stationing strategic weapons~~ ~~for the first time outside of Soviet soil~~ in defiance of American and -- this sudden, clandestine decision to station strategic weapons for the first time outside of Soviet soil -- change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our

unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these

missiles against this or any other country, and to secure their

withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.

which leads a world-wide alliance, ~~A WORLD-WIDE ALLIANCE.~~

peaceful and powerful nation. We ~~were~~ ^have been determined not to be diverted

from our central concerns by mere irritants and fanatics. But further

action is ~~now~~ ^now required -- and it is underway; and these actions may only

be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the

costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would

be ashes in our mouth -- but ~~let every nation know, be it friend or foe,~~
NEITHER WILL

~~that~~ we ~~without~~ shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and that

of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to

me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress, I

have directed that the following <u>initial</u> steps be taken immediately:

1) First: to halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all
INITIATED.
offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being ~~initiated.~~
~~OF ANY KIND~~
All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found

to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine

will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not

at this time, however, denying ~~access or~~ the necessities of life as the Soviets

attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

2) Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of the OAS in their communique of October 6 rejected secrecy on such matters in this Hemisphere. Should offensive military ~~preparations~~ *their capabilities* continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, further action will be ~~undertaken~~ *JUSTIFIED*. I have directed the armed forces to prepare for any eventualities; and I trust that, in the interest of both the Cuban people and ~~the Soviet technicians at these sites~~ the hazards to all concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized. ~~be recognized.~~

3) Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

4) Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated *TODAY* the dependents of our personnel there and ordered additional military units to stand by on an alert basis.

5) Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements -- and the nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers. ~~world have also been alerted.~~

decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers.

6) Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations ~~~~~~~~~ ~~~~~~~~~~~ we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our Resolution will

prompt
call for the dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive ~~~~~~~~~~~~ weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of UN observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

7) Seventh and finally: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join ~~with me~~ ~~and others~~ in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from

RETURNING TO   own
the abyss of destruction -- by ~~regaining~~ his government's words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba -- by refraining from any action which will widen

by PARTICIPATING IN A
or deepen the present crisis -- and then ~~resuming our~~ search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This nation is prepared to present its case against this Soviet threat to peace, and our own proposals for a peaceful world, at any time and in any forum -- in the OAS, in the United Nations, or in any other ~~appropriate~~

-- WITHOUT LIMITING OUR
FREEDOM
OF
ACTION.
~~place. We have never shied away from any~~ meeting that could be useful. We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear

weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and ~~overseas~~ MILITARY bases in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are prepared to discuss new poposals for the removal of tensions on both sides -- including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own destiny. We have no wish to war with the Soviet Union, for we are a peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples.

But it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in an atmosphere of intimidation. That is why this latest Soviet threat -- or any other threat which is made either independently or in response to our actions this week -- must and will be met with determination. Any hostile ~~action~~ MOVE anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed -- including IN PARTICULAR the brave people of West Berlin -- will be met by whatever action is needed.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba, to whom this speech is being directly carried by ~~every available medium.~~ SPECIAL RADIO FACILITIES. I speak to you as a friend, ~~as an admirer of your dedication to freedom and justice,~~ as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland, ~~Along with my fellow Americans,~~ AS ONE WHO ~~I have~~ shared the ~~great hopes~~ YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR of your ~~nationalist revolution promising~~ liberty and justice for all. And I have watched with deep sorrow how ~~the ideals of that~~ YOUR NATIONALIST revolution ~~were~~ HAS betrayed -- and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are no longer Cuban leaders ~~inspired by the great principles of your nationalist revolution.~~ INSPIRED BY CUBAN IDEALS. They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which

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has turned Cuba against your friends and neighbors in the Americas --
and turned it into
the first Latin American country to become a target for nuclear war --
the first Latin American country to have these weapons on its soil.

