Edwin M. Martin Oral History Interview – JFK#2, 05/19/1964
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note
Edwin M. Martin (1908-2002) was the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs from 1960 to 1962 and the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs from 1962-1964. This interview focuses on foreign policy concerning Latin America during the Kennedy administration, particularly the Cuban Missile Crisis and John F. Kennedy's meetings with Latin American leaders, among other topics.

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Second Oral History Interview

With

EDWIN M. MARTIN

By Leigh Miller

May 20, 1964

MILLER: Ambassador Martin, I think today we might start with the Mexican trip of the President in 1962. I believe the first sessions that you had with the President concerning this trip or with its arrangements were in the latter part of June 1962. Is that correct?

MARTIN: My recollection is that the first contact was on the 22nd of June when the President called to say he was somewhat concerned about possible security problems in connection with the visit, and that he wished me to call together in the next two or three days the representatives of various agencies which had been working on this question and develop a recommendation to him as to whether or not he should make the trip. He asked that the Attorney General be included in the group. I arranged such a meeting at the Attorney General's convenience and we met in the ARA Conference Room at, I think, 5 o'clock Sunday afternoon. It was the unanimous consensus that the Mexicans had been cooperating and that security arrangements were well in hand although there were a few small points to be followed up on. It was felt that the President could make the trip and that all possible precautions would be in hand with respect to his security, although these could never, of course, deal with the problem of an isolated, individual, attack.

MILLER: Did the President indicate the reason for his concern in his telephone conversation with you on Friday?

MARTIN: I don't recall that he mentioned anything specifically. There had been some Intelligence Reports of Communist activities designed to buildup anti-American, anti-Kennedy sentiment during the visit. I think it is of note that when the visit did take place the public outpouring of enthusiasm was unprecedented in Mexican history and there were not only no incidents but I don't know that any of us saw any signs, even on walls, or any placards, any demonstrations of any kind that would be called hostile. Certainly, I didn't. In fact the crowds were so enormous that the line of the parade from the airport was crowded with people considerably further than the Mexicans had anticipated. Toward the end they ran out of troops and senior boy scouts and what not to line the parade march. In the last stages we were driving through crowds that barely left room for a car to go through with no police protection.

MILLER: It would be your general impression then that the President's concern about security matters arose from Intelligence Reports rather than a personal concern?

MARTIN: That's correct. As far as the talks themselves went, they were conducted on a very limited basis with the President of Mexico [Adolfo Lopez Mateos], his Foreign Minister, and the Ambassador to the United States on the one hand; President Kennedy, Ambassador Mann (Ambassador to Mexico) and myself on the other, with Ambassador Mann and the Mexican Ambassador to the United States serving as translators. All the sessions were just these six people, with one exception. It was Saturday morning when we were trying to persuade the Mexicans that it was not possible to take action with respect to the salinity problem arising out of the Wellton-Mohawk irrigation project of a definitive nature within the immediate future, that Senator Mansfield [Michael J. Mansfield], who was a member of the delegation, was brought into the room to explain the difficulties from the standpoint of the Senate in dealing with this problem prior to the November election when Senator Hayden [Carl T. Hayden], who was from a state directly involved, was up for re-election. He had a powerful position in the committee structure and would strongly oppose remedial action before his election. So until his election was out of the way, we were handicapped, the implication being that when the election was out of the way then it would be easier for the administration to seek the necessary legislative authority and appropriations to deal with this problem.

The discussions were devoted primarily to the three issues of the Cuba Communist problem, the salinity question, and the Chamizal Boundary dispute. While the sessions between the two Presidents were quite cordial--I think they reacted very well to each other, and, of course, there was great enthusiasm for Mrs. Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] and the speech in Spanish which she made at the luncheon given by the President, we did have some difficulties with the Foreign Minister in drafting a communiqué that would be acceptable in the framework of our legislative situation. In a session that lasted until well after midnight between Ambassador Mann and myself and the Mexican Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Washington, the Foreign Minister tried to put into the communiqué concessions by us to which President Kennedy had not and could not agree, rather than reflecting only the discussions of the two Presidents. I finally closed the discussion, saying it was late and we were all wasting our time as we could not

amend but only reflect the agreements of the Presidents. The next morning the matter was resolved in the Presidential meeting to our satisfaction, largely I am sure due to the intervention with the Mexican President of Ambassador Carrillo Flores. An agreement was reached more easily I think due to the fact that President Kennedy, while expressing clearly his difficulties and the problems that he would have to surmount, also confessed quite frankly that in his judgment it was probable that the Wellton-Mohawk irrigation project which had caused the problem should never have been under taken by the United States. This frankness with President Lopez Mateos was obviously well received, although he realized that we couldn't back track on it at this point. When the two main topics of salinity and Chamizal had been taken care of the President then turned to Lopez Mateos in the Saturday morning session and said, "Now aren't there some things that you can suggest we talk about in which Mexico has been in the wrong?" This was also very well received and they did raise several points, not major in substance, but long-standing claims questions that we have had against Mexico and indicated willingness to try to work out settlements to them as the settlement of the other two major issues, at least as far as Mexico was concerned, progressed. It was a generous statement that did yield some results.

MILLER: On the Chamizal problem, was it President Kennedy's view that this also should never have happened?

MARTIN: Yes, he also made it quite clear that the U.S. in refusing to accept the arbitration award of about 1913, or something like that, had clearly been in the wrong, and that a great deal had happened since then. Interests had been built up and this meant that we could not just abandon the whole situation or even go back to that award, both because of what had happened as a result of passage of time and also because as a matter of fact it was physically difficult to determine what the award actually meant. It referred to a channel of the river at a period in time, I believe in the 1860s, for which there were no existent maps and one had to make guesses. Hence even though it was recognized that we had been mistaken and it was highly desirable to get back to a position of being able to arbitrate issues by our having settled this problem on which we did not accept the arbitral award, we did have political problems and interest which had built up which made it necessary to negotiate a compromise solution.

MILLER: What was your impression as to the factors that went into the Chamizal matter in the making up of President Kennedy's mind that we should have accepted the 1913 arbitration award? Was this the considered position of all the departments of the United States government that was proposed to the President? Do you recall?

MARTIN: I don't know that there was any very wide interdepartmental discussion of this question. I think it was pretty much the State Department and the Boundary Commission that were involved in finding a mutually acceptable solution. There were, of course, the interests of the city of El Paso, and the state of Texas, and the congressional delegations, and we in the department and Ambassador

Mann had been working very closely with them, and also keeping the Boundary Commission people informed about our talks. I am not sure all of these interests would have accepted this statement on the 1913 award but I think that as far as the Department of State was concerned and the legal people here, this was a considered judgment that the U.S. had made in 1913 a mistake, probably of law and certainly of politics. I suspect that President Kennedy was making a general judgment that countries that agree to arbitration should accept awards made, particularly bigger countries.

MILLER: You spoke at a previous session about concern over the Panama Canal as a sort of guilt complex of the President. Did you feel that there was one here?

MARTIN: I think this was another manifestation of a sense of U.S. history and a desire to redress mistakes made at a period when we had taken perhaps a somewhat immature ultra-nationalistic approach to our international relations.

MILLER: Moving over to the first topic that you mentioned, the Cuban and Castro [Fidel Castro] Communist difficulties, what position did the President take in his discussion with Lopez Mateos?

MARTIN: Well, as I recall it, he was trying to emphasize the importance of it to many of the other smaller, less strong, countries of Latin America, and invite the president of Mexico to understand and join with us in taking measures to restrain the capacity of Castro to intervene in other Latin American areas, having in mind, in particular, the use of Mexico as a transit point for people traveling back and forth and for propaganda and other matters. The reaction of the Mexican President was to agree that it was no threat to Mexico, didn't worry them a bit, that perhaps there were some problems in countries in South and Central America, but that in general their view was that the way to correct them was largely through increased aid and assistance in building up the strength of the democratic system rather than purely negative repressive measures. There was also, I think, some tendency to feel that the Cuban strength was derived from the Soviet Union and its support and the United States was the only country to deal with the Soviet Union; Mexico could not. Therefore, he was only willing to take a rather limited commitment to try to do something if something could be shown that would have an important practical effect in assisting the countries of Central America or in restraining Castro. Many of the measures which had been suggested at other times and places I think the president of Mexico thought were gestures and would not, in effect, weaken Castro or cause his down fall. And he was unwilling to undertake gestures in view of certain political problems he had at home. And I think he rather made it clear that there might be some things he could do if they would have a helpful effect although he wouldn't want to talk about them too much. There was no concrete result of the President's plan....

MILLER: The President didn't make any specific...?

MARTIN: No, I don't recall that there were any specific measures we asked for. There were a number of dangers pointed out; expressions of the need to find means to deal with these dangers, but I don't believe there were any specific proposals submitted.

MILLER: Did the President reply to the statement by Lopez Mateos and the Mexicans generally about the Soviet power in Cuba, that you recall?

MARTIN: I don't recall a response to this particular point, but the emphasis was on the need to keep Castro from disturbing the Hemisphere while the larger problem of Soviet support for Castro was being worked on, recognizing that it had to be dealt within terms of a complex and difficult global situation. The job was to try to restrain meanwhile Castro's effective strength and ability to operate against his neighbors. This was the general context of the discussion.

MILLER: Did the President mention or have any views in these talks about the Bay of Pigs episode?

MARTIN: No. I don't recall any comments on this specifically.

MILLER: Did the President respond, as you recall, to the very warm reception that he received from the Mexicans?

MARTIN: Yes, I think so. I think it was a thing that impressed him enormously. The warmth of his speeches and greetings, and so forth, reflected how this affected him. I should add one other small incident. The only time the President had a security problem, and that was a fairly incidental one, was when he went out to the annual picnic that was held on, I believe, a Saturday afternoon by the American Society in Mexico City. It's sort of their Fourth of July celebration--out at Suburban Park--and he (the President) made a little speech from the grandstand. Immediately beneath him were a group of children, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and behind them a fairly large audience of several thousand people. After his speech he got out of the grandstand and went down to shake hands with some children, and the children and the adults behind them immediately crowded in trying to take pictures, to get close to him, and despite the urgent appeal of the president of the American Society through microphones to "Stand Back," to "Stand Still" and to "Stay Away from the President," he was very quickly mobbed and additional Secret Service men had to rush in and get him out. But this was the only time when he was put under heavy pressure and the Secret Service men had to go into operation that I am aware of.

There is one other purely personal incident: At the luncheon which he gave, a Harvard-Radcliffe orchestra group, which was touring Mexico as a summer project in buses, on their own, had been asked to play the music. They were at the back of the dining room and it was a fairly noisy affair--lots of people talking--and they were playing rather erudite chamber music, and when I passed a note up to the President to say, "Do you realize that this is the Harvard-Radcliffe group that's playing for you back there? I

don't know whether anybody bothered to tell you." He wrote on it, "I'm glad to know about it, but I can't hear a note" and sent the little note back.

