

October 10, 1962

Speech by Senator Keating, "Cuba"

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Summary:

Keating alleges that there are six IRBM bases being constructed by the Soviet Union in Cuba.

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CUBA

Mr. KEATING. Mr. President, yesterday I spoke on the subject of Cuba. At that time I did not have fully confirmed the matter to which I shall address myself now. I now have it fully confirmed. As a result, I call upon the appropriate Government officials to confirm or to deny reports of intermediate range missile bases in Cuba.

Construction has begun on at least a half dozen launching sites for intermediate range tactical missiles. Intelligence authorities must have advised the President and top Government officials of this fact, and they must now have been told that ground-to-ground missiles can be operational from the island of Cuba within 6 months.

My own sources on the Cuban situation, which have been 100 percent reliable, have substantiated this report completely.

When are the American people going to be given all of the facts about the military buildup in Cuba?

Yesterday I pointed out, for either the 19th or 20th time, that we are not getting the whole story on Cuba. I referred to the recent testimony by Under Secretary of State George Ball before the House Select Committee on Export Control. Presumably the report was supposed to be in line with the President's commitment of September 4 that, "We shall continue to make information available as fast as it is obtained and properly verified."

I stated that Mr. Ball had confirmed facts which some of us had previously reported; that he had identified three, possibly four, short-range missile sites in Cuba. I commented, however, that the significant sentence in his testimony, which was buried away, perhaps in the hope that no one would notice it, was this: "Quite likely several more such sites will be installed."

The fact of the matter is, according to my reliable sources, that six launching sites are under construction—pads which will have the power to hurl rockets into the American heartland and as far as the Panama Canal Zone.

Why would Under Secretary Ball give the committee the impression that new missile sites were a possibility rather than a fact? Even as possibilities, he indicated they would be short range rather than intermediate range missile sites. Why has such a veil been thrown around Cuba, keeping this new information from the American people? Are they still trying to perpetuate the myth that the buildup is defensive? Is it possible anyone in Government is childish enough to believe this?

According to Mr. Walter Lippmann's column of yesterday, the United States has "an elaborate system of surveillance by sea, by air, and by land and there is every reason to think that its accuracy is very high. Little of military interest can happen without our knowing it. We do not have to guess. We know."

If this is true, our Government is well aware of the fact that within a matter of months, Cuba may have the capability of launching intermediate range missiles, but the American people are being kept in the dark. The Soviets know the

fact. The Cubans know this fact. But in the view of the administration our people are not entitled to know it.

Mr. President, let us have all the facts, and have them now.

U.S. WEAPONS RESEARCH

Mr. HUMPHREY. Mr. President, I would not want this session of Congress to conclude without the privilege of offering a few comments on the problem facing the United States in the one area in the world where the cold war is a very hot war. I refer to the fighting in Vietnam.

I will not at this late hour attempt to comment on the many phases of the Vietnamese situation in any detail.

It is, however, gratifying to note that, in recent months, the tide may well have turned for the forces of freedom against the Communist guerrillas of the north.

Under the leadership of President Kennedy and the active followthrough by Secretary of Defense McNamara, U.S. advisory and support forces have helped Vietnam seize the offensive in many areas.

A number of striking successes have been achieved.

The Vietnamese Army, civil guard, and self-defense corps have been greatly strengthened. They are far better led, manned, and equipped than they were a year ago.

This we can attribute to the advisory group of the U.S. military forces, and of course to the improvement in the overall training of the Vietnamese forces.

The vast program of construction of 2,300 strategic villages, with protective perimeters, has been advancing steadily.

There is strong evidence that Viet Cong forces are finding increasing difficulty in maintaining or winning the support of the peasant population in many areas.

This, I believe, is the most reassuring development of all.

LONG OVERDUE REFORMS

All is not as we might wish it, however.

The reforms which many Americans have long sought on the part of President Diem—economic, military, political, social—are still a long way from realization.

ABRIDGMENT OF REPORTERS' FREEDOM
OBJECTIONABLE

Vietnamese press censorship and interference with foreign correspondents is hardly reassuring.

We Americans have learned to be skeptical of general situations when the right of American reporters to travel and report freely is seriously abridged. We are rightly skeptical of dispatches which seem to depend overly on official press-agentry, because our correspondents are not permitted to go where they want to, when they want to, to check up for themselves.

The Republic of Vietnam has the right to manage its own affairs in its own way; we are its ally, but also its guests within its borders.

The fact, however, that it is American men who are being shot at in helicopters or ambushed while on training missions

does give us the right to speak frankly, as friends to the government of a courageous leader, President Diem.

And, of course, it is American taxpayers' money which is paying the big financial bill.

This is witnessed by the amount of money in the recent foreign aid appropriation for this area of the world.

COMMENDATION OF U.S. FORCES

But it is human lives that count—American boys' lives and Vietnamese lives, in defense of freedom.

I cannot express too high or warm a commendation to the Army and Marine helicopter pilots, or the American soldiers who have been training Vietnamese troops in forward areas.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article appearing in Tuesday's New York Times describing the fighting in Vietnam be printed at this point in my remarks. This article illustrates the massive difficulties we face in maintaining such limited war operations.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

VIETNAM WAS A FRUSTRATING HUNT FOR
ELUSIVE FOX

(By David Halberstam)

AP MY DIEM, VIETNAM, October 7.—"The enemy lives and fights like a swamp rat," said an American adviser to the Government forces here, "and there is only one way to fight him—the same way."

The war in South Vietnam is an endlessly wet and frustrating business that involves wading shoulder high in rice paddies in the Mekong Delta avoiding Communist man-traps and chasing an elusive, determined enemy over terrain that favors leeches over men, pursued over pursuer.

The conflict in South Vietnam has its particular horrors and pathos. Probably nothing is worse, so far as Americans are concerned, than the way the struggle moves back and forth across the land, taking the lives of simple peasants.

A major operation this weekend in Dinh Tuong Province involving more than 1,000 Government troops offered an insight into some of the agonies of this guerrilla war. The target was a stronghold of the Vietcong, the Communist guerrillas.

The Vietcong stronghold was in rich rice-land along a canal. The attack started at daybreak, with helicopters landing Vietnamese troops in waist-high paddies on the outskirts of a cluster of huts here.

The attack started almost immediately for C Company. The men moved out by a slow, tiring crawl through the marsh toward the village. The village was reached with almost no shooting.

Inside the peasant huts there were only frightened women and children. Young men are never found. They would be suspected as Communists so they slip away to hiding places the moment the first helicopter is heard.

Later C Company learned that not all peasants had been so lucky. One company landed near three peasants in a field with water buffalo.

The three started to run. One was killed by automatic-weapons' fire and two were eventually captured. The men were taken into town for questioning.

According to the villagers, the two men were the poorest peasants in the area. One, the father of four children, was unemployed. The other was a widower, so poor he could not afford to remarry.

For C company, the next step was to spread out along the length of the canal, providing

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