These new weapons are not in your interest. They contribute
nothing to your peace and well-being. They can only undermine it.
But this country has no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any
system upon you. We know your lives and land are being used as pawns
by those who deny you freedom. ~~And there by those who give Cuba
the weapons only sympathize~~

Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw
out tyrants who destroyed their liberty. And I have no doubt that most
Cubans today look forward to the time when they will be truly free -- free
from foreign domination, free to choose their own leaders, free to
select their own system, free to own their own land, free to speak and
write and worship without fear or degradation. And then shall Cuba be
welcomed back to the society of free nations and to the associations of
this Hemisphere.

(More)

APPENDIX IV

DRAFT FOUR (B)

*   *   *

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which both our will and our patience will be tested ~~by those who would have us do more and those who would have us do less~~ -- months in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our danger. But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing, ~~-- to be paralyzed by fear -- to go back on our word.~~

(full of hazards, as all paths are)

The path we have chosen for the present is ~~not perfect, as no path is --~~ but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high -- but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose is the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right -- not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this Hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.

*   *   *

APPENDIX IV

DRAFT FOUR (B)

10/21/62

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest

surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba. Within

the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series

of offensive nuclear missile sites is now in preparation on that ~~unhappy~~ *imprisoned*

The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability

island. Upon receiving the first preliminary *hard* information of this nature last *against the Western Hemisphere*

Tuesday morning at 9 a. m. -- ~~the first reliable information of this nature~~

~~we had ever received~~ -- I directed that our surveillance be stepped up.

And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence

decision on

and our ~~determination upon~~ a course of action, this Government feels

obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail.

The characteristics of these new missile sites indicates two distinct types

include

of installations. Several of the ~~now installations are for~~ *M* Medium Range Ballistic

Missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more

than 1000 nautical miles. Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking

Washington, D. C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City,

or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, in Central

America or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for

Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles -- capable of travelling more than

twice as far/and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the

Western Hemisphere, ranging as far north as Hudson's Bay, Canada and

as far south as Lima, Peru. In addition, ~~mediumxxxange~~ jet bombers,
capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated and assembled
on Cuba, while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent tranformation of Cuba into an important strategic
base -- by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive
weapons of sudden mass destruction -- constitutes an explicit threat to
the peace and security of all the Americas, in flagrant and deliberate defiance
of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and Hemisphere, the
Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations,
and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This
action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both
publicly and privately delivered, that the arms build-up in Cuba would
retain its original defensive character, and that the Soviet Union had no
need or desire to station strategic missiles on the territory of any other
nation.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it had been planned
some months ago. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the
distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and
the existence of defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government
publicly stated on September 11 that "the armaments and military equipment
sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes", that "there is no
need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons . . . for a retaliatory blow
to any other country, for instance Cuba", and that "the Soviet Union has

so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need

to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union."

That statment, ~~I regret to say,~~ was ~~patently~~ false.

Only last Thursday, as evidence of this rapid offensive build-up
was /in my hand, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office
already

that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said his Government

had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose

of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba", that "training by

Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments

was by no means offensive", and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet

Government would never become involved in rendering such assistance."

false.
That statement also was ~~dishonest and dishonorable~~

Neither the United States of American nor the world community

of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part

of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world where only the

actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's

maximum peril.
security to constitute a ~~breach of Article 51 of the UN Charter.~~ Nuclear

weapons are so destructive, and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any

substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in

may well
their deployment/~~will~~ be regarded as a definite threat to the peace.

For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States --

recognizing this fact -- have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with

great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which ensured that

these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge.

Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory

of any other nation under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history --

unlike that of the Soviets since World War II -- demonstrates that we

have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our

system upon its people. Nevertheless, American citizens have become

adjusted to living daily on the bull's eye of Soviet missiles located inside

the USSR or in submarines. In that sense, missiles in Cuba add to an

already clear and present danger -- although, it should be noted, the

nations of Latin America have never previously been subjected to a

potential nuclear threat.

But this secret, swift and extraordinary build-up of communist

missiles -- in an area well-known to have a special and historical

relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere, --

in violation of Soviet assurances, ~~in suddenly stationing strategic weapons~~

~~for the first time outside of Soviet soil~~ and in defiance of American and

this sudden, clandestine decision to station strategic weapons for the first time outside of
Hemispheric policy -- is a deliberately provocative and unjustified Soviet soil -

change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our

courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend

or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if

allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war.

