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# Altered perceptions : exposing the political alignment of the American Press during the Cuban period of the Cold War, 1959-1962

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A Thesis

entitled

Altered Perceptions; Exposing the Political Alignment of the American Press During the  
Cuban Period of the Cold War, 1959-1962.

by

Stephanie Crawford

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Master of Arts Degree in History

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The University of Toledo

May 2011

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An Abstract of

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Encompassing the years of 1959-1962, the Cuban period is categorized as the most dangerous period in the Cold War, in which political tensions allowed the world to reach the point of atomic brinkmanship. Heavily documented by the American Press, two major Eastern newspapers, the Democratically inclined *New York Times* and the more conservative *Chicago Tribune*, provided distinctly different perceptions of American action relating to Cuba. Review of contrasting information presented within the two newspapers reveals the considerable political influence affecting the portrayal of the invasive actions of the United

States beginning with the Cuban Revolution and ending with the resigned peace following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

Prior to the 1958-59 Cuban Revolution, the United States enjoyed considerable influence and economic success in Cuba under the Government of Fulgencio Batista. The removal of the Batista Government by the revolutionary forces of Fidel Castro in late 1958 provoked excessive American attempts to manipulate the Provisional Government, with little success. Initial reporting within the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* demonstrate the visible divisions between Press coverage, influenced by each paper's respective political affiliations. Despite an initially confusing presentation of unfolding Cuban events, the *New York Times* quickly adopted a position reflecting the overt support of the Eisenhower Administration, while the *Chicago Tribune* adopted a reserved policy, gradually adopting an anti-Castro outlook following the perceived infringements against American industry in Cuba.

While Press coverage during the initial year of the Castro Government, provides a critical baseline for perceptions of the American Press, the deceptive actions of the Kennedy Administration during 1961 and again in 1962 produced visible divisions in the perception both Fidel Castro and the Kennedy Administration. Placing the Cuban period within the proper context of the Cold War, the reflections of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* are indicative of the capability of political affiliations to alter the presentation of pertinent information to public, while simultaneously shaping global perceptions of the American Government.

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## Preface

“The Cuban Revolution has lasted four years and has transformed the country’s political, economic and social structure, even though the transformation seems a tragic one to many Americans and Cubans. But no revolution of this type lasts, and the United States must plan for a day when the Cubans will have the opportunity to install a democratic regime of their own-not one imposed by us-that carries out the original aspirations of the revolution in a climate of freedom”<sup>1</sup> *NYT* December 1, 1962.

The Cold War, a bitter battle of the world’s belligerent superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, succeeded in endangering world security in the struggle to gain superiority in order to achieve global hegemony. Once guarded allies, political greed allowed the two nations to engage in a fierce competition to disseminate their respective ideologies gaining political superiority in areas throughout the world. Interest in areas outside of Central Europe, namely Guatemala, and eventually Cuba resulted in the earliest confrontations of the 1950s, areas of active violence, fueled by the propagandized motives of both superpowers. Ideological divisions provided the American justification for interference in both Guatemala and Cuba, emphasizing the importance of containment

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<sup>1</sup> “The Cuban Dilemma” 1 December 1962 *The New York Times*, 19.

and overt support of so called struggling democracies. The Cuban situation is emblematic of the fallacy of U.S. motives. Prior to 1959, the United States had enjoyed an unashamedly one sided trade relationship with Cuba. Under the Batista regime, the U.S. enjoyed noteworthy control of many Cuban “public utilities”, in addition to use of Cuban land for American business ventures including the United Fruit Company, in exchange for ignorance toward the abuse of the Cuban people. By 1959, frustrated with years of mistreatment, revolutionaries from all strata’s of society under the leadership of a young Fidel Castro successfully staged a revolution unseating the American endorsed Fulgencio Batista, ending a significant period of American centric Cuban policy.

From the beginning the objectives of the provisional Cuban government under Fidel Castro embodied the foundations of a diplomatic government. Asserting the dire need to reform portions of society, including education, the redistribution of land to internally displaced Cubans, and control of Cuban utilities, the democratic aims of the new government posed a monumental threat to American interests. Under the guise of diplomatic friendship, the United States attempted to subtly maintain control of its Cuban possessions. However, met with limited success the U.S. readily embarked upon a propaganda mission intended to taint and discredit Castro in order to solidify its ongoing quest for control of Latin America.

The role of the American Press became particularly important in the quest to discredit Fidel Castro. While numerous newspapers existed in 1959, two widely read American papers, the liberal *New York Times*, and the conservative *Chicago Tribune* paint a decidedly different portrayal of the events occurring throughout the Cuban conflict. Relying largely on State Department rhetoric it is clear from an early juncture

that the *New York Times* acts for nearly two years as the beacon of government propaganda. Initially optimistic about the transfer of friendship from Batista to Castro, the paper reflects the U.S. Government's early ambitions for continued influence within the Cuban Government. As the United States government grew frustrated with Castro's insistence on fostering a new trade friendship, free of restrictive foreign influence, the *New York Times* subsequently displayed an increasingly more condemning attitude, questioning the political allegiances of the Cuban leader. Capitalizing on the imbedded American fear of communist influence, the U.S. sought to create a situation in which Cuba could be vilified as an extension of Soviet communistic influence, a political affiliation in which American intervention would theoretically go unquestioned. This propaganda move, clearly noted in the *New York Times*, led to headlines fearing Soviet subversives overtaking the Cuban Government, revealing Castro as a mere pawn of Soviet aggression toward the United States.

In contrast, the *Chicago Tribune* demonstrates reservations surrounding the Cuban Revolution from the earliest points, refraining from character assessments of the new Cuban leader in the opening days of January 1959. Initially reporting only on the Cuban bureaucratic developments, the paper reflects a disconnect between the conclusions of the editorial staff and the United States Government. Only after the April 1959 publication of Castro's speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, in which the Cuban ruler clearly identifies his personal objectives for domestic reform, specifically emphasizing the need to maintain Cuban sovereignty, does the *Chicago Tribune* adopt a negative portrayal of the Cuban leader. Growing increasingly skeptical of Castro's intentions, by summer of 1959 the *Tribune* is critical of Cuba's deteriorating

relationship with the U.S., attempting to blame Cuba for the growing American recession. Unlike the *New York Times*, the *Tribune* lambasts Castro for his domestic policies, including the mistreatment of the Cuban people. Although fear of a communist stronghold in Cuba is eventually reflected within the *Tribune* by late 1959, Castro's role in communist influence substantially differs from the portrayal of the *New York Times*. Crediting Castro as a lifelong communist, the *Tribune* asserts Castro's willing adherence to tenets of Soviet communism, eventually indicating its own notions of a communist conspiracy against the United States.

While the period of 1959-1960 is important in providing the background for relations between the United States and Cuba and for providing an introduction to depictions of events in the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, the remaining two years of the Cuban crisis are undoubtedly the most decisive years in terms of both government escalation and press reporting. The imagination of John F. Kennedy as President in 1961 had a tremendous impact regarding the attitude of the press, specifically that of the *New York Times*. Initially ecstatic about the election of JFK, weeks of newspaper headlines are dedicated to analysis of his inauguration speech, containing important references to the new administration's positions on Cuba and the Soviet Union. Adhering to the former hard line attitude of the Eisenhower Administration, Kennedy is quoted numerous times emphasizing the superiority of the United States in the Western Hemisphere, yet his desire to again establish peaceful relations with Cuba. Within days of his inauguration, the *New York Times* emphasizes the impression the inauguration speech has left on political foes of the U.S., including Fidel Castro, who reportedly disbanded his army in hopes of renewed relations under the more amicable Kennedy. Other reports

range beyond optimistic, asserting that Kennedy's power affects even Soviet Premier Khrushchev, who was reported to speak carefully with the new President.

Given such admiration for the new president, it is not surprising that the publisher of the *New York Times* Orvil Dryfoos and Managing Editor Turner Catledge were amicable to a request made by the Kennedy Administration in late March 1961 requesting that the paper omit any mention of an invasion of the Cuban mainland for reasons of national security. Satisfied with Kennedy's personal assurances that the United States was not and would not be involved in any aspect of a rebel invasion of Cuba, the *Times* continuously supported the President in refuting Cuban claims of an anticipated invasion throughout mid April 1961. Following the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion and the revelation of U.S. involvement, the *New York Times* felt betrayed and its editorial tone radically shifted course to an extremely anti-Kennedy position.

While the *Chicago Tribune* did not share in the jubilation of the *New York Times* during its celebration of President Kennedy's inauguration, the paper was not particularly anti-Kennedy in any respect. The major distinction between the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* during this period is reflected in the *Tribune's* decision to ignore the censorship request of the Kennedy Administration, evident in the sheer amount of coverage preceding the Bay of Pigs invasion. While the *New York Times* respected the request of President Kennedy to refrain from publishing details relating to the rebel invasion, the *Tribune* is suggested impending political plots, publishing an array of official U.S. denials and foreign reports about the existence of U.S. sponsored anti-Castro training centers. Consequently, devoid of the humiliation expressed within the *New York Times*, the *Tribune* began cautiously criticizing the Kennedy Administration for its lack

of direct action against the communist threat in Cuba and abroad, now linking the crisis in Cuba directly to Soviet influence.

In what initially appeared to be a seemingly desperate attempt to compensate for the errors of the failed invasion, the *Tribune's* allegations of increasing Soviet influence in Cuba proved accurate. The final year of the Cuban crisis, encompassing the period of brinkmanship known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, was reflected with increasing panic in both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*. Stemming from continued Cold War tensions, and the placement of United States Jupiter Missiles in Turkey, within proximity of Moscow, the construction of a Soviet missile base on Cuba should have been a foreseeable reaction given the history of the arms race. As a result, both newspapers provided rather critical reflections of the Kennedy administration's failures since assuming office in 1961, leading the *New York Times* to question whether the nation was destined for a third world war. Among apocalyptic claims, and government escalation of the crisis, the *Times* surprisingly reverted to a defensive position, once again supporting the decisions of the Kennedy Administration. Conversely, the reactions of the *Chicago Tribune* are dedicated to criticisms of Castro in relation to other humanitarian events occurring simultaneously in Cuba, in addition to allocating blame for the missile crisis as a result of Castro's friendship with the Soviet Union.

This thesis argues that despite relative proximity and political standing, two major American newspapers presented the same events in entirely different manners. Using the three year period of the Cold War dedicated to the Cuban conflict, it is possible to trace the gradually shifting perspective of both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* as different political encounters shape the perceptions given to the general public.

Especially important is the substantial difference in the adherence of the *New York Times* to the rhetoric of the United States Government, a position reflecting the paper's obsession with the newly elected President Kennedy.

In order to substantiate the claims made in both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* a thorough historiography of the period must be examined. In the process of researching this project, it was necessary to including a considerable amount of scholarship spanning numerous fields of study including; the Cold War in general, Soviet post war foreign policy, Cold War theory, the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis and a history of the American press.

Within the field of the general Cold War, the work of John Lewis Gaddis was central in establishing the foundations for the onset of the Cold War it. Using his monographs including *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States; An Interpretive History* and *We Now Know; Rethinking the Cold War*, the realities of tensions inspired over the course of the preceding decades, intensified following dissatisfaction during post World War II treaty negotiations, are brought to light, emphasizing the foundations for the quest for global domination. Also important in the area of Cold War studies is the compilation edited by Klaus Larres and Anne Lane, *The Cold War; the Essential Readings*, which provide context for many events occurring during the Cold War, including the Cuban Missile Crisis, allowing for a thorough understanding of the Missile Crisis's place within the Cold War in general.

Sources relating to Soviet post war foreign policy were also of the utmost importance to this project. Alvin Z. Rubinstein's *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II; Imperial and Global*, and Anatol Rapoport's *The Big Two; Soviet-American Perceptions of Foreign Policy*, and Robert H. Donaldson's *The Foreign Policy of Russia; Changing Systems Enduring Interests*, highlight the motivations behind the official resumption of Soviet-Cuban trade in 1960 and to highlight the potential opportunity for further aggravation of the United States. In addition, both works demonstrate the Soviet intent to use Cuba as a means of ensuring further capability in the arms race, using Cuba as a launch site for a potential nuclear attack on the United States.

In addition to the history of the Cold War, specifically examining the U.S. foreign policy regarding the Soviet Union, the intense focus upon American newspaper sources within this thesis require dedicated research of not only the newspaper sources themselves, but the history of the American Press. While the work of Joseph Campbell, *Getting It Wrong Ten of the Greatest Misreported Stories in American Journalism*, provides a detailed argument against the *New York Times* decision to censor information relating to the Bay of Pigs Invasion, he is largely concerned with the responsibilities of the American Press to the public. Similarly the work of James Aronson, *The Press and the Cold War*, was largely helpful in determining the rationale behind the *New York Times* decision to omit such information. It is important to note that while the work of Aronson also studies newspaper sources, including the period of the Bay of Pigs invasion, his argument, unlike the focus of this thesis, seeks to determine why the *New*

*York Times* chose to disregard its first amendment rights, not how the omission changed the future outlook of the paper.

This thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding of Cuban-American relations during the Cold War through a detailed analysis of the tumultuous years of 1959-1963. More importantly, this thesis is intended to demonstrate that the political perspective of both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* had a considerable influence on their decidedly different interpretation of the same events. Relying upon an abundance of primary source material in the form of newspaper articles, in conjunction with existing secondary source material, this thesis will attempt to assess claims made upon the basis of government propaganda and claims made based on the imbedded fears of the general Cold War. In essence, this thesis also illustrates, the tendency of newspapers to portray events according to their own political perspectives.

## Chapter One

### The Cuban Challenge; Regaining American Influence in Fidel Castro's Cuba

A victim of Cold War competition beginning in 1952, the onset of the Cuban Revolution in mid 1958 should not be regarded as a spontaneous event. The result of years of political oppression and abuse under the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, in combination with overtly excessive American influence, the Cuban Revolution represented the final frustrations of a tormented public. Adding to the Cuban complaints was the excessive American influence in nearly every facet of public society. Under the leadership of the young rebel Fidel Castro, the revolution succeeded in its initial aims of unseating the loathed Batista, implementing a provisional government, representative of highly democratic aims. Although Castro would eventually deviate from his initial objectives, forcing newly liberated Cubans to again experience the frustration many believed to have escaped, it is hardly plausible that this dramatic shift occurred without the outside interference of both the United States and later the Soviet Union.

This chapter will seek to argue that the American Press presented a divided and confused outlook of the Cuban Revolution that successfully demolished the comfortable arrangement the United States had fostered under the Batista regime. While some newspapers initially praised the Cuban rebels under the leadership of Fidel Castro, the tone rapidly changed to reflect panic and uncertainty, largely related to the now jeopardized stability of American business ventures centered in Cuba. Reflecting growing insecurities surrounding Castro's announced reforms, the State Department primarily concerned with the confiscation of land in use by the United Fruit Company, threatened economic sanctions in the false hope that the Castro Government would be unwilling to risk losing its major importer. After realizing that despite economic sanctions the Castro Government was unwilling to tolerate overwhelming U.S. influence, did the United States resort to allegations of ideological warfare and implement severe economic restrictions. Manipulating American fears of communist infiltration stemming from McCarthyism during the mid 1950s, the Eisenhower Administration exaggerated the fear of communism, directing pointed questions toward the new Cuban leaders' ideologies. Not satisfied by the printed public responses of Castro, the U.S. offered propagandized stories throughout the American press, insinuating Cuba's resistance to U.S. "guidance" was likely the result of a secret Soviet pact. Although little evidence existed in early 1959 tying Fidel Castro to any facet of the communist party, it is possible that the fabricated reports forced the new leader to seek assistance from a less ally.

The subject of Fidel Castro's rise to power and the subsequent renewal of trade relations with the Soviet Union have been well documented by scholars, specifically Yuri Pavlov. Pavlov's book, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance 1959-1991*, provides a detailed analysis

ranging from the revolutionary activity of Fidel Castro, through the developing conflicts with the United States in its struggle to maintain capitalist influence in Cuba. Of particular use was Pavlov's analysis of Fidel Castro's motivations for forming a unequal trade arrangement with the Soviet Union, in lieu of increasingly untenable conditions in relation to the exportation of sugar to the United States.<sup>2</sup> The work of Noam Chomsky, *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs*, is especially insightful about this topic because he provides a discussion regarding the transition from the Batista dictatorship to the Castro Regime, noting the considerable destruction of American influence, resulting in the marriage of Fidel Castro and the communist party.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Cold War theory in relation to the interaction between American capitalism and the increasingly communist Cuban government is well documented the work of Richard Saull, whose explanations provided useful comparisons to media reflections during the initial twenty four month period of 1959-1960.<sup>4</sup>

The harsh political conditions allowing Fidel Castro and other frustrated Cuban dissidents to overthrow the Batista regime stems from years of extreme dissatisfaction under dictatorial policies and dominant American influence. When the relationship between the Batista Government and the United States is examined, a confusing mixture of condemnation and opportunism is revealed, beginning with American influence under the Roosevelt Administration as early as 1938.<sup>5</sup> As World War II spread across Europe,

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<sup>2</sup> Yuri Pavlov. *Soviet-Cuban Alliance: 1959-1991*:New Brunswick MA; Transaction Publishers: 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Noam Chomsky. *Rouge States; The Rule of Force in World Affairs*, Cambridge MA; SouthEnd Press: 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Saull. *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War; the State, Military Power and Social Revolution*, Frank Cass Publishers; Portland, 2001, 179.

<sup>5</sup> Frank Argote-Freyre. *Fulgencio Batista; From Revolutionary to Strongman*, Rutgers University Press; New Brunswick NJ: 2007, 232.

the portrayal of Batista within the American Press reflects a level of disgust commiserate with the evils attributed to Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. The perception of Batista as inherently evil underwent a drastic transformation as the Cold War emerged, making Cuba a valuable political possession for its proximity to the United States. Reflective of increasing American capitalist presence in the country, growing influence in matters of the Cuban economy, the representation of Batista dramatically shifted from that of a dangerous dictator, to a treasured friend of American capitalism.<sup>6</sup> While American perceptions of Batista may have been altered by the press, the oppressive reality in Cuba continued to exist much to the disregard of the U.S. Government. Eventually unable to continue concealing the abusive policies of the Batista government, the Roosevelt Administration somewhat successfully exerted the building influence of American investors to force the Cuban Government to undergo a superficial transformation. Faced with endangering a crucial sugar trade agreement with the United States, Batista was forced to seek legitimate political support outside of his current corrupt political conspirators, forming the unlikely alliance with the Cuban Communist party.<sup>7</sup> While the ideological dispositions of Batista's new supporters provided a serious source of displeasure for the Roosevelt Administration, the temporary facade of a democratic government in Cuba was nothing more than a mirage created to appease the United States. In reality, as the oppressive policies of Batista continued to privately punish the Cuban citizens, the level of public tolerance reached its climax, providing the platform for revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 231.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 232.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 250.

While the Cuban Communist Party continued to enjoy influence in the Batista Government, relations with the Soviet Union were far from ideal. Tensions between the national communist party and the Soviet Union had reached a point of deterioration by March 1949 following the barring of Soviet ambassadors to Havana.<sup>9</sup> Resulting from the perceived belligerence of the Cuban Communist party, the priorities of the Soviet Union conveniently shifted away from Latin America, formally severing relations with the Cuban party in April of 1952.<sup>10</sup> In the days and months following the split, the Soviet Government continually denounced Cuba as a colony of “American monopolists” who were led by Batista, the “new American viceroy”.<sup>11</sup> The dissolution of the Soviet alliance provided the opportunity for the United States to renegotiate terms of the former trade agreement under conditions arguably more favorable to the United States than financially struggling Cuba. While analysis of U.S. motivations differ, this financially driven explanation is popular amongst Cold War theorists including Richard Saull, as noted in his 2001 manuscript, *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War: the State, Military Power and Social Revolutions*.<sup>12</sup>

The resumption of American aid to Cuba represents a transition during which Cuba became “. . . a virtual colony of the United States.”<sup>13</sup> Beginning in 1946, the Cuban economy underwent a gradual buildup of American interests, culminating in U.S. control of over fifty percent of Cuban “public utilities” including mines, cattle ranches, and oil refineries. These staggering numbers also extended into a fifty percent control of Cuban

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<sup>9</sup> Yuri Pavlov. *Soviet Cuban Alliance 1959-1991*, The University of Miami; Miami: 1994, 2-3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Saull, 181.

<sup>13</sup> Noam Chomsky. *Rogue States: the Rules of Force in World Affairs*, Cambridge MA; SouthEnd Press: 2000, 89.

railways, and forty percent control of the sugar industry, creating a serious economic dependence on the United States. Although the United States enjoyed wide spread of influence within the Cuban economy, the most significant presence can be found its considerable influence in the sugar industry. Although the U.S. only amassed a forty percent control of sugar production over eighty percent of Cuban sugar was exported annually to the United States, leaving the U.S. with the power to influence selling price and production of a prime imported commodity.<sup>14</sup> While the goal of the American Government sought to demonstrate the existence of a mutually beneficial trade alliance, the manipulative terms of the trade agreement knowingly indebted the Cuba to the United States. For example, during the final year of the Batista regime the Cuban Government imported a total of \$777 million dollars worth of product, while only exporting \$734 million dollars, producing a deficit of some \$43 million dollars.<sup>15</sup> Arguably engineered by American business interests, Cuban deficits were compensated by U.S. tourist expenditures and capital transfers from the United States and abroad in addition to the establishment of U.S. sponsored light industry.<sup>16</sup> In combination with a radical loss of independence, the serious financial difficulties incurred because of the American alliance fostered the political climate necessary for the revolutionary movement under Fidel Castro to succeed in toppling the Batista regime, ending American hegemony in Cuba.

Following a nearly yearlong struggle against Batista's forces, the revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro successfully took control of Cuba on 1 January 1959. Within twenty four hours of the implementation of the Cuban Provisional Government, headed by Fidel

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<sup>14</sup> James N. Cortada and James W. Cortada. *U.S. Foreign Policy in the Caribbean, Cuba and Central America*, Prager Publishers; New York: 1985, 137.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 141.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 142.

Castro, the American Press reflected a variety of positive appraisals and serious criticisms, early indicators of the forthcoming division of the Press. Reporting on 2 January 1959 an unsigned article published in the *New York Times*, entitled “Cuban Dictator Falls” celebrates the fall of the Batista regime, praising the newly implemented Cuban leader for his tenacity and bravery in battle.<sup>17</sup> While the author urges the American public to believe that the people of Cuba have only positive feelings and respect for the people of the United States, he cautions against believing the rhetoric of the State Department. The author claims the State Department, provided questionable data. Due to the preeminent influence of concerned American business interests, the State Department provides a skewed view of Castro as a threat, rather than a liberator. Accordingly, the article asserts that it was the State Department’s intention to persuade the American public that Cubans had become overwhelmingly anti-American, capable of harboring intense resentment against the U.S.<sup>18</sup> The author’s sympathy for the Cuban plight was uncharacteristic of the *New York Times*, urging the readership to ignore the State Department rhetoric during the transitional process.<sup>19</sup>

The tone expressed in this editorial is reflective of the initial optimism displayed in *the New York Times*, however additional articles featured in the same publication begin to uncover the increasingly negative attitude of the U.S State Department. Written by correspondent Arthur Krock, the article entitled “No Surprise Except For The Timing”, paints a more realistic picture of the unfolding situation. Detailing the situation in more detail, Krock stresses the nearly unanimous feeling in the State Department that

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<sup>17</sup> “Cuban Dictator Falls”, *The New York Times*, 2, January 1959, pg. 24.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 24.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 24.

U.S. aide without military intervention could not have saved the Batista regime.<sup>20</sup> Despite initial agreement, Krock foreshadows increasing divisions in reference to U.S. interests in the Caribbean, who frustrated with a lack of definitive intelligence regarding Castro's political path, purposely alluded to secret Soviet alliances, undoubtedly in an elaborate scheme to justify future American intervention.<sup>21</sup>

While Krock's article displays the emerging radical perspective of the State Department, the article "U.S. Aids Wary of Cuba's Future" conforms to the fabricated Government facade. Emphasizing Castro's unwillingness to divulge his true political affiliations, the author confirms the legitimate concerns harbored by the Eisenhower Administration about the security of American businesses in Cuba. Using the absence of a clear Cuban political outlook, the article implies the unwillingness of the U.S. to cooperate with the new Cuban Government. While Castro continually attempted to demonstrate that his positions were not anti-American, the U.S. dismissed such reports as inconclusive. Despite the *New York Times* attempts to justify the inexcusable disregard for Castro's attempts to clarify his positions, the ulterior motivations of the United States could not be completely dismissed.<sup>22</sup>

The early editorials of the *New York Times* display an uncertainty in the days following the establishment of the new Cuban Government. Decidedly unsure of the Cuban course, the *New York Times* adopted an overly cautious policy of reiterating the explanations of the State Department. Consequently, by early 1959, mentions of U.S. support for the revolutionaries all but disappeared. In contrast, another prominent

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<sup>20</sup> Arthur Krock. "No Surprise Except For The Timing", *The New York Times*, 2 January 1959, 24.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>22</sup> Dana Adams Schmidt. "U.S. Aids Wary of Cuba's Future", *The New York Times*, 2, January 1959, 1.

American newspaper, *The Chicago Tribune*, did not feature any substantial coverage during to the overthrow of the Batista regime, instead reporting only on the bureaucratic developments of the new Government.<sup>23</sup> In this way, the *Tribune* unlike the *Times* reserved its editorial opinion in the earliest hours of the transition phase, perhaps in order to reduce the confusion generated by the extensive *New York Times* coverage.