MILLER: In terms of his personal relationship with Lopez Mateos, did all conversations take place in English, or was it all translated?

MARTIN: All had to be translated. Lopez Mateos does not have English.

MILLER: Even with this hindrance, did the President seem to develop a personal relationship with Mateos?

MARTIN: Yes, I think that he did. I did get that impression definitely.

MILLER: The President returned about the 1st of July, I believe, to the United States. On his return did he seem to feel that he had accomplished anything by this trip?

MARTIN: I think he felt that he had established a personal relationship; had had a good, frank talk about some of the larger global issues of communism and the Cuban aspect of it; and also had made some real progress toward getting negotiations under way at least on these two very thorny issues: Chamizal and the salinity problem. This was gratifying to him and made him think that it was successful. I also think that the outpouring of the public every place he turned, particularly the parade in from the airport--but this was true every place he went--impressed him that we had good friends in Mexico that we could count on, that would be an influence in terms of policy for the future, and that the much vaunted anti-American feeling in Mexico did not really represent the feelings of the people but was rather an intellectual attitude of a group of rather specialized character and something that was more superficial than real. I may say one other point that Lopez Mateos made that in a sense reflected this, and I think was reassuring to him, was in the discussion about the world policy situation. He made a categorical statement that if the U.S. ever got into trouble in its relations with the Soviet Union, we could count on Mexico absolutely to protect our rear. We had no need to concern ourselves with that. I may say that in this general connection, it is relevant because it was an outcome of his visit, that at a dinner party last night I was talking with the Mexican Ambassador and Ambassador Mann after dinner, and the Mexican Ambassador said that he never thought he would see the day when U.S. relations with Mexico would be better than U.S. relations with Canada; that he felt that that day had now come. There is one other question that perhaps I should mention.

Coming in from the meeting with the Americans, at the picnic, riding in the open car, I happened to be with the President and Ambassador Carrillo Flores--Senator Mansfield had to go off a little early--and we were discussing something, and the religious question came up. The President asked Ambassador Carrillo Flores why it was.... I guess it was the question of whether he should appear at the Cathedral, which was quite a subject of debate before the trip, whether he should attend the mass, because public officials in Mexico are all assumed to be non-Catholics and not participate in

religious activities--there are very strong anti-clerical feelings--it was finally decided that he could, and he did, and it went very well, but he asked the ambassador why it was that the Mexicans had this feeling about the Church--it was something that was hard for him to understand. And the Ambassador went into a little historical discussion of the role that the Church had played at the time of the Mexican independence in siding with the Spanish Monarchy and subsequently the very large political and economic role with very large landowners that they had played; the repressive and conservative character which had led Mexicans to feel that their progress depended upon depriving the Church of the power which it had previously had and this had been built into a pattern of political life that still existed. But this was obviously a question which puzzled and concerned the President.

MILLER: Did the President respond at all or did he...?

MARTIN: No he just listened.

MILLER: Do you have the impression from this and the other discussions that we have had about the meetings of the President with Latin Americans figures, that the President had a feeling that he was specifically accomplishing things by diplomatic triumphs, by his meetings or his visits; or, did the President take a view of his activities more, as you suggested earlier, as initiating discussions on problems, getting things going, without attempting to make personal coups or triumphs?

MARTIN: I think it was more initiating discussions to get something moved along. But perhaps even more than that, starting with the Colombia-Venezuela trip, conscious or unconsciously, it seemed to me that one of the justifications of which he must have been keenly aware was that the demonstration of sentiment for him and through him for the U.S. gave heart and courage to pro-U.S. political figures who had tended, because of the preponderance of anti-U.S. sentiment and anti-Western sentiment among the more literate and vocal parts of the community, to be extremely nervous about coming out for us. When such a person saw millions of people on the streets of Mexico City cheering like mad for the President he, like any astute politician, would take another look. And I think that both in terms of political developments in Latin America and political attitudes there, the President thought that his visits and his personality did a great deal to strengthen the forces of the free world. And I think the same was true, in a different way, with his contacts with the individuals concerned, they were proud to be associated with the President of the biggest and the most powerful country in the world and one who was so popular at home, here and in their countries. After the visits they might be expected to feel a greater degree of consideration for his views on questions that might arise in the future. They were also open to personal appeals by him in a way which they might not otherwise have been. This doesn't mean that on basic issues they would lie down and roll over or anything like that, but there was a basic rapport that represented a great improvement. My own view is that this was a considerable factor in the rather remarkable unanimity that we got overnight from the Latin American countries at the time of the Cuba missile crisis. There had been created a reservoir of good will and good

feeling of pro-U.S. and pro-Kennedy feeling, as shown in Latin America during his trips, which paid off at that at that time.

MILLER: After the Mexican trip, the next episode at which you had to meet the President probably involved the Peruvian coup, although the President's calendar lists an AID meeting in early July which may have dealt with Dominican sugar, as nearly as I can guess. And on the 6th of July 1962 there was a White House statement on the Dominican sugar readjustment fund.

MARTIN: The 6th of July I.... That was the 6th of June, I believe.

MILLER: No, I'm sorry. The early July meeting with Ted Moscoso.

MARTIN: That's correct.

MILLER: So your next one was on the 20th of July.

MARTIN: Yes. I think the Arosemena visit is probably the next event of any significance. There were some discussions of the Peruvian coup problem and our policy with respect to it, although I don't have a listing of any particular meetings that I know of which dealt with that subject, but we did have discussions and we did clear a statement of the U.S. position which he made on that occasion--I believe at a press conference. It may be that the 7/23 pre-press briefing has to do with that subject.

MILLER: I believe that was the case.

MARTIN: Although my records don't show....

MILLER: Or it may have been, however, the communiqué for the Ecuador....

MARTIN: Yes. I'm not quite clear which it was, but in any case he did make a statement deploring the action. He on at least two or three occasions subsequently expressed the view to me that that statement had been a mistake, and he was sorry that he had made it. I think he felt that in terms of flexibility for the future and in terms of a, I think, rather conservative attitude towards these developments plus a feeling that one had to work with the governments in power and that power was an important factor, he had got himself, as President, too far out in an exposed position in this regard. He very specifically expressed doubts whether that has been a wise thing to do. A number of us argued with him and said that we thought that it had had a good effect at that time in Peru and in Latin America. I know that people like Ambassador Stewart [Charles A. Stewart] of Venezuela thought it was one of the finest things that the President had ever done. It had an enormous effect on potential friends of the United States for him to take this clear position but the President always had

reservations about whether that was the right thing to do--whether he hadn't been hurried into it.

MILLER: The statement, as I recall, indicated that we were cutting off aid and relations with Peru. Did he differentiate between cutting off aid as being sufficient or that we should have kept up some kind of diplomatic relations?

MARTIN: I'm not sure that he ever addressed directly the question of what we should have done. We didn't have to cut off relations because when the government changed we had no relations but had to take a new action to resume them with the new military junta one. So it was rather a question of not resuming right away and of suspending aid until we had a government we could deal with. Primarily, it's something we had to take positive actions on after such a coup. I don't think he would have worried too much with our having delayed somewhat in taking these positive actions. I think that was not the issue. The issue was his making a public statement and taking a public stand and putting the prestige of the Presidency and of himself personally behind his statement. I think he felt that this was perhaps, all things considered, a somewhat rash move.

MILLER: In taking this position on Peru, and a position that caused recurring discussion in other situations, did he, as far you know, take into account congressional attitudes in taking this position or was it merely...?

MARTIN: At this point I don't recall that there were any particular congressional expressions at the time of the Peruvian incident. We were dealing with the Peruvian situation (1) after an Argentine one, (2) after the warnings to which I referred earlier so that it had become fairly well-known publicly that we were pretty actively opposing a coup. We were faced with the constant threat to Betancourt of a coup and the danger that this would spread around Latin America. We had also to consider the strong feelings against a military action of many of the Latin Americans whom we were trying to make our good friends particularly a military action directed against APRA, whose leaders had many friends in other parts of Latin America. Hence it was both its impact in Peru in trying to keep up the spirits of pro-Democratic people and weaken the strength of the military junta, as well as its impact on other military in Latin America and other pro-Democratic elements, that were prime factors in the decision to recommend that he make a statement, and his decision to do so.

MILLER: Do you know when the President made the decision to issue the statement?

MARTIN: Just before it was issued. This was done very quickly, to my recollection, very quickly. And it was right away. Perhaps it went to him just before the press conference he had that morning--in that short time-span.

MILLER: You don't recall being present at the White House at the time he made this decision?

MARTIN: I'm just not sure. I'm just not sure how this was handled. Normally, Under Secretary Ball went over to brief him for his press conference and he may have taken it over or the Secretary. I don't know that I was there or not. I don't think so. I may say there is one other point on the Peruvian business. Subsequently the President of Peru, President Prado [Manuel Prado Ugarteche], who was evicted and after a very short period, of time was allowed to leave the country. As the President during World War II, he had been a very close friend of the U.S. and very helpful. We learned late one morning from the press that he was coming through New York on his way to Paris, that he was going to be in New York at two or three o'clock that afternoon and we proposed that the President should send him a message of condolences and good luck. There was some difficulty in getting to him to get his okay or signature on the message, but we did manage to do so. I went over to the White House, talked to him about it and got his okay on the phone, and then flew up and personally handed the message from President Kennedy to President Prado on the plane. When he reached Paris he released it. It had a very good reaction also and was enormously appreciated by Prado personally. He was very much touched.

MILLER: This was during the period in which we had not yet reinstated relations or aid?

MARTIN: Oh yes, this was just a few days after the coup. We put a great deal of pressure on the military junta to announce new elections, to announce their willingness to maintain civil liberties and the free activity of political parties pending a new election at an early date and to agree that they would accept the results of that election. We also put a great deal of pressure on them to make this commitment to the OAS, not just to the U.S., not just to the public, but before the OAS Council. In the end they in fact did so.

MILLER: Did the President play any part that you can recall in the pressure for free elections or....

MARTIN: I don't think that he played an active part but this position was certainly approved by him as the one objective we should be seeking. Now there were still some points uncovered and we were still considering the proper timing of resumption of relations and of military and economic aid when we received instructions from the White House that he wanted relations resumed immediately. There were some rumors running around that the Peruvian Ambassador, who had been very active on behalf of the junta immediately after the revolution, had managed by one means or another to be in touch with the President and to persuade him directly or indirectly that this was a wise thing to do. One story was that he had met him on the beach at Newport, but I don't know whether there was any truth to this or not. It is also true that Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Paul Fay [Paul B. Fay, Jr.], who was in the PT Boat Squadron, somehow--it is a little unclear--got one of our State Department officials, the desk officer, over to a lunch with a member of the Peruvian Embassy Staff, when we were not seeing

Peruvian Embassy people because of the absence of diplomatic relations to undertake a campaign of persuasion in favor of recognition.