This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our

unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country, and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.

Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and powerful nation. We ~~xxxx~~ determined not to be diverted from our central concerns by mere irritants and fanatics. But further action is ~~now~~ required -- and it is underway; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth -- but ~~let every nation know what we mean and what we mean to do that we will not~~ shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

which leads a world-wide alliance. have been

now

neither will we

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and that of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

1) First; to halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying ~~xxxxxxx~~ the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berline blockade of 1948.

of any kind

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2) Second: I have directed the continued and increased close

surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of

the OAS in their communique of October 6 rejected secrecy on such

matters in this Hemisphere. Should/offensive military ~~preparations~~ these ~~capabilities~~ Preparation

continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, further action will

be ~~undertaken~~. justified. I have directed the armed forces to prepare for any

eventualities; and I trust that, in the interest of both the Cuban people and

the Soviet technicians at these sites, ~~our inability to tolerate this threat will~~ the hazards to all concerned of continuing

this threat will be recognized.

~~be recognized.~~

3) Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any

nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western

Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring

a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

4) Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced

our base at Guantanamo, evacuated/the dependents of our personnel there today

and ordered additional military units to stand byoon an alert basis.

5) Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the

Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider

this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke Articles 6 and 8 of theRio

Treaty in support of all necessary action. Our other allies around the

world have also been alerted.

The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements -- and the
nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of
outside powers.

6) <u>Sixth</u>: Under the Charter of the United Nations, ~~xxxaxxkxxx~~ ~~xikxxxixxxixxxixxkxxkxxkxxxixxx~~ we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our Resolution will

prompt
call for the/dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive ~~Soviet bases and~~ weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of UN observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

7) <u>Seventh and finally</u>: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join ~~with me and~~ ~~and others~~ in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from

returning to   own
the abyss of destruction -- by/~~recalling~~ his government's/words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba -- by refraining from any action which will widen

by participat~~ing in a~~ing in a
or deepen the present crisis -- and then/~~resuming our~~/search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This nation is prepared to present its case against this Soviet threat to peace, and our own proposals for a peaceful world, at any time and in any forum -- in the OAS, in the United Nations, or in any other ~~appropriate~~

~~placex xx We have never shied away from any~~ meeting that could be useful.
without limiting our freedom of action.
We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear

weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and ~~overseas~~ military bases

in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are prepared to discuss

new proposals for the removal of tensions on both sides -- including the

possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own

destiny. We have no wish to war with the Soviet Union/ for we are a

peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples.

But it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in an

atmosphere of intimidation. That is why this latest Soviet threat -- or any

other threat which is made either independently or in response to our

actions this week -- must and will be met with determination. Any hostile

~~action~~ move anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples

to whom we are committed -- including/ in particular the brave people of West Berlin --

will be met by whatever action is needed.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba,

to whom this speech is being directly carried by ~~special radio facilities~~ special radio facilities.

I speak to you as a friend, ~~as an admirer of your dedication to freedom~~

~~and justice,~~ as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland,

as one who shares your aspirations for liberty and justice for all.

~~Along with my fellow Americans, I have shared the great hopes of your~~

~~nationalist revolution promising liberty and justice for all.~~ And I have

watched with deep sorrow how ~~the ideals of that~~ your nationalist revolution ~~were~~ was betrayed --

and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are

no longer Cuban leaders ~~xx~~ inspired by ~~the great principles of your nationalist~~ Cuban ideals.

~~revolution. xx~~ They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which

has turned Cuba against your friends and neighbors in the Americas --

AND TURNED IT INTO

the first Latin American country to become a target for nuclear war --

the first Latin American country to have these weapons on its soil.

These new weapons are not in your interest. They contribute

nothing to your peace and well-being. They can only undermine it.