Despite the uncertainty reflected in the *New York Times*, the skeptical tone of Arthur Krock's article was reflected the U.S. government reaction. Fidel Castro's assumption of power was immediately problematic for the U.S., not because of any confirmed political affiliations, but because he succeeded in overthrowing the Batista regime without direct support or influence from American investors. The independence demonstrated by Castro in the earliest days of the new Provisional Government signaled to the United States that the domineering relationship it had cultivated during the previous decade would be changed under new leadership.<sup>24</sup>

The initial goals of the new Castro regime promised a widespread program of internal improvements, especially in the sectors of education, public housing and redistribution of land to benefit displaced Cubans.<sup>25</sup> Despite seemingly humanitarian intentions, these reforms led to the U.S. labeling of Castro as a socialist power. Despite ideological difference, the new Cuban Government, devoid of a significant military presence, posed no tangible threat to the physical security of the United States. Economically however, the Castro reforms posed a serious threat to the interests of American business ventures, both economically and in terms of potential American

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<sup>23</sup> Jules DuBois. "New Cuban Rulers Picked; Castro Proclaims Urrutia President" *The Chicago Tribune*, 2, January 1959, 1

<sup>24</sup> Saull, 179.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 319.

influence. The most significant violation related to United States business interests occurred because of land reclaimed from American ventures, namely the United Fruit Company.<sup>26</sup>

Initially, U.S. response was delivered in the form of an infusion of capital to the Cuban economy in an attempt to restore the former “democracy” in place under the Batista regime, undoubtedly providing security to American interests. However, U.S. aid was not without expectations, which the initially receptive Cuban government promptly ignored or refused to fulfill according to the expectations of its lender.<sup>27</sup> Despite Cuba’s notable dissatisfaction about American demands, Castro’s retorts presented American newspapers do not indicate unreasonable Cuban objectives; instead, they reflect a country seeking validation as a sovereign state.

The growing level of dissatisfaction surrounding U.S. demands was the subject of Castro’s speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors delivered in April of 1959. The speech, reprinted in both the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, details Cuba’s economic plans, definitively stating Castro’s personal political disposition. In listing his objectives for the new Cuban Government, the development of a modern industrial sector capable of eradicating Cuban unemployment was a paramount task. In order to achieve this feat, Castro emphasized the importance of maintaining the American naval base at Guantanamo Bay and a consistent amount of American businesses.<sup>28</sup> Despite the speech’s positive overtures, the article foreshadows forthcoming American propaganda, reflecting the concerns of U.S. Senator George A. Smathers. In spite of the

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 319.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 181.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 1.

promise of favorable trade relations with the U.S., Castro's failure to directly denounce any offers of Soviet aid provoked radical Senators, including Smathers of Florida to recommend the creation of a military police force to prevent the spread of communist ideas in Cuba.<sup>29</sup> It must be objectively stated that the opinion of Senator Smathers was not a unanimous representation of American opinion, as other Senators including Russell Long and James G. Fulton expressed willingness to cooperate with the Cuban regime.<sup>30</sup> However incorrect Smather's perceptions were in early 1959, the *New York Times* would demonstrate by late 1959 that the fear of communism was a strong enough motivator to diminish the validity of even factual information.

Demonstrative of the Americans' discontent surrounding the Castro regime, "Cuba's Convulsions", published 4, July 1959 in the *Chicago Tribune*, adopted a decidedly radical perspective of increasing. Clearly denouncing the Castro regime, the article asserts that "few revolutionary leaders have worn out their welcome as quickly as Castro."<sup>31</sup> Outwardly more critical than the *New York Times*, the harsh condemnations of the *Tribune* would be indicative of the divide present throughout the majority of the Cuban period.

In spite of a brief recognition of Castro's difficulties since assuming power, the author argues that Castro does indeed harbor communist sentiments, supposedly evident through his continued tolerance for communists within his government. Clearly, the author is attempting to manipulate readers to consider Castro a dangerous communist sympathizer, alienating his own people through his various ill fated government reforms.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>31</sup> "Cuba's Convulsions", *The Chicago Tribune*, 4 July 1959,10.

<sup>32</sup> Among the many serious allegations hurled at the Cuban leader was the assertion that newly implemented reforms to agriculture have disturbed the sugar and cattle industries, thereby destroying the Cuban economy only to be compounded by the illegal expropriation of land in use by U.S. companies.<sup>33</sup>

As the *Chicago Tribune* article implied, control of Cuban agriculture increasingly inspired further hostilities between the two countries. The primary motivation for State Department concerns centered around the American program tasked with rapidly modernizing Latin American agriculture. The program later labeled the “Alliance for Progress” sought to prevent the continued expropriation of land in use by American business ventures, in order to secure a monopoly of Latin American sugar production.<sup>34</sup> Realizing the futility of their demands, the State Department shifted course, offering Cuba a loan for economic improvement with concessions refused by the Cubans, foreshadowing the complete severance of official Cuban-American relations.<sup>35</sup>

The event inspiring many of the State Department’s anti-communist attacks against Cuba stem from the Soviet Union’s unofficial recognition of the Cuban Provisional Government in 1959.<sup>36</sup> Despite this diplomatic gesture, the Soviet Union remained reserved in initiating trade relations, doubting that the Castro regime would prove to be “anything more than a bourgeois-democratic reform.”<sup>37</sup> As conditions between the U.S. and Cuba continued to deteriorate, the political situation left a financially struggling Cuba to seek Soviet aid. Following the visit of First Deputy Prime

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Saull, 181.

<sup>35</sup> Saull, 183.

<sup>36</sup> Pavlov, 4.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 4.

Minister Anastas Mikoyan during summer 1959, the former allies agreed to tentative economic agreements, to which the United States Press responded with extreme anxiety and criticism.<sup>38</sup>

Reacting to news of re-established trade between the Soviet Union and Cuba, U.S. officials estimated that Cuba would survive unassisted until October but not later than November of 1959, believing that Castro would “. . . ultimately be forced to concessions.”<sup>39</sup> Despite the propaganda disseminated in both the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* regarding the dangers of Castro’s communist affiliation, it is clear that in 1959 the State Department misunderstood the relationship between the Soviet Union and Cuba, underestimating the drive of Fidel Castro to create an economy completely devoid of American aid.

Originally published in the Chilean newspaper, *Trud*, an article entitled “Hands Off Cuba”, asserts that the United States had attempted to manipulate the inter-American foreign minister’s conference in Santiago to overthrow the Castro Regime.<sup>40</sup> Although the article insinuates that the attempts proved futile, the United States was not dissuaded from its increasingly aggressive anti-Castro policies as demonstrated by a December 1959 article, which repeats statements made by Senator Kenneth B. Keating claiming evidence of communist penetration in Cuba to be strong and implicating officials in the upper levels of Cuban government.<sup>41</sup> The significance of the newspaper coverage provides substantial evidence that within a one year period, the United States government

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<sup>38</sup> Laurence Change and Peter Kornblugh, “Chronology of the Crisis; January 1, 1959 to September 27, 1962,” New York: The New Press; 347.

<sup>39</sup> Saull. 183.

<sup>40</sup> “Soviet Says U.S. Plots”, *ProQuest Historical Newspaper*

<sup>41</sup> “Keating Warns on Cuba; Senator Says Red Penetration There Is of Ill Omen”, *ProQuest Historical Newspapers; The New York Times*, December 12 , 1959, 7.

concluded without that foreign support for the overthrow of the Castro regime the only means of restoring capitalist control in Cuba would be a series of anti-communist propaganda attacks and covert action.

During the first weeks of 1960, newspaper reports demonstrated an escalation in anti-Soviet and increasingly blatant anti-Castro rhetoric, linked to the severing of official American influence, and Cuba's increasing friendship with the Soviet Union. Published in February 1960, the *New York Times* accurately predicted the impending renewal of official diplomatic relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup> Relying on economic figures to incite both fear of rising prices and limited sugar commodities, the article alleges Cuba's plan to sell 345,000 tons of sugar to the Soviet Union at a price of \$9.5 million dollars below the production value in exchange for Soviet oil.<sup>43</sup> In addition to the consequences for the global sugar price, the plight of the exploited Cuban worker are highlighted in an attempt to discredit the intentions of Castro in his dealings with the Soviet Union.<sup>44</sup>

The *New York Times* continued to maintain its pro-Eisenhower rhetoric through February 1960, publishing articles indicating the growing commitments of Castro to the communist party. Referring to Castro, using terms including "dictator", the *New York Times* charged Castro deliberately planned to destroy the middle class through illegal land seizures.<sup>45</sup> Beginning with James Reston's 15 February 1960 article published in the *New York Times*, the recently agreed upon Mikoyan-Castro agreements proved ample evidence for those adhering to the notion of Castro's intent to further distance Cuba from

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<sup>42</sup>"Soviet Held Likely to Renew Cuban Tie", *The New York Times*, 12 February 1960, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>45</sup> R. Hart Phillips. "Castro's Course Still A Puzzle", *The New York Times*, 7 February 1960, E5.

the United States.<sup>46</sup> The article uses the specific details of the agreement, namely the perceived impact of the Soviet Union's purchase of 5,000,000 tons of sugar over the period of five years, to contradict Castro's claims of Cuba's politically neutral government.<sup>47</sup> Clearly emphasizing what he considers an unwise decision, Reston is critical of the Mikoyan-Castro agreement, insinuating that it is naïve of Cuba's leader to believe sugar subsidies and U.S. tourism money would continue in light of recent decisions.<sup>48</sup> The increasingly damaging restrictions threatened by the United States accurately reflects the diminishing tolerance of the Eisenhower Administration in 'negotiating' with Castro.

The foreshadowing accurately expressed throughout February in the *New York Times* culminated in a series of economic retaliations against Cuba following the Mikoyan-Castro agreement. Both the *Times* and *Tribune* reported the ongoing debate regarding the potential redrafting of the United States Sugar Act, which would equip the United States with the authority to reduce or eliminate all Cuban subsidies, totaling \$100,000,000 a year. Alternatively, as reported in the *Times*, another method of recouping revenues lost as a result of "unlawful" seizure of land in use by U.S. business ventures, the implementation of a substantial sugar tariff was also proposed.<sup>49</sup>

Ideologically, Reston advocates for an extension of the American propaganda tool, Voice of America, to be extended into the Cuba air range by way of the construction of a radio transmitter capable of broadcasting pro-American messages to the Cuban

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<sup>46</sup> James Reston. "Anti-U.S. Gesture By Castro Is Seen" *The New York Times*, 15 February 1960, 1.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Reston. "Capital", 1.

people in order to combat the damage done to capitalism by the Castro regime.<sup>50</sup> Ideally, these radio broadcasts would assist the United States in determining what percentage of the Cuban population was in fact friend or foe, the popular euphemism of Senator Smathers, a well known advocate of the radio program.<sup>51</sup>

Despite maintaining a neutral, if not occasionally negative view of events unfolding in Cuba, the *New York Times* announced within its editorial section the unwarranted fears of the Government as the Soviet Union and Cuba officially renew diplomatic ties.<sup>52</sup> In this article the editors reaffirm Cuba's right to reestablish ties with the Soviet Union, emphasizing a point made during the American Assembly's Caribbean meeting in March of 1960, in which it was stated "it would be fruitless to seek to prevent official or private relationships between Latin-American and Communist nations, and the United States must recognize this fact."<sup>53</sup> While acknowledging the legitimacy of U.S. anxiety revolving around the agreement, the editors also admit that the fears are completely unwarranted as the agreement is one of normal diplomatic trade.<sup>54</sup>

The *Times* reflected a calm and confident tone, believing that economic sanctions put in place by the Eisenhower Administration would force Castro to revise his economic alliances. However, *The Chicago Tribune*, typically critical of the Cuban leader published the article "Newsman Cites Evidence of Fidel Castro's Dedication to Communist Cause in Cuba", asserting that claims of Castro as a political opportunist were no longer valid as demonstrated through a significant list of events supposedly rendering Castro powerless

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<sup>50</sup> Reston. "Capital", 1.

<sup>51</sup> Reston. "Capital" 1.

<sup>52</sup> "Cuba and the Soviet Union", *ProQuest Historical Newspapers; The New York Times*, 10 May 1960, 36.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

pawn of the Soviet Union, if not a communist himself.<sup>55</sup> Strikingly different from the optimism expressed within the *Times*, it is evident that the critical *Tribune* has confidently condemned Cuba as an irreversible victim of communism.