MILLER: As far as you know, the Peruvian Ambassador, from your personal knowledge.... You had no personal knowledge that he was in contact with...?

MARTIN: I had no personal knowledge of any sort. No sir.

MILLER: Shortly thereafter--on about the 23rd of July--there was a luncheon--the President of Ecuador, Arosemena [Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy], was visiting here--was there anything of note that occurred during his particular visit?

MARTIN: This was one of the least substantive of the presidential visits that I can recall. It was designed primarily to influence a President who had a reasonable right to the office, who was an intelligent man, and who had not had much of any experience with the U.S.--except for the fact that when he was briefly an attaché in the Embassy which apparently got him into some kind of trouble and left a chip on his shoulder about the U.S. He also had some quite leftist immediate associates in his personal entourage and when he was unable to exercise the office of president, which was rather frequent, these people had an influence which was disproportionate and undesirable, and we thought it might be possible by bringing him up here to get a more friendly reaction from him toward the U.S. and more unfriendly toward his leftist friends. This was the main purpose of the visit. It didn't go too well in terms of actual results, I don't think, although everything was very friendly and he was extremely happy and his wife was enormously pleased by the attention paid to her, but at the final session, which is always the session in the afternoon of the second day to agree on the communiqué, President Arosemena showed up obviously in no condition to undertake serious discussions, and President Kennedy very quickly--I don't know whether he planned to do this anyway since he was starting out with a little private session, and we just heard a few minutes later what had happened--very quickly got a copy of his book *Profiles in Courage*, autographed it, presented it to President Arosemena, and said good-bye.

MILLER: I see. Was the President personally offended by the condition of President Arosemena, or...?

MARTIN: I think he had had enough previous intelligence not to be greatly surprised and to take it rather lightly. We had agreed at the working level on the communiqué and there were no points that had to be dealt with so that it didn't cause any substantive problems.

MILLER: Did this visit occur because of President Kennedy's desire to meet with President Arosemena or was it suggested by the State Department?

MARTIN: No, the ambassador and the State Department thought it would be useful.

MILLER: Thereafter there were several off-the-record meetings at the end of July according to the calendar.

MARTIN: Yes, there was one on the 27th, which according to my record was with Alsogaray [Alvaro Alsogaray], who was at that time the Minister of Economy of the Argentine interim government under President Guido [Jose Maria Guido]. He discussed primarily some of the financial problems of that government. There was also one on the 30th. There is a second one shown on the 27th which I don't know about, but there's one on the 30th which according to my records is Ambassador Gordon [Lincoln Gordon] discussing Brazil's financial problems, here anti-Communist problems and general difficulties we were having with Brazil on a number of fronts. There was one on the 31st of July with Ambassador Stewart our Ambassador to Venezuela, which was a general discussion of the Venezuelan problem. My recollection is that both the oil situation and the Communist difficulties within Venezuela were discussed to some extent, but it was mainly a routine call.

MILLER: In the session on Brazil did the expropriation of Rio Grande do Sul International Telephone and Telegraph properties come up?

MARTIN: It was a general round-up, and I am sure we discussed the status of the expropriations and of the purchase of American foreign properties, but I don't recall the specifics of that one any further. Well, there's one on the 2nd of August which I believe.... In fact, there are two shown.... I think they were really the same meeting--one with Falcon Briceno [Marcos Falcon Briceno], the Foreign Minister of Venezuela--and at the end of the meeting he had some of the staff of the Embassy come in and shake hands with the President. This was just a general discussion of the Venezuela situation; I think there was some discussion of the recent build-up of arms in Cuba about which I think there was beginning to be some discussion at this time, but primarily it was again oil and Communist problems there. I show also a meeting on the 3rd of August at which Ambassador Cole [Charles W. Cole] (American Ambassador to Chile) called on the President and gave him a general run-down of the current situation in Chile.

And then on the 9th of August I show a meeting on Haiti and the situation there. My impression is that it was a rather large meeting at which we discussed general policy lines toward Haiti, the difficulties we were having with our Aid Program and the Military Assistance Program and we agreed to certain courses of action with respect to the Aid and Military Assistance Programs. To some extent in this meeting, but even more so later on, the President kept pressing us to be sure that we were doing all we could to keep before Duvalier [Francois Duvalier] our minimum conditions for friendly relations so if he should ever choose to restore friendly relations he would know what the conditions were and know that the hand was extended to him, again a reflection of the unhappiness about bad relations with a foreign government. And at one meeting, I don't think it was this one, at which he insisted that we get a telegram out to the Embassy outlining--1, 2, 3,

4,--the conditions for restoration of friendly relations and to be sure these were conveyed to Duvalier.

MILLER: This seemed to be a personal feeling on his part that the United States should always be ready to extend its hand and people should know what they had to do in order to....

MARTIN: He didn't like to have enemies. Then there was a meeting on the 19th of August on Cuba. According to my recollection this was with respect to a possible meeting of Foreign Ministers, presumably on the build-up of Soviet missiles in Cuba, which I am sure by the 19th was beginning to be considered a problem and something we wanted to do something about. The possibility of having a meeting of Foreign Ministers was discussed. This meeting of Foreign Ministers was in fact held on about the 2nd and 3rd of October. But this was an early meeting to set tactics and objectives and discuss with the President what we might do.

MILLER: At that time your recollection was that intelligence reports were coming in on Soviet arms and missiles....

MARTIN: Not missiles....

MILLER: No. Arms....

MARTIN: Arms build-up including anti-aircraft weapons.

MILLER: Yes.

MARTIN: But not any other missiles. No, I'm sorry. May I just make a correction for the record? There has been a mistake on the typing of the dates at this point. According to nay records the meeting shows the 19th on Cuba as a September 19th rather than August, and the Folklore Ballet was September 25 rather than August. This brings it much more into the framework of the Foreign Ministers meeting and the build-up of the weapons.

MILLER: So that by the 19th we might start on the Cuban....

MARTIN: Yes. I believe it was prior to this meeting on the 19th that Secretary Rusk [David Dean Rusk] had met in New York with the Foreign Ministers of practically all the Latin American countries to discuss the problem with them in detail. He had nearly an hour with nearly all of them--sometimes a couple together. I was up there participating in many of these to try to feel out what their attitudes were after he told them the facts that we had, and I believe that it was after these talks that we were with the President specifically to discuss what we planned to do.

MILLER: As far as your own personal knowledge is concerned, were any communications sent to the President other than his usual intelligence briefing, but from the department or from your jurisdiction in the department concerning Soviet arms and anti-aircraft missiles prior to the 19th of September?

MARTIN: Of that I have no knowledge. I wouldn't want to depend on my memory, at all, for that.

MILLER: As far as your own personal relationships with the President are concerned, the meeting on the 19th of September was the first time that you sat in on discussions on this subject.

MARTIN: As far as I can tell now that is, yes. Other checks might show something, but I don't know of anything other than that. There was one small incident with the Folklore Ballet, before we get too involved in Cuba, that I thought was amusing. When we were in Mexico on the visit, one of the outstanding events was a performance of the Folklore Ballet, which is a very distinguished group which the President attended and enjoyed thoroughly, went back and met some of the ballerinas. They were up here on a tour and they came into the Rose Garden and they sang one or two of their songs--they're singers as well as dancers--from the Mexican Folklore Repertoire to him and he said a few words and asked them for an encore. They did an encore and then, obviously with careful rehearsing, they did for him a college yell of the build-up type in English, ending up with "Kennedy, Kennedy, Rah, Rah, Rah!" It was very amusing.

MILLER: The meeting on Cuba on the 19th of September in preparation for the luncheon of Foreign Ministers early next month did discuss Soviet arms, did the President have any particular reaction that you recall?

MARTIN: I recall none of the details of that meeting. This was the first of so many Cuba meetings that I can hardly distinguish.

MILLER: This is early October then and the next meeting shown is the luncheon for the Foreign Ministers of the Latin American countries.

MARTIN: This was during this informal meeting of Foreign Ministers.

MILLER: Yes, on October 2nd.

MARTIN: That's right. I also have on October 9th, a meeting with the President on the Cuban prisoner question. This was at a time I would presume when the Donovan [James Donovan] negotiations, or the prospects of future negotiations, was up. There was discussion of the conditions which might govern U.S.

Government participation or relationship to these negotiations. [END TAPE #1, BEGIN TAPE #2] On the 16th we start the missile crisis, I believe. I had just finished making a speech to the annual dinner of the local Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi on that Monday evening, explaining, among other things, our Cuban policy and, for the first time on the record, why the Soviets would not put missiles in Cuba. When I sat down the chairman gave me a note to call the White House operator. I did and was put through to Roger Hilsman. He said "The pictures that were taken Sunday show those things. Start thinking. We will be seeing the President in the morning." And this started a week of meetings including several with the President. Both my records and those of my secretary carefully deleted reference to this; we were trying to make things seem as normal as possible and gave no indication of what kinds of meetings I was attending when I was not in my office. And I was of some special significance because I was the only member of the group that had a regional attachment. Otherwise, I believe the cover story was that they were discussing the Defense budget, but this would not really cover me. At least on one occasion, on Thursday night I believe, when we went over to the White House for a rather late meeting I went apart from the rest of the group just for this reason. The rest of the group had a little difficulty in that it was that night that Secretary Rusk was giving a dinner for Gromyko [Andrei A. Gromyko], and the press were swarming over the first floor of the department. The whole group had been meeting upstairs in George Ball's Conference Room until the 10:00 date with the President. They tried to get their cars to go into the basement but they couldn't get in touch with their chauffeurs so I think eleven of them rode over in George Ball's car. We had several other problems of this kind of providing cover.