But this country has no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any

system upon you. We know your lives and land are being used as pawns

by those who deny you freedom. And that is why we have no quarrel with

the people of Cuba, only sympathy and hope.

Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw

out tyrants who destroyed their liberty. And I have no doubt that most

Cubans today look forward to the time when they will be truly free -- free

from foreign domination, free to choose their own leaders, free to

select their own system, free to own their own land, free to speak and

write and worship without fear or degradation. And then shall Cuba be

welcomed back to the society of free nations and to the associations of

this Hemisphere.

(More)

* * *

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult

and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee

precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be

incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead --

-- months in which both our will and our patience will be tested/~~by those who~~

~~would have us do more and those who would have us do less~~ months

in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our danger.

But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing. ~~It is to be paralyzed by~~

~~fear and to go back on our word.~~

full of hazards, as all paths

The path we have chosen for the present is ~~not perfect as no path~~

are

~~is~~ -- but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as

a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom

is always high -- but Americans have always paid it. And one path we

shall never choose is the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right --

not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in

this Hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal

will be achieved.

* * *

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VITA

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Bachelor of Arts, Communication Studies, 2004
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Conference Papers:
Emmers-Sommer, Tara M., Jenny Farrell, Ashlyn Gentry, Shannon Stevens, Justin
Eckstein, Joseph Battocletti, and Carly Gardener. "First date sexual expectations,
sexual- and gender-related attitudes: the Effects of who asked, who paid, date
location, and gender." Top Four Paper presented at the Western Speech
Communication Association Conference, Mesa, AZ., February 13-17, 2009.

Emmers-Sommer, Tara M., Jenny Farrell, Ashlyn Gentry, Shannon Stevens, Justin
Eckstein, Joseph Battocletti, and Carly Gardener. "First date sexual expectations,
sexual- and gender-related attitudes: the Effects of who asked, who paid, date
location, and gender." Paper presented at the 2009 University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Graduate and Professional Students Association Research Forum, Las Vegas, NV.,
March 28, 2009.

Gentry, Ashlyn. "The Cuban Missile Crisis Speech: Presidential Speechwriting,
Groupthink, and Strategic Language Use in the JFK White House." Paper presented
at the National Communications Association Pre-convention Seminar, "Deliberative
Democracy & Communication Studies: Building Networks of Research, Pedagogy
and Institutional Support," San Diego, CA., November 20, 2008.

Gentry, Ashlyn. "The Cuban Missile Crisis Speech: An Analysis of Text Evolution."
Paper presented at the 2009 University of Nevada, Las Vegas Graduate and
Professional Students Association Research Forum, Las Vegas, NV., March 28, 2009.

Gentry, Ashlyn. "Political Discourse: Traces of Narrative, Moral Barrier, and
Presidential Address in Barack Obama's 'A More Perfect Union.'" Paper presented
at the Western Speech Communication Association Conference, Mesa, AZ., February
13-17, 2009.

Special Honors and Awards:
Graduate Teaching Assistantship at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Competitively
selected for 1 year assistantship for August 2008-May 2009. Tuition waiver and
$1,110 monthly stipend.

Dean's Associates Grant $250, Spring 2009.

Communication Studies Travel Grant $300, Spring 2009.

Graduate Teaching Assistantship at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Competitively selected for 1 semester assistantship for January 2008-May 2008. Tuition waiver and $1,250 monthly stipend.

Dean's Associates Grant $350, Fall 2008.

Communication Studies Travel Grant $300, Fall 2008.

Graduate and Professional Student Association Travel Grant $300, Fall 2008.

Graduate Teaching Assistantship at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Competitively selected for 1 semester assistantship for August 2007-December 2007. Tuition waiver and $1,250 monthly stipend.

Tom Weisner Academic Excellence Scholarship, awarded Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 for $1,200.

Excellence in Leadership Scholarship, awarded Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 for $500.

Head Start Scholarship, awarded Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 for $500.

Governor Kenny Guinn Millennium Scholarship, awarded Fall 2006 through Spring 2007 for $10,000.

National Communications Association member.

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Speech: An Analysis of Text Evolution

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