In the weeks prior to 7 May 1960 both newspapers are consumed by headlines forecasting the official resumption of trade alliances between the Soviet Union. Both papers clearly paint the picture of growing anxiety and limited patience within the State Department, varying in the suggested course of action and the responsible party. The limited tolerance shown by the United States is readily apparent in the *New York Times* article “In The Nation; Propaganda Brake on our Cuban Policy,” published three days after the formal agreements. Following popular correspondent Arthur Krock’s initial allegations about Castro’s communist beliefs and Moscow’s direct intent to inspire resentment amongst Cubans toward the U.S, Krock makes the dangerous decision to highlight the methods of retaliation at the disposal of the United States.<sup>56</sup> Ranging from economic sanctions to unlikely military operations, Krock concludes that the U.S. would ultimately not resort to military violence, as the state department “. . .did not seek to make the Cuban people suffer for the acts of a despotic government, no matter how much popular support it had.”<sup>57</sup>

While Krock’s article attempts to justify any course of reaction the U.S. might utilize under the guise of a humanitarian responsibility to the Cuban people, an obvious propaganda attempt, the *Chicago Tribune* reflects a consistent anti-communist and anti-

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<sup>55</sup> Jules Dubois. “Newsman Cites Evidence of Fidel Castro’s Dedication to Communist Cause in Cuba”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 20, March 1960, 8.

<sup>56</sup> Arthur Krock. “In the Nation; Propaganda Break on Our Cuban Policy”, *The New York Times*, 1 April 1960, 32.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 32.

Castro tone. Unlike Krock's reflections regarding the political ramifications of the official renewal of relations, *The Tribune* is dominated by reports of spreading communist activity and censorship amongst allegations of Castro's debut as an official dictator. Headlines include "Gay Cuba of Old Is No More; Fear Has Taken Over", describing the desolation of Havana now devoid of American tourists as a result of the spreading red influence.<sup>58</sup> Other articles, including "Publishers Find Castro Curbs Press", detail the increasing censorship experienced by the Cuban Press since January of 1959 as yet another example of the severe infringements experienced by the Cuban people.<sup>59</sup> The significant differences between the presentations of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* reflect the different political affiliations of each paper.

Not completely devoid of references to the increasingly hostile relationship with the United States, *The Tribune* reports on the increasing tensions as early as the beginning of May, in which Cuban May Day celebrations were tainted by an anti-American mood.<sup>60</sup> During the May Day Celebrations the *Tribune* capitalized on the unveiling of Castro's "Our country or death", slogan emphasizing the increasingly stringent control the Premier exercised over the Cuban people.<sup>61</sup> Given the humanitarian angle emphasizing the suppression of the Cuban people, it is not necessarily surprising that the paper has relatively few mentions of the renewal of relations of 10 May 1960. However, in the weeks following, the *Tribune* does present the Eisenhower Administration's announcement that all subsidies to Cuba would cease within a six month period, a ploy designed to create such stagnation within the economy that Castro

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<sup>58</sup> Joan Wisely. "Gay Cuba of Old Is No More; Fear Has Taken Over", *The Chicago Tribune*, 8 May 1960, D1.

<sup>59</sup> "Publishers Find Castro Curbs Press," *The Chicago Tribune*, 26 May 1960, B2.

<sup>60</sup> "Havana Plans Giant Anti-U.S. May Day Rally", *The Chicago Tribune*, 1, May 1960, 1.

<sup>61</sup> "Cuba May Day Rally Takes Anti-U.S. Turn", *The Chicago Tribune*, 2, May 1960, 8.

would be forced to succumb to U.S. terms.<sup>62</sup> Contrary to the reporting practices of the *Times*, who despite claims of “balanced news” constantly adhere to the government sponsored line, the *Tribune* published Castro’s pompous, brazenly overconfident response, in which the Premier reassured Cubans that reprisal by the U.S. were not actions to be feared, emphasizing the security gained by new friendship with the Soviet Union.<sup>63</sup>

The progression into summer 1960 marked the implementation of the threatened sugar sanctions on Cuba, in which both the *Times* and the *Tribune* adhered to an extraordinarily pro-Eisenhower position. Articles featured in the *New York Times* during the week of 7 July 1960 including “Castro Criticized; Soviet Trade Treaty is Said to Cast Doubt on Status As Supplier”<sup>64</sup>, and “Cuba and Latin America,”<sup>65</sup> attempt to justify the severe economic sanctions as a reasonable response toward Cuba’s hostilities. In contrast, the *Chicago Tribune* while generally dominated by overt criticisms toward Castro himself, while refraining from direct support of U.S. initiative, voiced considerable support for the sugar sanctions within a boldly titled article “U.S. Had No Option But To Retaliate.”<sup>66</sup> Despite obvious support for U.S. sanctions, the general message of the article must also be clearly identified as a means of reassuring an anxious public that the United States would have access to sugar from other countries despite Cuba’s former ninety five percent control of the U.S sugar trade. Both newspapers showed some degree of government support but it is obvious that the objectives of the *Times* and *Tribune*

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<sup>62</sup> Robert Young. “Eisenhower Calls Halt on Aid Funds for Cuba; Ike Orders All Economic Aid to Cuba Ended; 1<sup>st</sup> Major Reprisal Against Castro”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 28 May 1960, 1.

<sup>63</sup> “Reprisal by the U.S. Nothing to Fear, Castro Tells Cuba”, 29 May 1960, 5.

<sup>64</sup> William J. Jordans. “Castro Criticized; Soviet Trade Treaty is Said to Cast Doubt on Status As Supplier”, *The New York Times*, 7 July 1960, 1

<sup>65</sup> “Cuba and Latin America”, *The New York Times*, 8 July 1960, 20

<sup>66</sup> Richard Orr. “U.S. Had No Option But To Retaliate”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 1.

differed in their intended message. While the *Tribune* sought to present alternatives to a strange and disconcerting embargo, the *Times* remains dedicated to the defense of the Eisenhower Administration's political decisions, nearly without regard for its domestic implications.<sup>67</sup>

The remaining months of 1960 were not without significant events; in fact, the month of August 1960 reflected the increasing anxiety experienced by the U.S. government, as it marks the first assassination attempt on Fidel Castro. Memoirs and government documents including the 1967 Inspector General's report have documented the first of many attempts to assassinate the Cuban leader.<sup>68</sup> This critical development, demonstrating that the United States had escalated to tangible measures of coercion following the continual failure of diplomatic measures, this was an event markedly absent from both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Evidence of growing resentment toward Castro was prominently displayed during a New York meeting of the United Nations in September of 1960. Following a petty situation in which the Cuban delegation received substandard treatment by several New York City hotels, the *New York Times* reports "Cuban Delegation is Pleased by Attentions From Russia",<sup>69</sup> a condescending article describing in detail the Cuban delegation's visit from Soviet Premier Khrushchev, more intended to cause the Eisenhower Administration discomfort than achieve any political arrangements.<sup>70</sup> The article portrays Castro as an ill tempered puppet of the Soviet Union, diminishing the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid,1.

<sup>68</sup> Fabian Escalante, F. *CIA Targets Fidel: Secret 1967 CIA Inspector General's Report on Plots to Assassinate Fidel Castro*, Melbourne, Vic. Australia; Ocean Press; 1996, 34.

<sup>69</sup> Max Frankel. "Cuban Delegation is Pleased By Attentions From Russia," *The New York Times*, 21 September 1960, 17.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid,17.

visit between the two men to an encounter more significant as a propaganda tool than an actual discussion.<sup>71</sup> While the visit may have actually been intended as a press opportunity intended to rouse discontent within the State Department, the tone of the *Times* article would be consistent with the end of U.S. tolerance with respect to Cuba's non-compliance of U.S. demands.

The events of 1959-1960 dramatically redefined the status of Cuba both diplomatically and ideologically, challenging United States influence. The *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* are both important tools in tracing the development of the rapidly deteriorating American tolerance to a perceived new threat, but more importantly they demonstrate the drastically different perceptions of two major American newspapers of a major Cold War crisis. Beginning confusion surrounding Fidel Castro's assumption of power in January 1959, it is clear that despite initial criticisms of harsh State Department rhetoric, the *Times* is more influenced by State Department than the editors of the *Chicago Tribune*. After identifying this critical difference, it is clear throughout the twenty four months examined in this chapter that the influence of the U.S. government, hidden behind the typescript of the *New York Times*, provides a chronology of decreasing American tolerance for the Cuban Government linked to its diminishing influence within Cuban affairs.

Initially portrayed as courageous revolutionary in early 1959, by late 1960 Fidel Castro the "brave and tenacious leader" had been demoted to the level of dangerous communist. The *Chicago Tribune* initially cautious in its reports concerning the Cuban Revolution, later represented the new Cuban leader in an increasingly negative light,

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 17.

undoubtedly in response to grievances of American business ventures. However, the most important difference remains the consistency of criticism expressed within the *Tribune* throughout the entirety of this period. Unlike the *Times*, whose objectives clearly changed in a manner consistent with State Department propaganda the *Tribune* remained dedicated to the notion of Fidel Castro as the catalyst of American discontent, often dedicating more column space to crimes against the Cuban people and American business, than official political discussions of Cuba.

The initial twenty four months following the Cuban Revolution are critical in developing a foundation for analyzing the tumultuous press coverage of more significant events in the Cuban period of the Cold War. In order to effectively demonstrate each paper's motivation as a source of future omissions and blatant attacks toward Cuba, and increasingly in regard to the Soviet Union, identifying the initial sources of contention remain critical. More importantly, the press portrayal of the Eisenhower Administration in its quest to regain control in Cuba is necessary in order to appreciate the dramatic impact of the Kennedy Administration and its ill fated impact on global politics. As a result of what would eventually be considered a betrayal of the press, the Kennedy Administration's use of deception both at home and abroad produced a dramatic shift in the allegiance of the *New York Times*, exposing the underhanded motivations of the U.S. in its quest for global hegemony.

## Chapter 2

### Tensions Ignite: The Failure of Diplomatic Sanctions and the Bay of Pigs

“I have made a tragic mistake. Not only were our facts in error, but our policy was wrong because the premises on which it was built were wrong”<sup>72</sup>

*President John F. Kennedy April 1961*

As 1960 and the Eisenhower Administration came to a close, the Cuban Government’s continuous refusals to conform to acceptable democratic standards had become a noteworthy source of frustration for both the U.S. Government and the American Press. Embedded fears within both *The New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* indicated the belief of exponentially expanding Soviet influence within the Cuban Government, posed a serious threat to the Western hemisphere and global security. Despite press coverage criticizing the Eisenhower Administration’s response to the Cuban dilemma as passive and bureaucratic, the reality of heavily guarded covert action remained hidden behind State Department walls, only hinted to the public during the

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<sup>72</sup> Trumbull Higgins. *The Perfect Failure; Kennedy, Eisenhower, and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs*, New York; W.W. Norton and Company: 1987, 154.

1961 Presidential campaign speech of Senator John F. Kennedy, a revelation criticized by even the staunchest anti-Castro politicians. This chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of the events occurring during 1961 under the direction of newly elected President Kennedy, especially the implications of such decisions upon the press presentation of events.

Using the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, this chapter will argue that as a direct result of President Kennedy's confusing cycle of disclosure and secrecy throughout 1961, specifically the ill fated censorship request, the presentation of the *New York Times* visibly changed, potentially altering level of public support within to the paper's vast readership. While not all newspapers chose to comply with this request, the *New York Times*, an avid supporter of U.S. decisions, was badly embarrassed in the aftermath of the invasion, a situation which dramatically altered the perceptions of U.S. decision during the remainder of the Cuban period. In contrast, the coverage of the *Chicago Tribune* is important as a baseline regarding the impact of President Kennedy as the *Tribune* chose not to comply with the censorship request, maintaining its anti-Castro rhetoric and open criticism of U.S. policy.

Ultimately, this chapter seeks to assess the policies of the Kennedy Administration using comparisons of the two newspapers in an effort to identify each paper's respective political affiliations, allowing the *Chicago Tribune's* to disregard requests to censor information relating to tentative invasion plans. In contrast, the *New York Times* decision to comply with the unusual appeal produced a serious animosity in the embarrassing aftermath of the Bay of Pigs invasion. A considerable amount of existing scholarship is dedicated to the analysis of the Bay of Pigs invasion, including the

work of James Aronson, *The Press and the Cold War*. Despite seemingly similar topics, this study differs from Aronson's because it does not seek to assess the alleged violation of the Freedom of Speech Clause, the primary argument consistent throughout Aaronson's examination of newspaper coverage during the period. While Aronson's work was useful in determining potential motivations for such concessions on the behalf of Turner Catledge, the editor of the *New York Times*, this chapter seeks only to use this overexertion of Presidential authority as a catalyst for altered perceptions within the Press.

As the political decisions of President Kennedy are highly interconnected with the *New York Times'* presentation of information, the work of Trumbull Higgens,<sup>73</sup> a political analyst concerned with State Department and military policy of both the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations involvement surrounding the invasion was especially useful in establishing a coherent timeline for comparison with limited newspaper reports. While Higgen's work was useful for contradicting newspaper reports, the work harbors considerable sympathy for Kennedy's ill fated decisions, alluding to the fact that the new President may have been helpless to stop an invasion already under way during the his predecessor's term. While this argument may have some part of the truth, Kennedy's conscious adoption of a hardline anti-Castro approach during the campaign, in comparison to his previously tolerant perspectives, suggests the unlikely possibility that the President was a helpless cog in an already moving machine. It seems more plausible that given the significant revisions to the most basic tenets of the invasion, Kennedy

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<sup>73</sup> Higgens, 157.

chose to move forward with the invasion due to political motivations stemming from his anti-Castro campaign rhetoric.

