

5. On April 3, the State Department issued a White Paper on Cuba⁶ (our telegram 1054 April 4)† in which it was stated among other things that if USA's call on Castro to cut his links with communism went unheeded, USA was confident that the Cuban people would continue their struggle to free Cuba, with the support it was hoped, of the other Republics of Latin America.

6. On April 5, Miro Cardona visited Washington for discussions with State Department officials, including A.A. Berle Jr. and Philip Bonsal, most recent USA Ambassador to Cuba. (Berle has since been described as among those favouring an armed attack on Cuba.) On the following day, the Cuban Foreign Minister, Raul Roa, once again charged in the UN that preparations were under way for an assault on Cuba. On April 7 and 8, *New York Times* despatches from Miami reported greatly increased activity in Cuba military camps, including the purchase of large quantities of medical supplies and blood plasma. Camps in Florida and Louisiana were being closed down, and men were being moved to "advanced" bases, including Guatemala, by unmarked aircraft. The *New York Times* noted that USA authorities had developed "an extraordinary tolerance for these activities, as if by tacit agreement to look the other way."

7. On April 8, Cardona announced in New York that uprisings against Castro in Cuba were "imminent," but declined to be specific. On the following day the Council issued a hortatory proclamation, in effect a call to arms. Further *New York Times* reports from Miami on April 9 indicated that a "major strategy revision" had been worked out by the Council's forces; it had been agreed that instead of a major invasion, the exiles' efforts would be directed towards multiple small scale guerrilla type landings. This was reported to have been a victory for the Ray faction, which considered any large scale invasion attempt to be probably doomed to failure.

8. By April 10, the press was reporting concern in USA Government quarters; the *New York Times* maintained that within the previous two weeks "a sharp policy dispute has developed within the Kennedy Administration about how far to go in helping the Cuban refugees to overthrow the Castro Government;" conflicting advice was coming from the State Department, Defense Department, and Central Intelligence Agency. As if to settle these doubts, at his press conference on April 12 the President categorically stated that USA forces would not repeat not in any circumstances intervene in Cuba and expressed opposition to the mounting of any "offensive" from USA territory. It now seems clear that the President made these statements in the knowledge that an attack was imminent. Several days later reports from Miami indicated that Cuban leaders there did not repeat not believe that the President's announced opposition to actions from USA soil would interfere with their preparations.

9. On April 15 came what was apparently the first move in the planned attack; the bombing of three Cuban air bases by a number of aircraft, reportedly flown by defectors from the Cuban Air Force, although the precise nature of this operation remains obscure. Castro, charging that the attacks were the prelude to an invasion organized by USA, ordered general mobilization and proclaimed a state of national alert. The landings began on the morning of April 17, and the invading forces appear to have been able to survive for only some two days.

10. In his press conference of April 17, Secretary Rusk said in his opening statement that USA was determined to ensure that no repeat no Americans would participate in any actions in Cuba. He further stated that USA was not repeat not intervening in Cuba and that it did not repeat not intend to do so in the future, emphasizing that "what happens in Cuba, is for the Cuban people themselves." To a question he replied that what was going on in Cuba "was not repeat not taking place from American soil."

⁶ Voir/See *Cuba*, Department of State Publication 7171, Inter-American Series 66, April 1961.