I have very few specific recollections of President Kennedy's role in this matter except for his consistent effort each time we met with him to explore all possible alternatives, to give everyone, and others he invited from outside occasionally, a chance to express their views, or if they chose, several views, to make sure that everything was being examined with great thoroughness and care. On no occasion, on his part, or for that matter that of any other member of the group, did I hear any reference to domestic political considerations except once or twice that, "Isn't it too bad that we're in the middle of an election, because people may interpret what we do in relation to the election," but the effort was consistently to explore fully all alternatives. One important member of the group, almost at the last meeting, I think it was on Saturday, when we had pretty much made up our minds, said “I didn't sleep too much last night. Do you think this is right or are we sure we shouldn't just do nothing. Let's go all over it again." I didn't feel that anybody came in with a fixed opinion, that anybody didn't at some point change their views in the course of the discussion. I was also impressed by the degree to which they were looking at the effect on the U.S. character and the U.S. position in history of the decision taken in this event with particular reference to what we called for shorthand "a reverse Pearl Harbor"; in other words, "an unannounced major air assault" which would kill thousands of civilians, as well as military. And there was, of course, also the most careful exploration, in a war gaming sense, of the reactions elsewhere by the Soviets to whatever we might do in connection with Cuba. It is my recollection that it was the President who on one occasion asked me point-blank what the OAS would do if we presented them with a proposal which would authorize a blockade. At the time this

course of action had not been decided on--it wasn't finally decided, I think, until the Sunday, although I think everybody's mind, including the President's was pretty well made up on Saturday--"What did I think the OAS would do?" And my response was that we will get 14 votes in 24 hours and probably 17 or 18 if we have another 24, because there were communications problems with some countries, some governments, like Uruguay, that will take time to make up their minds in view of their nine-member executive and considering that President and Foreign Minister of Mexico were in Far East. And this seemed to be accepted as a hypothesis, although we always faced the possibility we might have to act without an OAS sanction. Although perhaps some people may have done so privately, as far as I can recall, as a group we never really decided what we would do in these circumstances. We felt we would get OAS approval and we drew up the proclamations accordingly. I would have presumed that they would have been issued in any case with certain modifications if the OAS had not acted on Tuesday as in fact it did. We got 18 votes in 22 hours with Uruguay not being able to get instructions; with Bolivia voting without instructions; Peru getting instructions after the others had voted. We gave other countries the use of our telephones and we got AT&T to give them priorities.

But I do feel, as I mentioned earlier, that this support was a tribute to the President's attitude and activities with respect to Latin America, to Secretary Rusk's great patience in the first Punta del Este meeting, to the long talks he had had hour after grueling hour at the UN in September on Cuba, and to his patience in the Foreign Ministers' meeting where he had tried to understand their point of view and not ram anything through. These were his tactics and the President's wishes. As a result, when they had something urgent, the Latin Americans knew it was urgent, and they knew that they could trust us.

MILLER: Did the OAS approval come up early in the conversations, and you say it was assumed that....

MARTIN: I think it was rather late because we must have had to know what it was we wanted to do before we knew if it was an OAS matter. So I would think this would have come up Thursday or Friday, probably Friday. No, I'm sorry, we didn't meet with the President on Friday because he went off on a trip. It was probably Thursday night, at the ten o'clock meeting we had just before he left on the trip. There we discussed, among other things, whether he should go and decided that he should, but he might have to come back, which, of course, he did do. And we met with him again, I believe on Saturday afternoon on his return and by then we had a pretty well agreed proposal to submit to him…. There were, of course, after his speech a number of meetings, some of which I attended, some of which I did not, dealing with negotiations with the Soviets until the final settlement--not final settlement, but the interim settlement on the Sunday--and then a number of meetings subsequent to that while negotiations were going on in New York. This was, of course, of what had then become a formal body of the National Security Council. In fact, we did go formal toward the end of the first week although the early meetings were completely informal. These later meetings were primarily addressed to the question of what kind of statement we could agree with

the Soviets, or issue jointly or so forth, to get the matter out of the United Nations Security Council, and most of these sessions included Ambassador Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] and John McCloy [John J. McCloy], who were the two negotiators appointed by the President. They were very thorny and difficult sessions. There was a great deal of controversy on how this should be handled, dealing both with procedure and the substance of the statements that could be made and that would be acceptable to us. The President showed great patience. It was my feeling from those sessions which I sat in on--and it was most of them--that perhaps for somewhat different reasons, both Ambassador Stevenson and Mr. McCloy were pressing for concessions on our part from our original position in order to reach an agreement with the Soviets. Stevenson was interested in the UN attitudes and in making a favorable impression by concessions in terms of the UN non-committed countries and saving the face, I thought, of the Soviet negotiators, whom he thought had a reliable, helpful, personal desire to cooperate. I think Mr. McCloy was primarily concerned with the over-all posture of the Soviets and the prospects of the negotiation of a Berlin settlement. He thought this at the time was a lively prospect and it shouldn't be spoiled by our being too tough in getting out of this one; that the missiles were out surely and we ought to accept that and not be too sticky about anything else like inspection arrangements. And in general both of these positions, and they were not the only ones that slanted in this direction, tended to disregard the impact of the settlement in Latin America or on Castro in Cuba, so that I tended to argue for being a little more difficult with the Soviets for this reason because the impact there could have been rather considerably impaired, an impact which had been enormously helpful up to this point, though more in Latin America than in Cuba. The President, as I say, was very patient on this but in the end held to a reasonably firm line as far as I could see. There was one early snafu in this connection, I may say. At least I think it was a snafu in terms of its impact on Latin America. On the Saturday after his speech on the Monday, we drafted the statement to the Soviets which they accepted, thereby ending the crisis. This was at a meeting at the White House on Saturday afternoon. I did not attend. It was a rather small group and when they came back and documents were distributed I was puzzled and concerned because there was no reference to the possibility that Castro by aggressive activity in Latin America might justify action on our part but committed us without qualifications that so long as the missiles were out and we could verify this by ground inspection, we would not invade. I immediately went to the Secretary's office, and my recollection is that Ball and Alex Johnson [Ural Alexis Johnson] were still there talking over the meeting and future steps with the Secretary. I pointed this out and they were somewhat disbelieving but read it over and the best I could get was that they had thought it was in--but there had been a number of drafts and much editing, and they felt that it might have been dropped in the final typing. We would have to take the position that it was assumed, of course, that aggression on their part would be a justification for action on ours. Now, this didn't become quite as important as it appeared at the time since we never got ground inspection in Cuba. Therefore, this exchange of commitments wasn't carried out and wasn't valid. Part of the later argument about the business in the Security Council was to what extent we insisted it was not valid and reserved our right of independent action. But at the time of our original offer to the Soviets we got a fair amount of criticism from Latin Americans on this omission.

MILLER: In consideration of what you mentioned earlier, and the recommendations for a position vis-a-vis the Soviets in this crisis, was it your impression from as much as you know about, that the President clearly had in mind the alternatives and who was involved in them or was this a rolling consensus that was developed by almost everyone?

MARTIN: No, I think he was well aware of the different approaches and the various alternatives that had been discussed and who was.... Well I am not sure he kept a running account day-by-day as things shifted but he knew in general what the line-up was and he was extremely anxious that there be a consensus and that anybody that had any reservations speak out. He felt this was a sufficiently important decision that while he would take it, and he certainly did, if it were at all possible he wanted all key figures that were participating to agree that this was the best thing to do with, I think, particular reference to the two Republicans participating in the exercise actively, and one who was brought in very briefly, Bob Lovett [Robert A. Lovett]--but I refer to Dillon [C. Douglas Dillon] and McCone [John A. McCone]. I don't qualify McNamara [Robert S. McNamara].

MILLER: Did the President mention this or is this your observation?

MARTIN: No, but he kept asking them for their views. Moreover, Dillon would not logically have been in this exercise and he wasn't in it throughout, but as I recall he was brought in several times and given full opportunity to know what was going on, what the background was, the whys and wherefores, and express his views.

MILLER: On what pieces of paper--or how did the President arrive at the decision finally? Was it the speech? Was this used as a vehicle?

MARTIN: I am not sure. I have the feeling it may have been the speech draft that was the key document, although there had been a number of position papers developed two or three days before outlining alternative courses of action, but I think it was the speech draft that really put it down in black and white specifically. And there were, of course, draft proclamations which the lawyers were brought in to do in the last day or so.

MILLER: Were there alternative drafts of the speech, or was it...?

MARTIN: I don't recall this.

MILLER: As far as the position papers were concerned that outlined the various alternative approaches, they were all presented to the President simultaneously?

MARTIN: I just don't know about this. My feeling is that there was more talk than reading in this matter on the President's part although I never can be sure what Mac Bundy or Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] may have showed him. That none of us knew about, Mac was a full participant and the Attorney General was too and I would assume that they may have had some long talks with the President and maybe shown him pieces of paper. But the alternatives were sufficiently broad that you didn't need a lot of paper work to describe what you were discussing in terms of the all-out attack, the pinpoint attack on the missiles, the blockade of arms and implements of war, the blockade of arms and petroleum products--these kinds of choices--making it more an oral exercise from what I saw than it was a paper exercise until the speech writing came.

MILLER: Do you have any recollection about how soon the blockade came up as one of the alternatives? Was it from the beginning, or was it....

MARTIN: I would have said almost from the beginning. I recall that I believe it was Wednesday noon that I wrote a position paper for the group which was based on essentially a blockade concept, not that anybody was committed but a "that was could it work" sort of thing. And either late Wednesday afternoon or Wednesday evening I recall Mac Bundy asked me what my view was--we were discussing all the alternatives…. I said at that point I thought there were only two choices: namely, a blockade, preferably including POL because of its implications for Castro, or an all-out attack, that various intermediate levels of military action were impractical, would cause trouble but would do us no good.

MILLER: The blockade paper which you had written on Monday....

MARTIN: I'm sorry. If I said Monday, I should have said Wednesday. The discussions started Tuesday.

MILLER: You prepared it here in the department and was that paper transmitted to the President, do you know?

MARTIN: Not as far as I know. There were a great number of papers on various subjects discussed in the group and very few of these, as far as I am aware, were transmitted to the President.

MILLER: You were meeting at this point almost continuously here in the department?

MARTIN: That's correct.

MILLER: And who were the usual participants in those meetings here in the department, from your recollection?

MARTIN: The Attorney General, McCone, Mac Bundy, Ted Sorenson, McNamara,

Gilpatric [Roswell L. Gilpatric], Nitze [Paul H. Nitze], Taylor [Maxwell D. Taylor], Ball, Alex Johnson, and myself. The Secretary, my recollection is, was often there but not as regularly as either Ball or Johnson. He had other things that he had to do that he couldn't conspicuously miss. My belief is that's about the list of regular attendance and there was no one else who was there regularly, with any degree of regularity. Later on a couple of lawyers were brought in--Katzenbach [Nicholas D. Katzenbach] and a State Department person and, of course, Dillon. These nearly all took place in George Ball's conference room. Mr. Hurwitch [Robert A. Hurwitch], the Cuban expert in my office and my secretary Miss Louise Hughes were cut in after a couple of days. We worked out of George Ball's office--we were crowded in there for this purpose. There were just about three secretaries that were cleared to participate in what was going on and they were kept very busy. We ate up there as well as in the conference room--for three nights running on beef sandwiches and a glass of milk sent in from a nearby restaurant.