In order to provide a significant context for the military operations initially exposed by the *Chicago Tribune*, the work of James Blight and Peter Kornbluh provide a detailed re-examination of the Bay of Pigs using the oral testimony of several key figures including Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Jacob L. Esterline, Col. Jack Hawkins, Rafael Quintero, Lino Fernandez, Oleg T. Darouseenkov, and a wide spectrum of international scholars.<sup>74</sup> The accounts in Blight's compilation provided an excellent method for verifying quoted statements and events reflected within either paper. The work of other scholars including Yuri Pavlov<sup>75</sup>, Phillip Bonsal<sup>76</sup> and Richard Saull<sup>77</sup> have been used throughout the chapter in order to develop a narrative clarifying the intentions of the United States, Soviet Union and Cuba amongst over propagandized press reports.

The decisions made by President John F. Kennedy comprise the majority of this chapter, especially the perceptions of such decisions, both before and after the Bay of Pigs invasion. Even prior to his inauguration, then Senator Kennedy had been vocal regarding his opinion of the Cuban situation, expressing views contrary to the positions held during his presidential campaign. In his 1959 book, *The Strategy For Peace*, Kennedy offers critical assessments of the Eisenhower Administration's positions in relation to Cuba.<sup>78</sup> Referring to Castro as "the fiery young rebel,"<sup>79</sup> Kennedy essentially

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<sup>74</sup> James Blight and Peter Kornbluh. *Politics of Illusion; The Bay of Pigs Reexamined*, Boulder CO; Lynce Rienner Publishers Inc: 1998.

<sup>75</sup> Pavlov. *Soviet Cuban Alliance 1959-1991*.

<sup>76</sup> Phillip Bonsal. *Cuba, Castro and the U.S.*, The University of Pittsburg Press; Pittsburg: 1971.

<sup>77</sup> Saull. *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War*.

<sup>78</sup> Higgens, 58.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 58.

attributes responsibility for Cuba's turn to communism as the fault of the uncompromising Eisenhower Administration.<sup>80</sup> Within the course of eleven months, Kennedy's position, tailored to appease a communist fearing public labeled Castro "a source of maximum danger", proclaiming that the major task of the next administration was to contain communism to Cuba and prevented the destruction of the proposed Alliance for Progress throughout Latin America.<sup>81</sup>

Prior to Kennedy's inauguration, escalating frustrations during the final days of the Eisenhower Administration culminated in the official severing of diplomatic relations with Cuba on 3 January 1961. While the dissolution was by no means unexpected, the somewhat trivial justifications given by the United States Government were reported in the *Chicago Tribune* article "U.S. Cuts Ties With Cuba."<sup>82</sup> Praising the overextended patience of President Eisenhower, the article provided a vague explanation of a minor diplomatic disagreement, intensified to provide the necessary justification for the diplomatic split.<sup>83</sup> While the split affected only Cuba, the implied message was clearly directed against the increasing danger of communist affiliations present in Cuba and the perceived threat to American hegemony more generally in Latin America.

The election of President John F. Kennedy began a confusing period of inconsistent statements regarding tolerance of Cuba and communism in general. Despite maintaining the government hard line response of zero tolerance for the policies of Fidel Castro during his campaign speeches, President Kennedy's inauguration speech foreshadowed a small willingness to improve relations with the Cubans. Published in the

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>82</sup> Joseph Hearst. "U.S. Cuts Ties with Cuba," *The Chicago Tribune*, 4 January 1961, 1.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

*New York Times* during January 1961, “Castro Suggests Amity with the United States” was reflective of Castro’s desire to foster improved relations with the United States following President Kennedy’s inaugural speech. While the author reflects on the recent demobilization of the Cuban military, he finds fault in the actions of the United States during the tensions of 1959, while simultaneously condemning the demands of Premier Castro for unreasonable U.S. admission of intentionally disseminating falsehoods throughout the American Press regarding the intentions of Cuba and its new leader.<sup>84</sup>

Similarly, in the *Chicago Tribune* article, “Castro Takes Peace Cue From Kennedy Address”,<sup>85</sup> also reflects Cuba’s increasing willingness for peace in response to Kennedy’s inauguration speech. While both articles featured in their respective publications emphasize Kennedy’s persuasiveness in generating the desire for peace amidst criticisms of Castro, the *Tribune* employs a significantly more condescending tone. Recounting the allegations of the Cuban leader blaming the Eisenhower Administration for conspiring to instigate direct aggression against Cuba, the article recalls the Cuban leader’s belief that the only force preventing the so-called “yankee invasion” was the buildup of Cuban military forces.<sup>86</sup> In a condescending retort, the article subtly denounces the boisterous remarks of Castro, painting the illusion of the Cuban leader as an overly vocal dictator whose retorts are without substance as he delivers his criticisms hidden behind his own fortified castle walls.

The considerably pro-Kennedy attitude of the *New York Times* continues throughout the end of January including, “Hemispheric Policy,” labeling Cuba the

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<sup>84</sup> R. Hart Phillips. “Castro Suggests Amity with the United States,” *The New York Times*, 21 January 1961, 1.

<sup>85</sup> “Castro Takes Peace Cue From Kennedy Address,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 21 January 1961, 5.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

“greatest threat to American hegemony,” validating Kennedy’s ringing challenge to both Cuba and the attempts of the Sino-Soviet bloc to intervene in the attempt to inspire revolutions throughout Latin America.<sup>87</sup> The righteousness and superiority of the President continued to be celebrated within “Kennedy’s Start,” proclaiming overwhelming support of the President, whose “hands on attitude” had forced even Soviet Premier Khrushchev to speak softly.<sup>88</sup> Even at this early juncture, such overt admiration for the newly elected President was recognized by the Kennedy Administration and would prove to be an important tool in the future Government agenda.

In contrast, while the *Tribune* is certainly celebratory of the new President’s inauguration, the paper reports on both Kennedy’s inauguration speech and daunting future tasks with wisely worded caution.<sup>89</sup> Amidst quotations reiterating Kennedy’s pledge to continue the fight against global communism and pleas for Cuban communists to join the U.S. in a new quest for peace, the author continuously remarks upon Kennedy’s ambitions using terms including “youthful”, and “optimistic.” These underlying criticisms, in addition to the author’s description of Kennedy as a “young man in years but aging in responsibility,”<sup>90</sup> provide a realistic assessment in deviating from the idealistic depiction of the new President found throughout the *New York Times*.

In spite of Kennedy’s inaugural plea for peace between the United States and Cuba, the *New York Times* engaged in a new campaign designed to diminish the power of Castro through a series of propagandized reports, shedding doubt on reports of mounting

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<sup>87</sup> “Hemispheric Policy”, *The New York Times*, 24, January 1961, 28.

<sup>88</sup> “Kennedy’s Start”, *The New York Times*, 29, January 1961, E1.

<sup>89</sup> Walter Trohan. “Kennedy Bids For Peace”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 21 January 1961, 1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

revolutionary movements and increases in Soviet arms in Cuba. Even claims originating within the U.S. Government, including allegations launched by New York Representative Victor Anfuso during January 1961 claiming that Castro would soon allow the instillation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, were dismissed as mere rumor.<sup>91</sup> Despite Anfuso's continual insistence that his information was directly supplied by anti-Castro sources in Cuba, U.S. officials skeptically addressed the information as leaks from the Castro camp, seeking to validate their own lies regarding a planned U.S. invasion.<sup>92</sup> Although articles surrounding the possibility of a large scale invasion continued to circulate within the *New York Times*, the majority of articles published during the remaining days prior to the invasion reflect a confusing mixture of overconfidence and increasing questions.

Other articles published in the *Times*, including "Castro Slipping Cuban Exiles Say," add to attempts to further discredit the Castro Government in light of Cuban allegations revolving around a U.S. sponsored invasion slated for 18 January 1961.<sup>93</sup> Published 19 January 1961, "News From Cuba"<sup>94</sup>, openly mocks Cuban predictions of an Air Force bombing and Marine landing in Cuba during the previous day. In an overconfident expression of support for the new Administration, the author claims that the threat of invasion was nothing more than a figment of the Cuban imagination, making the fateful statement "as the people of the U.S. had always known it to be."<sup>95</sup> Interestingly, the *New York Times's* unquestioning allegiance to the U.S. Government would be irreparably damaged by April of 1961 following a serious breach of trust on the behalf of the once revered President Kennedy.

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<sup>91</sup> "U.S. Doubts Cuban Pact", *The New York Times*, 6 January 1961, 3.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>93</sup> Sam Pope Brewer. "Castro Slipping Cuban Exiles Say", *The New York Times*, 23 January 1961, 1.

<sup>94</sup> "News From Cuba", *The New York Times*, 19 January 1961, 28.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

Throughout much of February and March 1961 U.S. newspapers were dominated by unconfirmed rumors fueled by both media and governmental opinions questioning the role the United States had or would take concerning the Cuban refugees and a potential Cuban invasion. By early April, it had become painfully obvious that the Press had identified a deeply imbedded secret within the U.S. Government. Prior to an official statement from the Kennedy Administration, a special correspondent of the *New York Times*, James Reston, exposed the ongoing argument cautiously questioning the role the United States should play in any attempt to unseat Fidel Castro as, the major source of communist influence in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>96</sup> Surrounded by a detailed explanation of the United States' obligation to the Organization of American States Treaty, specifically forbidding interference in state issues, Reston divulges that U.S. support of Cuban refugees stemming from the Eisenhower Administration continued to exist under the Kennedy Administration.

While Reston acknowledges that the Kennedy Administration was currently in a serious debate to determine if it would support a larger scale invasion of Cuba and the more important the obligation of the U.S. should the invasion fail. Furthermore, Reston claims that the major concern of the State Department surrounds the global implications of intervention, specifically linking any occurrence in Cuba to the larger Cold War.<sup>97</sup> Discussing the concerns of John J. McCloy the President's Special Advisor on Disarmament, Reston argues that the State Department's hesitancy is fueled by fears of

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<sup>96</sup> James Reston. "Top Advisors in Dispute On Aid To Castro's Foes" *New York Times*, 11 April 1961, 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

igniting a proxy war one capable of provoking the Soviet Union to intervene with nuclear force.<sup>98</sup> It is claims such as these that allow Reston's scarcely substantiated article to have a dramatic impact on the Press presentation during April of 1961. While it can be inferred that Reston was privy to a confidential State Department source, such conjectures only substantiate the omissions that the President would privately request of the American Press as months of speculation and increasing fear became solidified in invasion's failure. The months of February and March 1961 continue to reflect growing suspicions of U.S. involvement in the planning of covert operations to overthrow the Cuban leader. Despite the end of official relations in January, the U.S. Government continued to demand that Cuban leaders sever relations with the Soviet Union and transition to a democratic government. On 4 April 1961, the *Chicago Tribune* reprinted the text of a U.S. declaration to Cuba under the article entitled "US to Cuba; Cut Red Ties."

"We call once again on the Castro Regime to sever its links with the international communist movement to return to the original purposes, which brought so many gallant men together in the [in the revolutionary movement] and to restore the integrity of the Cuban Revolution."<sup>99</sup>

The release of such a statement by the Government was intended as a warning for Fidel Castro; it was directly intended to provide justification for the covert preparation of anti-Castro forces being trained in Florida and Guatemala. Within the next three weeks headlines across American newspapers reported claims of U.S. conspiracies to overthrow the Cuba Government in poignantly titled articles including "Anti-Castro Units Trained To Fight at Florida Bases."<sup>100</sup> the American Press, particularly the pro-government *The*

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Robert Young. "U.S. To Cuba; Cut Red Ties" *The Chicago Tribune*, 4 April 1961, 1.

<sup>100</sup> Tania Long. "Anti-Castro Units Trained to Fight in Florida Bases", *The New York Times*, 7, April 1961, 1.

*New York Times*, carefully began to question the actions of its beloved Kennedy Administration.

Amidst swirling rumors of U.S. involvement in conspiratorial plans to overthrow the Castro Government, the *New York Times* reported the visit of Dr. Miro Cardonna, leader of the Revolutionary Council, the democratically aligned Cuban Government exile, to the State Department.<sup>101</sup> In attempting to substantiate the reason for the highly coincidental visit, the author clearly demonstrated the difficulty in achieving his task as few officials were even aware of the visit later reduced to a “visit” between old friends.<sup>102</sup> The author claims that Cuban Foreign Minister Cardona’s visit was in some way related to U.S. involvement in the training of revolutionary forces, however an ambiguous State Department spokesman vehemently refused to discuss the visit stating that, “I am not going to hash over extraneous matters that the Cubans have alleged time after time.”<sup>103</sup> Although the unnamed representative of the State Department contended that Minister Cardona’s visit is consistent with the U.S. Government’s anti-Castro policies, the lingering questions created by the visit served to fuel further rumors, planting the first seeds of government disapproval from the *New York Times*.