One slightly amusing sideline occurred on the Monday night when we had the President's speech and the various events around it--the Ambassadors in and press conferences and so forth. There was a concert given on behalf of the United Nations by Isaac Stern in the State Department Auditorium--a black tie affair--and my wife and I were going. I couldn't go obviously but she arranged for another Foreign Service Officer, a friend, to go with her. Having heard about our eating habits, she came in, all dressed up, to George Ball's office, with a picnic basket and a hot plate, pies and salad and chicken casserole. Starting about nine o'clock George Ball, Alex and the rest of us, when we had a chance, had our supper--the first warm meal we had had for some days.

There was one other point that the President certainly was involved in. It was my impression that the decision whether to make the speech Sunday night or Monday was not made until Sunday morning depending upon the leak situation, in other words, how much the press picked up because we didn't want this to build up vaguely or even moderately precisely without the Presidential speech. By a miracle really, apparently it was not until Saturday that the key people in the press in Washington, like Reston [James B. “Scotty” Reston] and Lippmann [Walter Lippmann], and others, realized that something special was going on. They still didn't know for sure Saturday whether it was Berlin or Cuba, but by some means several people apparently knew by Sunday that it was Cuba. The White House intervened to prevent publication, and I gather made a commitment that if they would not publish they would get a special briefing of the background. And at five o'clock on Monday George Ball and Alex Johnson and I--I believe it was--met with Al Friendly [Alfred Friendly] of the *POST*, Walter Lippmann, I believe Joe Alsop [Joseph W. Alsop], and Scotty Reston, in George Ball's conference room and gave them an hour's briefing on the background, this I gather was the carrying out of the commitment.

MILLER: On the leak situation, as far as you know, other than this, no one else had picked up the story?

MARTIN: Not at all. We did some rather special planning. On Saturday afternoon we went to the White House to see the President after he

came back from Chicago. We went in personal cars from the State Department to the meeting to avoid a conspicuous line of black Cadillacs outside. I found myself in an awkward position. Alex Johnson decided to stay over and not drive his car back. I had driven alone in a rather small Hillman Minx convertible. I offered it to the Secretary, Ambassador Thompson [Llewellyn E. Thompson] and Ambassador Stevenson, but I had forgotten that we had to squeeze in the very large security guard of the Secretary. If we had had a slight accident I wonder what the press would have thought of the passenger list crowded in that tiny car. Before leaving the White House that day, I did some checking with the Secret Service. I thought there ought to be a better way to do this. We didn't want to have a lot of black Cadillacs on the back White House drive again on Sunday. [redacted] and we went through that entrance on Sunday when we went over, while Secretary Harriman [W. Averell Harriman] and Assistant Secretary Talbot [Phillips Talbot] went through the public entrance, obviously to discuss the Chinese-Indian conflict which was heating up, as you recall, at that time.

MILLER: In the meetings that took place here in the department in Mr. Ball's conference room, a number of position papers were prepared, including the one you had mentioned on the blockade. Had you prepared any other position papers personally?

MARTIN: Yes, there were a couple of others. I have copies of some of these available which I hope to turn over to you. There was one occasion--I think it was on Thursday at some point--where we had people prepare position papers on positions with which they were not in sympathy. It was considered a useful exercise for them to do the best they could with something that they really didn't sympathize with. It might highlight the problems usefully. I was assigned one of these, and I believe I have that in the file. I also did one for the Secretary on whether negotiation of an accommodation with Castro involving repudiation of the Soviets was a feasible alternative. The Secretary said at the meeting that he could do no better than read my memo which he did. That proposed alternative, with which the Secretary hoped from time to time, was dropped.

MILLER: In the communications from the meetings going on here with the President, was it ever formally stated precisely how the relationship of the group meeting here and the President would work: How the work product would get there?

MARTIN: No, but by the meeting Saturday we were meeting as the Executive Committee of the National Security Council rather than informally as we were at least through Thursday.

MILLER: Up through Thursday--and still on Thursday no final course of action had been arrived at as a recommendation.

MARTIN: I think on Thursday night we told him that in general the blockade seemed to have the most in its favor. We said we will continue to work on it and analyze it. There were some problems, some other people were not quite sure, but my recollection is that by Thursday night this was the consensus.

MILLER: And that during this period of time McGeorge Bundy and undoubtedly the Attorney General, it was your impression, were keeping the President informed as to how things were going.

MARTIN: In addition to the meetings we had with him.

MILLER: What days did you have meetings with the President--you personally?

MARTIN: My recollection is that the group including myself met twice with him on Tuesday, once on Wednesday, at least once on Thursday and again on Saturday and again Sunday.

MILLER: And at these meetings, who would report to the President? Or did someone report to the President what had happened since they had seen him last?

MARTIN: Yes, I think.... It wasn't so much of a report as an expression of views. It was a very open situation which everybody was invited to say what they thought. There was no recognition of agency views. For example, some of the bitterest debates were between Defense Department people. I don't use "bitterness" in an invidious sense, because it was all extremely friendly, but to indicate that the most vigorous disagreements were between Defense Department people. The State Department wasn't in agreement early in the game so there was freedom for personal presentations. I would have said that with the President, to return to your question, Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara were particularly vocal in expressing their views as were really the Attorney General, Mac Bundy, and McCone. But the President wanted everybody's views on the table and wanted to know them.

MILLER: So each day, or each time you met with the President, there was something of a rehash of views that had been expressed before, and during this period of time the shifts and changes of people would become evident.

MARTIN: That's right. Also, of course, a characteristic of this was that each meeting was preceded by a very thorough briefing by the photo-analysis people and by John McCone of CIA because one of the reasons we were waiting and one of the things that affected our attitudes was the need to secure both confirming evidence of the first pictures taken on the Sunday and also evidence about how far along they were; what was the pace of construction; what were the chances that at the time we took action they could strike; what was the evidence for nuclear heads being there. This was one of the great problems--whether the heads were there. In other words, if they had

the missiles in place and the heads were there then you had certain risks of retaliation, perhaps even unauthorized from the Soviet Union that did not exist if the heads were not there or if the missiles weren't in a position to fire.

MILLER: In considering the blockade, therefore, this was a matter of major importance. At what....

MARTIN: If the blockade could stop heads from arriving it was more effective than if it couldn't, and the evidence was that the storage sheds for heads were being constructed but was far from finished and that it was unlikely, although one could never be sure that the Soviets would store anything as valuable as heads without having them fully protected, particularly since the Cubans were kept a long way from the missiles themselves--no Cuban was anywhere close.

MILLER: At what point in the weeks' meetings did it become clear that the storage bins or the heads were not fully completed, or…? Was this early in the game or…?

MARTIN: This is something, of course, for the experts, but my impression is that it was rather late in the week before we had real evidence from pictures on the storage bins.

MILLER: But…

MARTIN: And, of course, this was uncertain evidence. There were things that looked like storage bins that were not completed. We couldn't prove that there weren't storage bins someplace that we couldn't see or hadn't found.

MILLER: The blockade concept developed independently in many respects of the fact that the heads might be there.

MARTIN: It did, but it was reinforced by the likelihood that they were not there. I think that one of the points that was very crucial in all this was that almost any other course of positive action involved an initiative by us that might well have caused the shedding of Soviet blood--it almost certainly would have--whereas the blockade which might result in injury, but couldn't necessarily do so. In other words you could shoot off a rudder without killing anybody. What we felt we knew, which perhaps wasn't much, about the politics within Russia between the military and Khrushchev [Nikita S. Khrushchev] suggested that killing Russian soldiers and shedding Russian blood would make whatever instincts Khrushchev might have had toward a peaceful settlement, toward backing down, very much more difficult to implement. Once this bridge had been crossed we would more likely be in deep trouble in terms of retaliation elsewhere, than we would otherwise be. Of course, I must say, one of the great puzzles in all this is that I don't think anybody felt we had a satisfactory answer as to why they were put there. The argument that I had given and other had given as to why

they wouldn't do it still looked very good to us, and in fact I think it still does. I have used it with some distinguished press people since, who asked me what I said, and they have had to admit that I was very convincing. What one can say I believe it that they made a mistake. It was against their interests in a great many ways as far as we can tell.

MILLER: In the meetings with the President, as each person gave his views in the succession of meetings, at what point did the President indicate that he was leaning towards one solution or another, or did he ever indicate at all?

MARTIN: I don't get the impression that he gave much lead. He asked questions, he was interested in getting a recommendation and then he'd make up his mind.

MILLER: Was this idea of negotiating with Castro rather than the Soviets seriously advocated by…?

MARTIN: I don't recall whether anybody seriously advocated it. I think some people did raise it as a possible course of action, which it was. Certainly we wanted to throw the Soviets out of this hemisphere. Castro was being used by them and treated rather badly at this point and maybe there was something you could do to split him off under the threat of invasion and attack. But I think all possibilities, whether anybody seriously advocated them, were pretty carefully examined because you might decide after looking at it that you should advocate it. It was that kind of open-minded detached discussion.

MILLER: Then moving on to the end of the week towards the Friday and Saturday--the decision was on Saturday--how did the President, as far as you know from your personal knowledge, indicate that he accepted the recommendation of the blockade? Did he formally state this or did he just say "Draft the speech along these lines," or was it just assumed?

MARTIN: My impression is that at the end of the Saturday afternoon meeting the consensus was to this effect. There were one or two people there, however, who had some doubts. My impression is that Admiral Anderson [Admiral George W. Anderson] attended that meeting--this was one of the few times, I think, that other members of the Joint Chiefs were there, and there may have been one or two others--and he had some doubts. The President said "This looks right to me. Let's draft a speech along these lines, but I want to sleep on it and consider it further and I may be back to talk to you further about it and I will not make a final decision until tomorrow morning." I never was quite clear whether this was a tactical way of letting dissenters down easily or whether he really was giving further thought to it. I was a little uncertain on that point.

MILLER: It was the uncertainty at the time?

MARTIN: Yes, at the time.

MILLER: In having some reservations, Admiral Anderson was advocating more....

MARTIN: More forceful action, yes.

MILLER: Forceful action and....

MARTIN: That's my recollection. I believe when it became a Security Council Bromley Smith [Bromley K. Smith] came in and took notes.

MILLER: But from your own personal recollection the decision was embodied almost entirely in the words, "That sounds right to me." Up until then, as far as you can recall, there was no real indication other than as a consensus developed in the group he would have had to overrule the entire group, and undoubtedly would have prevented a consensus from developing, had he felt that this was wrong. But still that would be the essence of the decision. After the speech occurred, as far as your involvement was concerned, what happened?

MARTIN: I don't have any records on that week. My secretary carefully didn't keep them, but my impression is that I did not participate in meetings with the President the following week. We had the OAS meeting and there were a number of meetings to consider the exchanges with Khrushchev--the letter exchanges. I recall being in the Secretary's office most of Friday evening reading what was coming in but I won't recall meetings with the President. The discussions with the President were handled primarily by the Secretary and I think Ambassador Thompson because this was a straight Khrushchev problem and didn't involve me to the same extent. So that I didn't get involved subsequently until we got at the next stage to the question of the UN and in that connection some of the meetings were in the Cabinet Room and some were not.

MILLER: On the weekend, after the President's speech, they moved into the question of whether or not the arrangements were going to be first consummated and then satisfactory. At that point was the President cognizant of the Latin American implications? You had mentioned earlier your view of the documents.

MARTIN: I would think he would be. I don't know....

MILLER: There were no pieces of paper?

MARTIN: I don't know what happened at that Saturday afternoon meeting. No, I don't know of any pieces of paper. The big issues then were the Turkish situation and things like that, and the inspection question. There was some difference of opinion as to the value of ground inspection and how much we should insist on it, a difference of opinion about the UN role in inspection versus the OAS role. We had quite a lot of discussion of how inspection, if it were to take place, would be carried out and to what extent it would be a UN operation or to what extent an OAS operation, or U.S.

operation; whether or not we should offer Caribbean inspection which the Cubans had suggested and the Soviets might ask for. This I rejected rather vigorously because I couldn't possibly see how a mistake like that which Castro and the Soviets had made could be an excuse for permitting the UN with Soviet membership and Cuban membership to inspect other countries in the Caribbean, and if it was to be Caribbean it would have to include Florida and Puerto Rico, and I didn't quite see how this was a salable proposition. This kind of compromise seemed to me would be wholly unacceptable from a Latin American standpoint, but this was one suggestion which was kicked about quite actively at one point.

MILLER: I think that covers pretty well....

MARTIN: I think so.

MILLER: After the Cuban crisis in the fall of 1962 you had a number of meetings of a more or less routine nature with President Kennedy, as I understand it, including the Betancourt visit in early 1963, and meetings when ambassadors were in town meeting with the President. I would like to move on to about March of 1963 and ask you about the visit to Costa Rica of the President and the events leading up to that.

MARTIN: This visit started when nearly a year before--nine months before--after the Mexican visit, I made a tour around Central America, and in Guatemala, my second stop, President Ydigoras [Ydigoras Fuentes Miguel] handed me a letter to the President inviting him to come down and meet with all the Central American presidents. I wasn't sure how much they agreed with him, but in checking around on my other stops I found they all thought this was a good idea. We asked them to fix a place because we didn't want to have to choose it. It ended up being Costa Rica. By the time we got to Costa Rica there were several items of importance. There was a more serious problem with respect to Cuban infiltration and in preventing travel of young Communists to Cuba for training in sabotage and guerrilla activity. We felt the Caribbean countries were concerned and we felt that they would be willing to cooperate on more stringent measures to control infiltration from Cuba and this back and forth movement. So this was one important subject of conversation. The other was the further development, with such help as we could provide, of the Central American Common Market, in which they were all interested and so were we. One of the small issues that was much debated before the sheeting was whether or not the President should go out and make a speech at the University of San Jose. There had been some suggestion that the left-wing students there, aided and abetted by Communist students from other Central American countries, were planning to create disturbances and there were many people who argued against the President exposing himself to the University community. In the end it was decided to go and it was a huge success. There were 15, 000 people, I would guess, there. I think one student started to make a little fuss and was quickly taken away. After his speech the President leaned over and started shaking hands with people from the platform. People started mobbing up to shake hands, and to touch his hand. He had to go about a hundred

yards, I guess, or a hundred and fifty yards down a walk which was protected by a rope fence, to the helicopter. They quickly broke down the rope fence, and all of us who were with him joined the Secret Service in trying to provide a protective cordon. That was as rough a fifteen minutes as I ever spent. Women were losing shoes and clothes and it was a real mob, trying to get close to him to touch him. After the formal opening meeting at which each President made a little speech, just the Presidents adjourned for a brief session up in a sort of hallway in the Opera House where the people walked between acts--a big open room--to discuss and agree on the agenda privately and informally. They enjoyed it so much that all the rest of the sessions were there--just the seven Presidents--no advisers, no assistants of any kind, not even the Foreign Ministers who were all there. Part of the time it became so informal that only a limited translation service was provided. As a result the regular sessions which had started out with several hundred behind-the-table observers, members of the delegations who had come to listen to the Presidents talk, ended with them all just sitting behind their respective Foreign Ministers while the Presidents spent two days up there by themselves. I don't know about the other delegations, but certainly our delegation never really knew what went on in those discussions. I have no idea what was discussed. We did turn out, with the help of the Foreign Minister of the Costa Ricans, a communiqué by the end of the second morning. We first worked on it with the lower level people, and then with Secretary Rusk and the other Foreign Ministers and we were pretty well agreed except for the Honduran, who had some special problems. The final day the Presidents and Foreign Ministers were having lunch at the American Embassy Residence. The conference schedule called for a meeting to begin at three thirty or four that afternoon and the communiqué to be issued at six or seven that night, but President Kennedy became very concerned that there would be leaks and that the U.S. Press Corps was feeding stuff out that was misleading. I think he was concerned about the Cuban aspects particularly. When he arrived for lunch he called me up to a little balcony where a few of the guests were sitting and said, "We want to get this communiqué out as soon as possible, and let's see if we can't get it out by say four o'clock. And let's see the text". We only had an English text at that time and we gave that to him. He read it slowly to the group and I sent one of our translators downstairs to rapidly type out a rough Spanish text. We finally distributed that around at the luncheon. The Hondurans still had worries despite the pre-luncheon discussion. The President now tried to move up to two o'clock, the time forgetting the communiqué out. We had to reproduce hundreds of copies in both languages so we negotiated back and forth all during the luncheon. Finally we thought we had everybody agreed and were ready to take it down to be reproduced, but the President of Honduras said he wanted to see a clean copy in Spanish. The Presidents reassembled at four o'clock for him to see his clean copy, which held up the release. At the same time that he and the other Central American presidents got the clean Spanish copy, I got the final English text which had been reproduced in quantity. In sort of casually thumbing through and comparing them we discovered that the Secretariat in typing out the text from the drafts sent them after the discussions at the residence, had somehow accidentally omitted the Cuba policy statement from the Spanish text. By the time I invaded the precincts where the presidents were meeting with this news they had essentially finished reading and approving it. And I said "I have to withdraw the Spanish

text just distributed; this is not as it was to be released; there's been a mistake," and then had to go back to the Secretariat where it took at least an hour to reproduce another mimeographed text. Meanwhile the presidents waited. Fortunately although the Honduran President had not finally agreed to a full clean Spanish text, as he had insisted he must do, under the pressure of time the others gave me carte blanche to okay the full text for reproduction and he did not protest. Thus their ultimate action was pretty much a formality. We ended up making about the seven o'clock deadline originally intended. My impression is that the six presidents felt that in the course of these two days of just talking at random with President Kennedy--again a diplomatic trick if you will--they were being treated as friends of equal status and that his willingness to sit with them unprotected by aides, assistants, or advisers, whether the Secretary of State or not, and talk freely to them was an enormous honor. Here was the President of the greatest country on earth who thinks he knows enough about cur little problems and cares enough about them and us to sit here by himself and to talk to us about them. There were some commitments made about aid that we had a little trouble figuring out subsequently. There were some charges about how the aid program had been handled and Moscoso was called in the last afternoon to explain alleged bureaucratic delays. In conclusion I think it was from this standpoint an extremely useful meeting. They found it very gratifying and a great boost to their own prestige to be treated on this equal basis.

MILLER: Did you have any impression as to who suggested that these meetings...?

MARTIN: I have no idea--who suggested they stay on, and not resume the full sessions as had been intended. I have no idea where that came from….

MILLER: Did the President communicate to you and/or the Secretary what they were talking about in detail?

MARTIN: No.

MILLER: Did he make any commitments?

MARTIN: We sort of had to quiz him to find out just what happened and what was committed. Most of the things that came out of the communiqué had been in draft communiqués we had been working on for several weeks before. There really wasn't much change in that regard. I gather they talked in rather general terms. There was one problem in that I had the impression that Luis Somoza [Luis Somoza Debayle], the President of Nicaragua, able and energetic after he left the presidency and looked new worlds to conquer, decided that one of them would be to help mount an invasion of Cuba. He tried to drop the idea in a number of places that all of this had been discussed with President Kennedy at San Jose and had his approval, which I doubt.

MILLER: Did the seven presidents work at all on the communiqué, or was the communiqué...?

MARTIN: They read the draft. They had some drafting changes, and some little points in the Cuba section was worked over a bit, but there was anything substantial. We had a bit of a crisis right at the start of the meeting in that the communiqué which had been worked out at the Ministerial level in advance of the meeting, upset one or two of the presidents when they got there. They found it was wholly unsatisfactory and impossible. The Secretary and I met after the formal dinner the night before the official opening of the conference until one or two o'clock in the morning trying to find out what was the problem and what we could do about it. But we did work that out satisfactorily. We wrote explanations which helped clear the air; we showed a willingness to make changes, and in the end managed to dissipate the idea of some of the Presidents that communiqué was being imposed on them by the U.S., thus there was quite a lot of backroom work details, but the President didn't really get involved in this except indirectly through telling the Foreign Ministers half-jokingly that the presidents didn't like what they had done.

MILLER: One of the major discussion items was the traffic with Cuba in the Caribbean area. Was this a personal matter with the President that he raised as an issue both before here in Washington and at the meeting, or was this something....

MARTIN: He was consistently concerned, not that we weren't, but he was consistently very concerned at the movement particularly of young people to Cuba for training in guerilla and sabotage activities and than back to Latin America. He was constantly prodding for figures on what was going on, for what more can be done, how can we correct this, how can we stop it. This was a rather continuing interest on his part. I can recall a number of occasions where in meetings or in telephone calls to me he asked how things were getting along and what were the latest figures, and this sort of thing, so this was, I think, a real preoccupation of his personally. And quite rightly.

MILLER: In coming back from there did he feel that progress had been made at this particular meeting in clamping down on traffic?

MARTIN: I think he felt progress had been made. It was agreed to have Ministers of Government meeting subsequently to work out detailed measures. There have been, I think, two meetings since then to carry out the decisions in principle which were reached there, so I think he felt this was another step ahead. I didn't actually comeback with him. I went on to Colombia but it's my impression that he thought progress was made. He later asked for something like a quarterly report on progress both on this front and on the Central American Common Market and on the special aid we had agreed there to give to their programs. He wanted to follow up and showed an interest in seeing that these things were not just dropped with the communiqué, as often happens.

MILLER: In terms of Central American integration and movement towards such a goal, was this a feeling that the President had personally, that you would guess, that there should be some consolidation of countries?

MARTIN: I think he felt that the movement going on there was a very important and promising one and he was anxious to do anything to encourage it. I think his willingness to make this trip reflected to a very considerable extent his interest in this as an important new development that should be promoted and encouraged. I think it very definitely was something he felt strongly was to be promoted.