Following other U.S. declarations about the “clear and present danger” in Cuba, the *New York Times* published the article “Cuban Alarums”, a confusing demonstration of increasing skepticism, fear and support of the U.S..<sup>104</sup> Indicating a growing unease within the press, the article denotes frenzied activity amongst the underground movement

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<sup>101</sup> E.W. Kentworthy. “Leader of Anti-Castro Cubans Tells Aims to U.S.” *The New York Times*, 7 April 1961, 2.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> “Cuban Alarums”, *the New York Times*, 9 April 1961, E1.

in Cuba and exiles in positions of high command operating in New York City. The exiles, operating under the name of Revolutionary Council issued public calls for the rise of Cubans in a new war of liberation. It was reported that the Council's activity in New York spawned charges within the United Nations that the U.S. was waging an "undeclared" war against Castro.<sup>105</sup>

Much of the foundation for the United Nations charges stem from the publication of a thirty six page document claiming Castro had betrayed his own revolution by allowing Cuba to become a hub of international communism. The document issued familiar calls for Cuba to sever ties with the Soviet Union, encouraging Cubans to band together in the struggle for freedom.<sup>106</sup> Responding to this piece of U.S. propaganda, Cuban Foreign Minister Roa fueled conspiracy theories indicating that the C.I.A. was training and equipping a liberation army of four to five thousand counter revolutionaries.<sup>107</sup> Although Dr. Cardona denied receiving any direct support, the claims alleged by Minister Roa provided enough subsistence for circulating rumors that the *New York Times* continued to investigate rumors surrounding U.S. involvement, while continuing to defend the motives of the U.S. Government.

Most Press reports of the Cuban invasion contained minimal valid information, a pattern dramatically changed by the publication of Tad Szulc's 8 April article entitled "Cuban Intrigue Boiling In Miami As Castro Foes Step Up Efforts."<sup>108</sup> Reporting the near completion of a five to six thousand man liberation force being trained in the U.S. and

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, E1.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Tad Szulc. "Cuban Intrigue Boiling in Miami As Castro Foes Step Up Efforts," *The New York Times*, 8 April 1961, 2.

Guatemala, the article unveiled key points of invasion plans, including the leading military command and the projected invasion site, posing a significant security breach of U.S. operations.<sup>109</sup> Offering little response to recent conjecture, President Kennedy's outrage was well noted in a memo to Press Secretary Pierre Salinger; "I can't believe what I'm reading. Castro doesn't need agents over here. All he has to do is read our papers. It's all laid out for him."<sup>110</sup> President Kennedy's outrage regarding the disclosure of such intimate details surrounding the invasion ultimately contributed to the "watering" down of information presented within the *New York Times* during the period of 6 April through 14 April.<sup>111</sup>

Exploiting its personal friendship with the editor of *The New York Times*, Turner Catledge, the Kennedy Administration misled the paper with a series of red herrings designed to protect the sensitive details surrounding the planned invasion.<sup>112</sup> Fabricating a series of small scale landings, justifying the presence of four to six thousand men, the Kennedy Administration's falsehoods successfully masked further exposure of important information, including the scheduled invasion date. Perhaps most importantly, the series of false stories suppressed the capitalist motivations surrounding U.S. support for the overthrow of Castro, including the significant role played by the C.I.A. in nearly every facet of the invasion.<sup>113</sup> These untruths are critical in establishing the relationship with the Kennedy Administration fostered with the *New York Times* in comparison to the general disregard by the *Chicago Tribune* concerning the Kennedy request.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>110</sup> Higgens.117.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 118.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

The issue of the censorship request and government misinformation supplied to the *New York Times* has met with varying reactions among historians, often challenging the authority of the Government to alter the reports of the Press under the First Amendment. While issues of legality are undeniable in relation to this rather invasive request, such issues extend beyond the scope of this investigation. Instead, it is useful to examine the rationale prompting the Kennedy Administration to believe that such a request would not only be adhered to by the Press, but would be critical to the overall success of the invasion. Despite what seems to be an obvious overextension of Governmental authority, Lylod S. Etheredge argues that the Kennedy Administration requests for omissions were designed to protect both the integrity of the invasion and the image of the United States.<sup>114</sup> Operating under this theory, the U.S. government believed that if they were viewed as acting as an independent force the expatriates stood a better chance of inspiring a national uprising, while not sufficiently posing a challenge to existing Soviet influence in Cuba.<sup>115</sup> While certainly not validating the covert domestic policies applied to the Press, Etheredge's work serves to explain the rationale behind the Kennedy Administration's requests, providing clarity for such a request.

Despite the official editorial belief in information alluding to several fabricated small scale invasions supplied by the Kennedy Administration, not all *New York Times* correspondents dismissed circulating rumors of a larger secret operation. Special Correspondent James Reston, the head of the *New York Times*' Washington Bureau was personally responsible for cleverly disregarding the requests of the U.S. Government

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<sup>114</sup> Lloyd S. Etheredge. *Can Governments Learn? American Foreign Policy and Central American Revolution*, New York; Pergamon Press: 1985, 37.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, 46.

throughout several poignant articles. Published 12 April 1961, Reston issued what is perhaps the most compelling request for Governmental openness witnessed throughout the entire Cuban period. Introducing his concerns with a grandiose comparison of President Kennedy to Pericles of ancient Greece and despite Reston's unwelcome line of questioning, his allegiance to the Kennedy Administration is clear.<sup>116</sup> While openly pledging support for the overthrow of Fidel Castro, Reston clearly substantiates recent headlines questioning how much longer the United States can continue misleading its own people while secretly arming and training anti-Castro refugees.<sup>117</sup> Reston's discomfort in directly questioning the U.S. Government is readily apparent as he introduces the political ramifications of U.S. connection in the training of anti-Castro revolutionaries.<sup>118</sup> Immediately following these claims, Reston attempts to minimize the impact of his discovery, justifying the potential violations by assuming that without intervention Cuba would undoubtedly develop a missile base capable of threatening world security, thereby validating such an overextension of authority.<sup>119</sup> Despite such hesitancy to openly criticize the U.S., Reston's plea for public disclosure is representative of the growing concerns forcing the Kennedy Administration to publically address the claims of media outlets.

Reacting to Reston's articles within twenty four hours, the Kennedy Administration issued its first public response, stringently denying any involvement. The text of the Kennedy denial was summarized in *The New York Times*, and in similar articles, including the *Chicago Tribune's* "Kennedy Bars Intervention in Cuba by

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<sup>116</sup> James Reston. "United States and Cuba-The Moral Question", *The New York Times*, 12 April 1961, 40.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

U.S.”<sup>120</sup> While the Kennedy Administration’s direct denial of involvement in the planning of any overthrow of Fidel Castro including the promise to prevent any Americans from participating in any form of involvement, seemed to temporarily satisfy the concerns of the Press, the pacification was short lived.<sup>121</sup>

The American Press in the days preceding the 17 April invasion presented the a divided representations of unfolding events, reflecting the political affiliations of each paper respectively. Published on 11 April 1961, “The Cuban Drama” boldly rejects any aid to Cuban refugees during any sort of invasion.<sup>122</sup> This article refers to the current portrayal of rumored invasions dominating Press headlines as a mixtures of “truth, imagination and wishful thinking.”<sup>123</sup> In support of its argument, the article raises an important comparison, relegating Cuban sentiment in regard to unwanted U.S. intervention to U.S. feelings in respect to communist influence throughout Latin America.<sup>124</sup> The simplistic clarity of this article is symbolic of the *Times* agreement with the official no intervention policy of President Kennedy, and as the final article specifically addressing invasion plans until 18 April 1961.

For a period of some seven days the *New York Times* chose to omit any “sensitive” information surrounding U.S. sanctioning of an exile invasion of Cuba per the request of the admired President Kennedy. However, *The Chicago Tribune*, not bound to secrecy pacts with the U.S. Government, continued to report on the events leading up to the 17 April invasion. Published 10 April, “Paper Says Thirty Five Anti-Castro Pilots

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<sup>120</sup> Laurence Burd. “Kennedy Bars Intervention in Cuba By U.S.” *The Chicago Tribune*, 13 April 1961, 9.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*,9.

<sup>122</sup> “The Cuban Drama”, 11 April 1961, *The New York Times*, 36.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*.

Train,”<sup>125</sup> this article references the so called “white pamphlet,” a propaganda packet dominated by the Kennedy Administration asserting minimal Cuban support of the revolutionary movement in Cuba.<sup>126</sup> The article also suggests some validity for circulating rumors of U.S. military involvement or support in the coming invasion, much to the detriment of the Kennedy Administration’s attempt to maintain a covert level of secrecy surrounding the invasion.<sup>127</sup>

Despite uncovering the plans of the Kennedy Administration, *The Chicago Tribune* was unaware of the truth surrounding invasion rumors, and it published Kennedy’s denials throughout various articles. However, unlike *The New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune* published reports of the bombing of Cuba on 16 April, the eve of the Bay of Pigs invasion featuring headlines including, “Rebel Planes Bomb Cuba.”<sup>128</sup> The article featuring two dramatic pictures of destroyed military vehicles reports the destruction of military targets in Havana and two other Cuban cities, by “war planes.”<sup>129</sup> Repeating the statement of Cuban President in exile, Osvaldo Dorticos, who labeled the war planes as property of the United States, the article further alleges that the attacks were a “. . . prelude to large scale military aggression.”<sup>130</sup> In addition to its initial assessment attributing responsibility for the attack on the U.S., the article attributes a forthcoming attack of five to six thousand “worms”, as the final phase of the Kennedy conspiracy against Castro.<sup>131</sup> While reporting the words of Cuban leaders about a covert

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<sup>125</sup> “Paper Says Thirty Five Anti-Castro Pilots Train,” *New York Times*, 10 April 1961, 1.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> “Rebel Planes Bomb Cuba; First Pictures of Havana Damage Premier Orders 300,000 Out To Halt ‘Invasion’”, *Chicago Tribune*, 16 April 1961, 1.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

U.S. operation against Cuba, the *Chicago Tribune* brought to light the beginnings of the covert operations that Cuba already anticipated.

While the Kennedy Administration chose to delay its official denial and denunciation of rumors surrounding the Cuban invasion, the act attributes more strategic deviousness to President Kennedy personally than is actually true. As Arthur Schlesinger recounts during conversations compiled in James Blight's *Politics of Illusion*,<sup>132</sup> President Kennedy was highly skeptical of the inherited Cuban invasion plans, and had reserved the right to withhold approval until twenty four hours prior to the invasion itself.<sup>133</sup> However, as a result of Kennedy's personal hesitancy, and the potentially dramatic ramification for both the U.S. and the larger world, details of the invasion were closely guarded.

A large portion of information supporting U.S. involvement in the training of anti-Castro forces was derived from C.I.A. fact gathering. Considering the long standing propaganda efforts of the C.I.A., attempts to instigate unrest amongst the Cuban people using radio programs including the Voice of America, it is not surprising to discover that covert operations extended into the primitive disruption of military radio signals designed to force military officials to communicate in shorter, candid bursts of information.<sup>134</sup> In combination, these factors painted a growing anti-Castro population on the verge of revolution that did not exist. Creating the image of a public ready to revolt was critical to the justification the United States government would offer in the aftermath of the

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<sup>132</sup> Blight,50.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid,52.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 50.

invasion, and more generally provided rationale for interference in Cuban affairs for U.S. ideological and economic benefit.

Despite well planned public leaks reflecting growing unrest in Cuba, the State Department itself expressed concerns surrounding the validity of C.I.A. information, causing the invasion to be postponed three separate times in March 1961. Originally scheduled for 5 April, the invasion was rescheduled for 10 April and finally for the actual invasion date of 17 April 1961.<sup>135</sup> Uncertainty was also shared amongst top aides including Tom Mann and Arthur Schlesinger, who repeatedly warned the President of the problems surrounding the weakly supported revolution.<sup>136</sup>

On the morning of 18 April 1961 headlines of *The New York Times* exclaimed “Anti-Castro Units Land in Cuba.”<sup>137</sup> Recounting the events of the Cuban landing to the minutest detail, the author attempts to bury Cuban accusations leading to American involvement in the invasion.<sup>138</sup> Mentioned only briefly, the article notes Castro’s accusations that the “invaders were mercenaries in the service of United States imperialism.”<sup>139</sup> Loudly reiterating Secretary of State Dean Rusk’s promise that the United States would not intervene, the author dismisses any notion of U.S. responsibility.<sup>140</sup>

In addition, the author clearly dismisses the confidence of Premier Castro that the invading rebels would be quickly crushed. Although the authors are hesitant to agree with

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<sup>135</sup> Higgens. 99.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Tad Szulc. “Anti-Castro Units Land in Cuba; Report Fighting at Beach Head; Rusk Says U.S. Won’t Intervene”, *The New York Times*, 18 April 1961, 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

the claims of the Revolutionary Council, suggesting that the rebels had achieved a significant confiscation of Soviet arms, there is little evidence to indicate the authors believed the Castro forces would succeed in hindering an invasion led by pro-democratic revolutionaries.<sup>141</sup> Realistically, it seems the author hoped that a successful invasion by the Cuban revolutionaries would be capable of inspiring a revolution, ultimately leading to the implementation of an American approved government.