MILLER: In the meetings themselves, did the President seem to develop a personal relationship with the other six presidents who were there?

MARTIN: Yes, I think so. In all these long meetings, and then when we finished--I'm not sure about the chronology--but essentially after the meetings and these long personal talks of the whole group, he had bilateral meetings with each of them to discuss specific country problems. It was quite clear from those meetings, which one or two of us did sit in on, that he had developed a personal relationship and he was inviting them to register their complaints and to see what could be done about them so that it was quite clear that he felt he had gotten quite close to them.

MILLER: Were they of varying intensity? Who would you say the President got along with best on a personal basis. Can you make a value judgment?

MARTIN: In so far as I can make a value judgment, it's my impression from a good many comments and also from bilateral talks that the man who made the most impression on all the group was Somoza. He's a very able, personable young individual and articulate, which neither Ydigoras of Guatemala, for example, or the Costa Rican, Orlich [Francisco J. Orlich Bolmarcich], are. And Vileda-Morales [Jose Ramon Vileda Morales] is not particularly articulate, but Somoza is and I think he made a very strong impression on our President as well as the others. And as a matter of fact after this meeting the Costa Ricans of all people entered into informal talks with the Somoza crowd in Nicaragua looking toward future political cooperation, particularly after the new government was to be installed in May, and I think this meeting had some--made an impression on the Costa Ricans--Somoza's attitudes. Somebody said if he had another name he would be considered one of the outstanding presidents, certainly of Central America if not perhaps of Latin America.

MILLER: With whom would you say the President developed the least rapport? Especially with the President of Panama there?

MARTIN: I think it would be hard to say that. I don't know, I couldn't distinguish. We had another go-around on Panama problems and their desire for substantial money grants, in particular.

MILLER: So that in terms of personalities the one that stood out as far as the President was concerned was Luis Somoza?

MARTIN: I would have thought so. There were also some exchanges I think in the case of the presidents of both Panama and Costa Rica--I'm sure about Costa Rica--about aid programs and what not, in which the President would turn to Moscoso and say, "What about that?" And Moscoso would give the story on why a project was delayed and so forth. It was often the country's fault for not supplying data--he'd know this story, and there were one or two occasions in which our Ambassador intervened to take the country's position against Moscoso and the President had to ask him to be quiet. I think Panama and Costa Rica were cases in point, as I recall, but I wouldn't want to guarantee that.

MILLER: In these exchanges with the Latin American presidents which frequently involved aspects of the aid programs, did the President have what you might say a reasonably close working knowledge of the AID program as such, or did he have in mind only the broader picture.

MARTIN: I think he looked at it only in the broader sense. When you got into the details of the paper work and why things got delayed he had a certain degree of impatience and a desire to take corrective action. As I recall it, in the course of these talks he overruled a couple of AID positions in order to do a favor for one of the presidents. For example, the President of Honduras, or his wife, rather, had a pet project for a rehabilitation center for crippled people. The AID view was that this was a very expensive public health measure in relation to other things that needed doing. The President, however, instructed that they provide the funds that were being sought for this. He drove past a hospital in Costa Rica which was unoccupied and he instructed AID to provide funds to make up whatever was necessary to get it moving. He clearly felt quite free to intervene and insist on action. Sometimes it was difficult but....

MILLER: From these meetings did you feel that the President had a kind of philosophy of aid that he applied, or was it quite a pragmatic approach?

MARTIN: I would have thought pragmatic, and a bit political.

MILLER: I think that's a prerogative of a President.

MARTIN: Exactly.

MILLER: Moving on then to....

MARTIN: International politics, I mean.

MILLER: That's right. Moving on then from the Costa Rican visit, there were again a number of more or less routine meetings with the President concerned with

the visits of the Ambassador of Chile [Sergio Gutierrez-Olivos] and the Prime Minister of Jamaica [William Alexander Bustamante]. In the summer months, the matter of the Dominican Republic began to come to the fore. Bosch had been elected and installed in the spring of 1963 as I....

MARTIN: In February.

MILLER: Yes, February 1963, and after some months there began to be some rumors of a change. I think John Bartlow Martin, the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, came back, after a series of cables showing concern, in July according to my records....

MARTIN: That's right.

MILLER: To discuss this particular problem. Do you recall that meeting?

MARTIN: Well, I don't recall the meeting itself in any detail but the general view of the President was that the U.S. Government should make every effort it could, through all the instruments available to us, to help Bosch do a better job and maintain himself in the D.R. [Dominican Republic]. There were many attacks on Bosch as pro-Communist, if not a Communist; many other things were said about him and his regime, but the President came down hard on continuing to support him. This was U.S. policy and we reviewed various possible ways in which we might try to be more helpful to him. He was one of the most difficult people to help I've run into. And I must say Betancourt had the same experience with him. But this was the position; we had to stand firm for he was the elected President and therefore, deserved our support in any way we could organize it.

MILLER: Do you have any feeling that the President gave Bosch special consideration in view of Bosch's relationship to Betancourt?

MARTIN: I really couldn't say whether he did or not. I don't think that was a major factor. I think he found Bosch a reasonably attractive personality when he came here early in January and met with the President, a meeting which I am not sure is on this record. But I think more important than that, he felt that the U.S. had a very major stake in success in the Dominican Republic. We had had a major role in removing Trujillo [Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina] by bringing the OAS pressure to bear. There was a chance to remedy a wrong--the Marine occupation out of which Trujillo came. To establish a democracy in the Dominican Republic would be an enormous success to counter the Castro situation in Cuba. In other words, here was a Rightist dictator who had been overthrown, and replaced by democracy with our help. I think this was a general feeling but I am sure President Kennedy felt especially keenly that while this was a small country it was one whose political future was of great importance to the U.S. and to his policy, and to the things he was trying to do in Latin America. He always expected that both in terms of personnel and assistance and other

measures we would give very top priority to the Dominican situation. Of course, the election of Bosch was a first rather major success; it was a good election even by our standards let alone Latin American standards. You had a leader elected by more than a majority of the people with majority control of his Congress. To follow up on this and keep him in office was a very important objective of policy. So the President was deeply interested and I think we had more sessions to go over the specifics and the details of Dominican policy at times when there wasn't an imminent crisis than for any other country. He took a very deep interest in it and came up with detailed suggestions about: "Can't you try to do this, or that, or the other thing?" When we'd presented him with a list of twenty courses of actions we were taking. He had a very personal interest in the Dominican Republic and the progress there.

MILLER: Was it any part of this interest or was it just a reflection of his interest that he had as an ambassador there someone whom he had known, I gather, from campaign days?

MARTIN: I don't know what went into the selection of John Martin as the ambassador. It is my impression that he worked with the Attorney General in the campaign. How well he had known the President I do not know. That was before I came into the position.

MILLER: Did the President have any feeling that his position and support of Bosch would be undercut by branches of the U.S. Government? Did he seem to reflect concern over the military role?

MARTIN: After the coup there were some reports on this. I think they may have been mentioned at meetings with him and this was certainly something that he didn't care for, but I don't recall this as a major issue with him. And this is a very difficult thing to prove. There were song charges made by one of the Senators that some American businessmen were doing this which were looked into pretty carefully, and I think that we did report to him what the story was and there were one or two who certainly spoke out, but speaking out is their privilege.

MILLER: Did the President have a deep concern that the U.S. Government was not united behind Bosch?

MARTIN: No.

MILLER: In the events immediately preceding the coup, did the President keep himself well informed, as you recall? Was the cable traffic going to him?

MARTIN: I feel sure he was being kept rather well informed although the coup came rather quickly, but in the few days just before I am sure he was kept informed by Mr. Dungan.

MILLER: The…. After the coup occurred let's see, my schedule does not indicate exactly what meetings, if any, you had with the President.

MARTIN: October 4 was on the Dominican Republic, according to my records, and October 16 was on the Dominican Republic. There's another one that's not shown here on November 1, on the Dominican Republic and Honduras, with the President. There are several during this period.

MILLER: At this time the AID Bill was before the Congress and in fact, was being debated on the floor of the Senate. In your discussion with the President on this problem; political factor on the AID Bill's success loom in his consideration of this problem?

MARTIN: Yes, it did, and I would like to make a little more extended comment about some of the statements about this and how they developed. On the policy side, first perhaps, I think there was very general agreement on what should be done in terms of recognition and aid and so forth in the early period after the Honduran and Dominican coups took place. The President was very much concerned at the congressional reaction in certain quarters that these two coups in the Dominican Republic and Honduras reflected a collapse of the Alliance for Progress. They showed that it wasn't worth trying. They pointed out that these two were in top two early in the year in Guatemala and Ecuador. They were using this as a springboard to attack the Alliance appropriation. This was a matter of great concern to the President. He didn't feel it was a correct appraisal of either these specific situations or the totality of the Alliance and he was anxious to counteract this.

One of the things he did reflecting this political sensitivity at one of the early meetings was to--it may well have been the meeting on Friday, the 4th--to issue instructions that nobody was to talk to the press about the Dominican Republic except myself. This was, I believe, designed to put wraps on John Martin--now for what basis I am not quite clear--but John was just back, he had many friends, including the press crops, and they were anxious to talk to him. The President felt there ought to be a centralized press contact and so for two or three weeks I was the only one who was supposed to do any talking. But there also came up the question of public statements, and on the whole, particularly in view of his reactions to the Peru public statement, we were disposed to act but say little. This was the general policy. However, on late Thursday the 3rd, I believe, it would be, I got a phone call saying John Whitney [John Hay Whitney] who had been my ambassador in London, had told his people that he would like to give me a chance to make a statement about the Alliance for Progress, perhaps the recent military coup developments, and they would publish it in the *Sunday Herald Tribune* and guaranteed (1) it would be published, and (2) they wouldn't change a word, and I could choose the length. It occurred to me, in view of our concern, that this might be an opportunity to present our point of view and to counteract some of these congressional criticisms. But I also knew that this was something the President, in view of his relations with the on the AID Bill would have to decide and that he couldn't decide without knowing what could be said and whether this would in fact be useful. Thursday--the

International Bank and Fund meetings were in town and we were at dinner parties every night--after the dinner I came back to the State Department to see the papers that had been prepared on Dominican and Honduran policy, because we had a meeting with the President at five o'clock on Friday. They were not satisfactory and I rewrote them and then went home.

I had been thinking about the coup statement and between twelve and one I wrote a coup statement and had it typed up the next morning, took it over to chat with Dungan about noon, and he looked at it and we agreed to ask the President that night at the five o'clock meeting what he thought about the possibility of issuing the statement and having this for him if he wished to see a possible text. Dungan also said that the pressure on the Hill was building up and they now thought that they probably ought to have a statement specifically on the Dominican Republic situation, probably from Secretary Rusk, and he had done a very rough draft. I went over and got it, took it back, and in the course of the afternoon went over it with George Ball, we called the Secretary who was in New York at the UN meetings and he made one or two small changes and cleared it. Thus, we went into the five o'clock meeting (1) to get approval of a specific course of action in relation to the politics of trying to get the Dominicans back onto some kind of a course directed toward constitutional government; (2) we had the Secretary's statement which the President approved and which was released immediately; and (3) we had the idea that my statement might appear in the *Herald Tribune*. I outlined in general for the President the sort of thing I had in mind saying, and he said, "I think you ought to put more in it on the progress the Alliance has been making in dealing with the coup problem, the changes in the military attitude--something more positive--evidence of achievement in this whole field rather than just some of the negative aspects." I agreed this could readily be justified, but also offered to leave a copy with him of the draft I had then. He said "I'd like to read it. You leave it here." I assume he did read it in the course of the evening. I worked on it after dinner and early Saturday morning. Dungan, about ten o'clock or so, sent over suggested redrafts of several paragraphs based on, I gather, his conversation with the President after the President had read it. I then did a further draft consolidating all of these suggestions. At this point I told the *Herald Tribune* "It looks like the President will approve, but I can't give you final word until early Saturday afternoon." About one, I guess, I got word back from Dungan that the President had okayed the new draft that I had sent over at 11:30 or something like that to the White House, and it was okay to let it go. Up to that point I had been rushing drafts back and forth to the White House under great pressure--the President was going out of town right after lunch so I had to get his okay before he left or not at all. The Secretary was in New York and I tried to reach George Ball, but he had left for the day. The *Herald Tribune* said they had to have it by two o'clock, so I sent it to them, and it was published the next day. But so far as I knew, while I didn't sit there while the President read it, he had seen two drafts, according to my contacts with Dungan, and had okayed the final one.

There was a rather considerable negative reaction in some quarters. I went on the *Today Show* Monday morning at eight o'clock, and my interviewer asked a number of questions suggesting this was an approval of military regimes and I did my best to emphasize that there were three places where it said we were firmly against them at the start, in the middle, and at the end. What this was a tactical approach to what you could

do with the real problem of a government once it had taken power. That afternoon I spoke to the group of editors and publishers and TV people--we had in the department one of these national briefing sessions auxiliary with 500 of them in--and again I tried to emphasize the positive aspects of the statement because the *Post* that morning had picked up rather strongly the negative aspects. Unfortunately too the *Herald Tribune* had copyrighted the story contrary to our rules, and while we had given it to other papers and told them it was not copyrighted nobody else had printed it, so most people had read the accounts about it in papers like the *Post* but very few people had read the *Herald Tribune* which was the only one with the full text. And the Senate reaction was rather sharp on the Monday, too, but as I say I tried to balance out on the positive side at the Monday sessions.

On Tuesday the President called me. He was having a press conference on Wednesday and I was leaving Wednesday for the Argentine inauguration. He called me and said "I gather we are getting some rather strong negative reaction from some of the Latin American ambassadors on this statement. It caused quite a lot of trouble." I said, "I have not gotten any negative reaction. I have had several of them call me to say they thought it was a fine statement but I can imagine that some of them might be disturbed, particularly about the press accounts and that I was disturbed about the way the press accounts had picked up certain sentences out of context and emphasized what looked to them like approval of coups or acceptance of coups or complimenting the military for their progress." He said, "I think at my press conference I ought to hit the other side." I replied that I thought this was right that I had done so twice the day before and I thought he ought to continue it; that we were drafting a statement for him to make for his press briefing paper which would be pointed in this direction. And before I left Tuesday night he okayed a press briefing statement which was substantially what he used on Wednesday.

I may say, just as a sidelight, one of the more vigorous critics apparently was the Venezuelan Ambassador. And when I got back from Argentina he said he would like to have a little seminar with me to discuss it--what was wrong with it. I said "Fine." When he came in he said, "I've just read it for the third time and I agree with it a hundred percent." But he thought it is perhaps questionable to publish in a newspaper something that has to be read three times to be understood fully. I also pointed out to them that some phrases were put the way they were because the President's principal interest was in the situation in the Senate on the Alliance appropriation.

Subsequently on the way down to Argentina I was handed on the plane by Dungan a memorandum which Mr. Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.] had prepared for the President in about three pages attacking the statement rather vigorously and putting in that certain Latin American ambassadors had attacked it. I assume that this was the reason for the President's call to me. I agreed with some things Mr. Schlesinger said, but not with others and I wrote him a little memorandum back, and we are still good friends.

MILLER: But as far as your understanding is of the President's view toward military coups in Latin America, the statement which you prepared and which he had reviewed, did not reflect any real change?

MARTIN: It did not. I did a statement for *U.S. News & World Report* in May 1962, which said substantially the same things, and this was the policy which we followed in the Argentine case and each one of the cases, adapted, of course, to the particular circumstances. And it was the policy which I think the President held although as reflected in his comments on the Peruvian case and also in some comments he made on the Dominican and Honduran cases subsequently he was somewhat more pragmatic than some of us would have been. I think it was about the first of November when we had a meeting on the Dominican and Honduran situations with the President, one which is not shown on this record, at which the President said that, "If it were not for the Congress I'm sure we ought to recognize now." I wasn't sure that the time had quite come. I would have waited....

MILLER: This would be for the Dominican Republic?

MARTIN: Both the Dominican Republic and Honduras. I didn't think we were going to get much more out of them than we had gotten up to that point, but I was willing to keep trying for another two or I feared the situation was deteriorating into possible chaos and disorder which would be bad and could result in a government of the extreme Right or Left which would be less satisfactory, with less prospects of return to a democratic regime than provided by the present ones. But the President's instincts were also very pragmatic in these matters.

MILLER: Pragmatic in the sense that he would be willing to recognize the status quo....

MARTIN: Get what he can out of it in terms of progress but where you can't get it, where there's no popular sentiment against the regime, you have to work with it and live with it and do the best you can with it. This is what we did fairly promptly in both Guatemala and in Ecuador without any discussion or argument because in both cases there was a rather general movement and there was no local sentiment to try to build on, to put pressures on them to make immediate commitments to a constitutional government. The leverage of the U.S. from outside, AID or no AID, is extremely limited. Now in the Dominican Republic and in Honduras there were still elements which gave some hope that by working with them and putting pressure on the regime we could get helpful statements. And we did get statements from both parties before we finally recognized, looking to a return to constitutional government. But the matter of judgment is to decide when you've squeezed as much blood out of the turnip as you can by applying pressure and when you can better on the whole and prevent worse things happening by working with the government and stabilizing a situation. I think President Kennedy was very concerned about instability and the opportunities for the Communists to take advantage of unstable governments which did not have a certain degree of authority. He was concerned that the military represented an anti-Communist force in Latin America which we had to recognize and reckon with and not destroy as such as force. But when we were talking about the situation in Haiti, for example, and

also in the Cuba case--possibilities of changes in governments--he was consistently preoccupied with "what have we got to take its place? How do we know it will be better?" This is a very good question.

MILLER: Your article, which did cause a certain amount of comment on Capitol Hill especially, I gather was determined to be released to explain publicly U.S. posture, and especially in view of the AID legislative situation?

MARTIN: Both to explain the U.S. posture and to indicate that the Alliance was a program which was addressing the problem of military coups in a number of different ways, both by strengthening civilian governments and orienting the military toward more peaceful and professional pursuits, and that we were making progress in this effort and the Alliance was changing the social climate in Latin America. If you were doing a statement without regard to the congressional situation as of that time the amount of space you might devote to different pieces of this might be different. In other words, the emphasis took cognizance of this fact, but I don't think the facts themselves would be changed materially. I think it was misunderstood partly because of this matter of emphasis, partly because many of the people who read it reacted without enough thought or were very sensitive to anything that was being said on this subject and they say the things that excited them and not the things that could have been reassuring. I think some of it was picked up by people who were against the AID program to start with and were looking for sticks to beat it with, and I don't need to name names in this regard, I don't think. But I think possibly that if we had not had a twenty-four hour deadline practically speaking and had spent several weeks developing a statement it might have been somewhat more carefully worded in one or two respects but I wouldn't have thought this would have made any serious difference in the public reaction to this statement which I still think is a correct statement of the general situation in Latin America and of a proper U.S. policy toward it.

MILLER: Did the President have any meetings with congressional figures on this subject at which you were present?

MARTIN: No. Not that I was present. I think he may have had some. I gathered from Dungan there may have been some, but not that I was present.

MILLER: The Dominican Republic case excited somewhat more interest than the Honduran but they were so close in time that they tended to become bracketed. Were they bracketed in the President's mind or did he tend to deal with them separately?

MARTIN: Well I think they were bracketed in the sense that "Here's two more--for God's sake is this going to start a trend?" I mean it's two more coming so close. I think what he was very much concerned that on top of the two earlier in the year that this might give ideas in Venezuela in particular, in Colombia,

possibly in Argentina, and this could create a very serious situation. And in Venezuela in particular, with the election coming up and the position which we took had this in mind.

There's one other comment I'd like to make on this. There was quite a lot of attempt made in the papers and elsewhere to distinguish between Rusk's statement, which was a strong statement against the Dominican and Honduran coups and the more general statement in the *Herald Tribune*. As far as I could see, having participated fairly actively in drafting both of them on the same day and both having been approved in substance by the President at the same meeting, the Rusk statement was an application of the tactic which was described in the general statement to the particulars of the two situations in the Dominican Republic and Honduras. In other situations the Rusk statement would have been inappropriate. It was an application where text was influenced by the senatorial reaction, but still pointed, as the general statement was, in the direction of the position, not that we would not recognize until there was a constitutional government but rather that we would not do so until there was a change in the current situation--and a change in the current situation meant an announcement of a plan to return to constitutional government, no a return itself. This language was very carefully drawn with this intention in mind, including some rewording of this language by the Secretary himself.

MILLER: As far as the President was concerned, did he at the meeting Friday, the meeting you had at which these papers were presented, as well as a discussion of the problem, was he presented at that meeting with any alternative courses of action such as cut off everything forever until they actually do return to constitutionalism?

MARTIN: Not to my knowledge.

MILLER: As far as the meeting at which you and Mr. Dungan were present....

MARTIN: That was a very large meeting that Friday. The military were present and Ambassador Martin was present and George Ball. No, I don't think any real alternative courses of action were offered. I think the military was on the whole concerned about keeping out of touch too long with the military and other elements in those two countries, and we did have quite a lot of difficulty in getting the military to withdraw their people in accordance with a reasonable schedule and had to get some Presidential help in that regard--White House help....

MILLER: Well that's all....

MARTIN: I think that's all at this time.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

Edwin M. Martin
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