Addressing the United States' position more specifically, *The Chicago Tribune* headlines faithfully stated [Rusk] "Declares U.S. Policy in Cuba is Hands-Off."<sup>142</sup> Directly addressing accusations of American involvement, the *Tribune* also emphasized Secretary of State Rusk's claim that the U.S. would not intervene in the Cuban invasion.<sup>143</sup> Boldly denouncing the so called "inflammatory"<sup>144</sup> claims of U.S. involvement, Rusk acknowledged existing American sympathies for the Cuban plight, concluding with the belief that despite the hardships endured by the Cuban people, this invasion was solely a matter for the Cuban people.<sup>145</sup> Interestingly, when questioned about the U.S. position regarding communist infiltration in Cuba, Rusk's answer reverted to the stereotypical vagueness of the Kennedy Administration, pledging only to work with other governments of the hemisphere to combine efforts in order to combat communism.<sup>146</sup>

Distinguishing its line of questioning from the *Times*, the *Tribune* poses a critical question seeking to determine whether Rusk's absolute claims of non-intervention would

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Robert Young. "Declares U.S. Policy in Cuba is Hand's Off", *The Chicago Tribune*, 18 April 1961, 2.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

continue if a direct threat to American citizens should arise. Essentially refusing to answer the question, Rusk simply adhered to a policy of ignorance in which he asserted more explanation was not possible given the U.S. Government's limited knowledge of specific details pertaining to the invasion.<sup>147</sup> While it is clearly evident that the *Chicago Tribune* was disinclined to wholeheartedly accept the claims of the Kennedy Administration, it is also evident that not all *New York Times* correspondents blindly subscribed to government rhetoric. Written by Arthur Krock, a popular *New York Times* correspondent, "Hazards of Presidential Absolute Pledges" cleverly cautions the Kennedy Administration about guarantees which in time may become untenable.<sup>148</sup> Woven into a comparison of the Kennedy policies in relation to Cuba with to those of the Wilson Government in respect to Mexico, the article warns Kennedy of relying on misleading information, a conundrum experienced by President Wilson in a policy similar to Kennedy's Cuban policy.<sup>149</sup>

Krock astutely differentiates between the terms "invasion" and "intervention", explicitly stating that intervention; i.e, naval blockades can occur without full scale invasions, a path which might seem increasingly popular to President Kennedy amidst the severe disagreement plaguing his cabinet.<sup>150</sup> While Krock's article does not make any direct accusations, his skepticism surrounding the validity of Kennedy's reliability is a concern that would soon dominated the *New York Times* for the remainder of the Cuban period. Following a week of post invasion headlines in which numerous countries, including West Germany, the Soviet Union, and Guatemala hurled accusations of U.S.

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Arthur Krock. "In the Nation; Hazards of Presidential Absolute Pledges," *The New York Times*, 18 April 1961, 36.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

responsibility for the now failed Bay of Pigs invasion, the editors of the *New York Times* officially broke their silence. Published 23 April 1961, diplomatically reflected a significant shift away from its previous positions of conformity and blind acceptance of the official position on Cuba, revealing a more independent position.

Acknowledging that the discovery of falsehoods in the aftermath of the invasion was painful, the editors openly criticized the U.S. Government for a “great deal of miscalculation, misunderstanding, wishful thinking and underestimation of the factors involved inside and outside of Cuba.”<sup>151</sup> Deeming the miscalculations of the C.I.A. inexcusable, the editors charge that the C.I.A. was misinformed about the true magnitude of the Cuban situation, consequently providing poor advice to the White House and State Department.<sup>152</sup> Despite the majority of burden being placed onto the C.I.A., the editors also reluctantly pass judgment on to their former idol.<sup>153</sup> Abandoning its initial weak defense of Kennedy, the editors acknowledge that the President should have taken responsibility for his mistruths and their consequences. Admitting the new propaganda advantage the failed invasion has now afforded the Soviet Union, the editors do not refrain from exposing all known unintended consequences surrounding the ill planned invasion.<sup>154</sup>

The *New York Times*’ criticisms of President Kennedy and the U.S. Government may seem anti-climatic, devoid of screaming headlines recounting the ineptitude of the Administration. Nonetheless, the critical tone of the editorial marks a significant shift in allegiances, as the *Times* transition from enamored supporter to betrayed skeptic. This is

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<sup>151</sup> “The Lessons of Cuba,” *The New York Times*, 22 April 1961, 24.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

a shift which can be directly attributed to the mis-information supplied to the *New York Times* in the week prior to the invasion.

Journalist James Aronson in his work, *The Press and the Cold War.*, has documented the drastic shift of the Press, specifically *The New York Times*, following the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Compiled as a survey of a dozen American newspapers throughout the Cold War, Aronson dedicates an entire chapter to the Press response to the Bay of Pigs. However, Aronson's analysis is much less concerned with the actual perceptions reported within the Press, instead focused on weighing the violations of the freedom of the Press as a whole.<sup>155</sup>

The work of Professor Neal D. Houghton is also of interest to the explanation of the shift in perceptions. Houghton successfully traces the increasing radicalism of the U.S. Government response to heightened communist infiltration only ninety miles from Florida.<sup>156</sup> Houghton's analysis, while informational, seeks to examine journalistic intention and the government's right to request censorship in the interests of national security, and it is not a study regarding mere perceptions of an event as documented by the Press.

The conclusions of both Aronson and Houghton are easily validated as is clearly notable by the now aggressive tones prominently displayed in the *New York Times*. An article entitled "The President and the Press-The Old Dilemma," openly challenges the direct government request for editorial censorship in matters of national security.<sup>157</sup> Making the broad accusation that the Kennedy Administration is currently engaging in

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<sup>155</sup> Aronson. 158.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 159.

<sup>157</sup>"The President and the Press-The Old Dilemma," *The New York Times*, 10 May 1961, 44.

global, underground wars, the C.I.A is also lambasted for its “orchestration” of the entire Bay of Pigs affair.<sup>158</sup> It is clear throughout the article that the *New York Times* has long surpassed being “upset” with the Government, now openly unveiling the false information provided by the Government.

Published 10 May 1961, the strongest editorial in the *New York Times*, “The Right Not to Be Lied To”, openly criticized the Government in bold statements including, “What some leaders of our Government stated in this regard did not square with the facts. If they could not reveal the facts, they would have done better to remain silent. A democracy-our democracy-cannot be lied to.”<sup>159</sup> Further explanation of the now resentful attitude of the *New York Times* is unnecessary given the potency of the aforementioned editorials. Without delving into matters regarding the rights of the Press, an area generally outside of public perceptions, it is clear that the perspective of the *New York Times* would no longer be an uncritical reflection of Kennedy rhetoric.

In contrast to the strong shift in the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, unaffected by the Kennedy request had continued reporting developments throughout the invasion. Adopting a position more concerned with the movements of the Soviets in Cuba than the Kennedy lies, the 19 April article, “Khrushchev Gets His Answer On Cuba,” denies most U.S. involvement in the invasion, shifting blame toward the Soviets.<sup>160</sup> Claiming that invading Cuban rebels were obstructed by Soviet tanks and jets, the

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> “The Right Not To Be Lied To,” *The New York Times*, 10 May 1961, 1.

<sup>160</sup> “Khrushchev Gets His Answer on Cuba”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 19 April 1961, 14.

*Tribune* alleges the Castro regime remains standing only with the support of Soviet arms.<sup>161</sup>

Briefly commenting on Khrushchev's claims blaming U.S. involvement for the invasion, the article admits that Kennedy's early statement pertaining to a policy of non-intervention should a rumored invasion materialize be regarded as a speech merely for the record.<sup>162</sup> Despite this acknowledgment, the *Tribune* continues to adhere to a rather dramatic response toward Soviet aggression, reminding Khrushchev "should he fail to keep his dirty hands to himself," Cuba was in range of the United States.<sup>163</sup> The rather climactic attitude toward the Soviet presence in Cuba continues throughout much of April under headlines including "U.S Warning to Russia; Report Rebels Bomb Havana Air Base,"<sup>164</sup> undoubtedly in an attempt to destroy Soviet artillery nearby. Relatively few articles into the month of May discuss the aftermath of the invasion in detail comparable to the *New York Times*, instead focusing on the new advantages now accessible to Soviet influence, a separation likely distinguishable through initial perceptions of both U.S. and Cuban policy.

The reflections of both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* maintain somewhat of a consistency for the remainder of 1961 as the *New York Times* continued its now open criticisms of U.S. policy, while the *Tribune* continued its fixation on the movement of Soviets within Cuba.<sup>165</sup> As if to demonstrate the newly acquired cynicism of the *New York Times*, the New Year's Eve political cartoon entitled "April: Cuban

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> "U.S. Warning to Russia; Report Rebels Bomb Havana Air Base", *The Chicago Tribune*, 19 April 1961, 1.

<sup>165</sup> "Red Repeat; Will Aid Cuba In Any Attack", *The Chicago Tribune*, 27 April 1961, W5.

Invasion,”<sup>166</sup> depicts a bewildered Kennedy entering a room to find the old, complacent and bound C.I.A. smoking a pipe, while the Cuban liberation lay stabbed to death at its feet.<sup>167</sup> The caption below the illustration simply reads, “Elementary, my dear Watson.”<sup>168</sup> Clearly, the once nearly benevolent leader had been reduced to a clueless, wandering man unaware of the actual events occurring in his Administration under the capable guidance of the C.I.A..

The election of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States in 1961 proved to have a dynamic impact on not only the United States role in the Cold War, but also the trust of the American Press. The dramatic political transformation of Kennedy as a liberal minded Senator, sympathetic to the Cuban cause, radicalized during the Presidential campaign giving way to a strictly anti-communist, anti-Castro Administration committed to completing goals set under the former Eisenhower Administration designed to remove the Cuban leader. Despite less than consistent information gathered by the C.I.A., in its quest to end communist presence in Cuba, a considerable benefit to American capitalist interests, the Kennedy Administration adopted policies of deception intended to mislead the Press while anti-Castro revolutionaries were financed, trained and supplied by the United States military in Florida, Louisiana, and Guatemala.

While the *New York Times* chose to comply with the requests of President Kennedy requesting the omission of information surrounding the invasion, other newspapers, including the *Chicago Tribune* continued to publish rumors surrounding an invasion and reports of the pre-invasion bombings of Havana. While it cannot be

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<sup>166</sup> “April; Cuban Invasion”, *The New York Times*, 31 December 1961, E6.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

conclusively determined why the *Chicago Tribune* decided not to adhere to the Kennedy requests, the paper, always pro-American in sentiment, did not share the Kennedy fanaticism of the *New York Times*. While the *Times* chose to reiterate any public announcement made by the Administration regarding the emerging evils of the Castro Government, the *Tribune* had largely begun targeting the Soviet Union for its continued influence and devious motivations in Cuba. Although both papers were clearly anti-communist, the *Tribune* maintained a consistency in its anti-Soviet agenda that was not influenced by the covert schemes of the Kennedy Administration.

The aftermath of the Bay of Pigs invasion holds important implications for both foreign policy and the relationship between the Government and the Press. The Government consciously acting on faulty information, overestimated the impact of pro-American, pro-democratic programs, including the Voice of America, in influencing the uprising of a mass anti-Castro force, allowing invading revolutionaries to be crushed by government and Soviet equipment. In turn, the failure provided an important propaganda advantage for Soviet leaders to denounce the Americans for violation of the O.A.S. States Treaty and intensifying Cold War tensions.

Despite the significance of the failed invasion from a military perspective, the damage inflicted upon the Kennedy Administration's domestic relationship with the Press was even greater. Aptly recognizing the potential to exert influence on an enamored newspaper with a readership base as important as the *New York Times* was arguably a clever political strategy, with little consideration for its potential backlash. As demonstrated in the above discussion, despite deeply reserved responses in the immediate aftermath of the invasion, within two weeks the *New York Times* had clearly retreated

from its previous position of unquestioning allegiance to the Kennedy Administration to a position of unabashed criticisms, producing a more candid, yet less favorable representation of events to come.

## Chapter 3

### The Press Speaks: the Political Motivations of the American Press During the Cuban Missile Crisis

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

*President John F. Kennedy*<sup>169</sup>,

The two year time span preceding the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 reflects the rapidly degenerating relationship existing between the capitalistic United States and the increasingly communistic Cuban Government. Following the failure of U.S. attempts to democratically manipulate the course of the newly implemented Castro Government during 1959-1960, the once “friendly” relationship now displayed obvious signs of distress. This period of unraveling was prominently documented within the American Press, which reported both the suggestive undertones of the U.S. Government, and its blatant demands, presenting a generally divided depiction of the emerging Cuban Government.

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<sup>169</sup> Office of the White House Press Secretary. “Radio-TV Address of the President to the Nation From The White House”, 22 October 1962, 5.

The divisions present in the Press during the early juncture of the Cuban era of the Cold War became increasingly important during 1961 as the Eisenhower Administration departed office, leaving the newly inaugurated John F. Kennedy to oversee a series of existing covert operations intended to convert the now openly communist Cuban Government to an acceptable democratic status. As Cuba publically disregarded the increasingly hostile U.S. demands, the headlines of the *Chicago Tribune* frequently combined Fidel Castro and the Soviet Union as the general source of malevolence in the world. While *The New York Times* also depicted Cuba in hostile terms, the paper's focus regarding the ills of Cuban leadership were temporarily suppressed following Kennedy's purposeful redirection of the paper in the week preceding the failed Bay of Pigs invasion. Despite the historical divisions between the portrayals of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, the gross violation of Kennedy's personal relationship with the editors of the *New York Times* would temporarily result in the paper's more critical assessment of U.S. policy, which became remarkably similar to the depictions of the *Chicago Tribune*.

*The New York Times*, embarrassed by Kennedy's supply of misinformation about the Bay of Pigs attempted to reestablish its tarnished integrity through a series of scathing editorials personally attacking the President and the White House. In contrast, the *Chicago Tribune*, which chose not to omit sensitive information prior to the failed invasion, maintained a consistent critical assessment of the communist presence in Cuba in the aftermath of in the invasion. Given the obvious change of the *New York Times* position during 1961, this chapter will analyze the accuracy of information presented within both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* during the October 1962

missile crisis. The impact of each paper's underlying political influence will be examined in order to evaluate the information presented to the public in the period directly before and during the Cuban Missile Crisis, generally labeled as the 'most dangerous period of the Cold War'.

Given the highly public evaluation of the Kennedy Administration and its instigation of tensions leading to the Cuban Missile Crisis, a considerable amount of scholarly research has been dedicated to analysis of the period. While this chapter will serve to assess the accuracy of reports made within the American Press, several monographs including the work of John Lewis Gaddis *We Now Know; Rethinking Cold War History*, will help to provide context and clarity to the newspaper reports researched. The work of Gaddis is specifically useful in more clearly understanding the complicated political relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States in which both sides viewed Cuba as an opportunity to further assert supremacy in the Cold War.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, despite a sometimes overly critical assessment of Soviet Premier Khrushchev, Gaddis's analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis presents a wealth of information capable of both substantiating and contradicting reports of sinister Soviet intentions displayed throughout both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.<sup>171</sup>

In contrast to the visibly anti-Soviet perspective represented within *We Now Know*, the work of Yuri Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance 1959-1991* provides a more critical assessment of American instigation policies in the months preceding the Missile

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<sup>170</sup> John Lewis Gaddis. *We Now Know; Rethinking Cold War History*, Oxford University Press; Oxford: 1997.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*, 266.

Crisis.<sup>172</sup> While Pavlov's work maintains anti-Khrushchev notions similar to those found in the work of John Lewis Gaddis, Pavlov demonstrates that a naïve Castro was not only manipulated by Soviet ambitions, but the scapegoat for U.S. ambitions in the greater Cold War.<sup>173</sup>

Another work investigating the role of the Press throughout the Cold War, *The Press and the Cold War*, written by journalist James Aronson is particularly useful for validating the justifications offered by the editors of *New York Times* in regard to omissions made at the request of President Kennedy in 1961.<sup>174</sup> While Aronson's work certainly offers pertinent references to similar subject matter, the focus of this chapter and the scope of *The Press and the Cold War* differ substantially in their intentions. Addressing the important concept of freedom of the press and editorial responsibility to readership, *The Press and the Cold War* broadly criticizes the misbehavior of the Press in various periods of the Cold War, including the Cuban Missile Crisis. In contrast, this chapter will attempt to examine the influence each paper's political affiliation had impact upon published information, often hindering the accuracy of the information presented to the public.

In an effort to validate or discredit information printed within either newspaper, various government documents including memos, commission reports and other meeting minutes will be utilized this chapter. Of primary interest is the study commissioned by the C.I.A. and the Office of the Attorney General during late 1961 examining the actuality of the Cuban situation from a military, political and psychological standpoint.

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<sup>172</sup> Yuri Pavlov. *Soviet-Cuban Alliance 1959-1991*: Transaction Press; New Brunswick, MA; 1994.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>174</sup> James Aronson. *The Press and the Cold War*; New York: Monthly Review Press; 1990.

The study conducted by General Edward Lansdale, a prominent military figure within the Department of Defense throughout the Cuban period, offers a complex analysis of Cuban affairs, including a thirty-two point recommendation plan for future diplomatic and military action in Cuba. The Lansdale study is critical in establishing the continuous and deliberate attempts of the Kennedy Administration to mislead the Press through its vehement public denials of increasing Soviet threats and invasion plans, contrary to the plans implemented throughout 1962 despite the uncertainty of information presented in the Lansdale report. Other de-classified Government documents will be used in the latter portion of the chapter to differentiate between press prepared statements and the actual intentions of the Government.

Contrary to the claims of the Kennedy Administration, the Cuban Missile Crisis did not arise overnight. While numerous events throughout 1962 ultimately contributed to the climatic tensions of October 1962, for the purposes of this study the months of September and October 1962 will be of paramount importance. In the months preceding early fall 1962, the American Press was consumed with the fervor of upcoming Congressional elections, temporarily disregarding the static Cuban situation in favor of political campaigning, only occasionally regurgitating well circulated conjecture surrounding the increasing Soviet presence in Cuba. It was not until September of 1962 that details pertaining to the political fiasco later labeled the Cuban Missile Crisis warranted a status of extreme importance within the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Following the momentous failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion and subsequent falling out with the *New York Times*, the Kennedy Administration adopted a considerably

reserved approach during early 1962, refraining from any overt comments regarding Cuba. Initially appearing to have abandoned overzealous ambitions of converting Cuba to a democratic ally, the submissive attitude of the Kennedy Administration was little more than a carefully crafted public appearance, designed to minimize public criticism of the Administration's shortfalls. In reality certain parts of the Kennedy Government, namely the State Department and Attorney General, continued covert planning for the destruction of the Castro Government in secret departmental meetings. Commissioned in late 1961, the intelligence presented by General Edward Lansdale provided an assessment of Cuba on political, military and psychological fronts, resulting in a detailed recommendation plan for future action against the rising communist threat.

In his report Lansdale clearly stated the exiled Cuban revolutionary movement lacks the public support necessary for a full scale revolt against Castro, a widely known fact following the failed 1961 invasion attempt.<sup>175</sup> Acting contrary to available intelligence, Lansdale's report recommended a program of diplomatic interference, including interrupting trade to Cuba. While Lansdale notes the past success of such programs in Israel, Jordan, Iran and Greece, it is clear that he does not believe the United States would be successful in fully inhibiting or dissolving the free world shipping alliance to Cuba.<sup>176</sup> Despite the projections for limited success in disrupting trade to Cuba, the report notes the ongoing investigation of underground revolutionary movements in Cuba, suggesting that eleven teams of American military forces would be

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<sup>175</sup> Brigadier General Edward Lansdale. "The Cuba Project, A Program Review", 20 February, 1962, 6.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 6.

successful in penetrating Cuba by July.<sup>177</sup> Investigations also revealed the growing strength of a two hundred and fifty man revolutionary force located in the *Pinar del Rio* area of Western Cuba, indicating that other provincial factions of lesser men could potentially be combined to stage a successful intervention as early as October.<sup>178</sup>

Regardless of Lansdale's optimism about the establishment of revolutionary teams, he is plain in stating the foreseeable difficulties in resupplying such teams. Despite considerable limitations surrounding any invasion, Lansdale indicates that the most critical component of his report requires the White House to determine what commitment level the Government will officially support, fearing that without an immediate decision, revolutionary leaders would seek support from other less desirable allies.<sup>179</sup>

Disregarding the instability of Cuban revolutionaries, Lansdale suggests four options for U.S. action, ranging from minimally invasive tactics to varying levels of infiltration of Cuba. Among the minimalistic options proposed, the report suggests a total quarantine, demoting Cuba's political status to a member of the communist Bloc. Alternatively, the U.S. could commit to the covert Cuban operations, supplying revolutionaries with military equipment, in addition to tactical planning to ensure the overthrow of the Castro Government. While both options would achieve the goal of minimizing public knowledge of U.S. involvement in Cuban affairs, each plan bears a remarkable resemblance with the foreign policy during 1959-1961, which achieved little success.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 8.

Alternatively, the most radical options included overthrowing the Castro Government by engaging in a process of diplomatic and psychological warfare, with enforcement by overt U.S. military presence. The boldest recommendation would require the generation of false Cuban provocations, justifying the overthrow of Castro with excessive U.S. military force.<sup>181</sup> Differing in sheer intensity from their minimalist alternatives, the latter options represent a military commitment that was not a political alternative for the Kennedy Administration during 1961. While it seems unlikely that such extreme options would succeed in overthrowing the Castro Government, the greater implications of the Cold War may have influenced Lansdale's closing remarks. Admitting that the figures presented within the report reflected estimations of resistance support, and were not necessarily realistic, Lansdale heavily advocates operational secrecy in any continued U.S. action.<sup>182</sup> Reinforcing Lansdale's uncertainty surrounding the operational feasibility of his recommendations, the report concluded that should word of preparations spread across Cuba there was a strong possibility that the Castro forces would be capable of suppressing any uprising.<sup>183</sup> Given the glaring uncertainties reflected throughout the Lansdale report, the decision reached by the joint C.I.A. Attorney General Committee reflect an unyielding zealotry to overthrow the Cuban leader despite a serious lack of solid information.

Embellishing the weak possibilities for military success presented within the Lansdale report, the 19 January 1962 joint meeting of the C.I.A. and the Attorney General completely disregarded the hesitations reflected in Lansdale's assessment.

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 7.

Drawing bold conclusions not supported by the evidence presented in the report, the committee determined that there was indeed a strong anti-Castro force growing in Cuba, warranting necessary U.S. action.<sup>184</sup> In a weak attempt to solicit further intelligence surrounding underground Cuban revolutionary groups, the committee established plans to open a refugee interrogation center in Florida, to best collect pertinent information from the rising number of Cuban refugees.<sup>185</sup> Also acting upon information greatly manipulated to facilitate the intentions of the C.I.A., the committee establishes the disastrous Cuban protocol that would intensify international relations to their culmination in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Though much of the information presented within the Lansdale report was never publically presented, the reports of both Lansdale and the joint committee are important in establishing the motivations of crucial components of the Kennedy Government, and will serve to prove or disprove the later claims and statements made to the Press by the U.S. Government.

Initiating the Cuban protocol determined in early January, the United States began enforcement of a complete Cuban embargo on 3 February 1962. This significant political play attracted the interest of the *New York Times*, questioning the implications of such aggressive policies and more importantly, questioning the potential for future American action.<sup>186</sup> Acknowledging Cuba as a major priority of the Kennedy Administration, the editorial is clear in assessing Cuba's responsibility for harsh U.S. responses. Despite the article's overwhelming anti-Cuban sentiment, some criticism of the U.S. policy is evident even in understated tones. Interestingly, the editors engage in a geographical lesson,

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<sup>184</sup> Memo For the Director of Central Intelligence. 19 January 1962.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>186</sup> "Action on Cuba By U.S. and O.A.S." *The New York Times*, 4 February 1962, 152.

indicating that perhaps U.S. response to the Cuban threat is not commiserate with the potential spread of communism to an additional two percent of the world population.<sup>187</sup>

Although the article reflects significantly limited patience toward the Castro regime, it is the questioning of U.S. policy that emphasizes the stark difference from the *New York Times*' unquestioning allegiance to the Kennedy Administration prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Despite the obviously increasing criticisms displayed within the *New York Times*, the quiet questioning of the Kennedy Administration is minor in comparison to the *Chicago Tribune*'s scathing assessment of Secretary Rusk's behavior and strong armed motivations leading to the complete embargo of Cuba.<sup>188</sup> Sarcastically announcing Secretary Rusk's success in "wringing a declaration of from the O.A.S. declaring Castro's incompatibility with the Inter-American system," the article alludes that this the concessions agreed upon by the O.A.S. were in fact concessions of Rusk's initially stringent, militarily enforced demands.<sup>189</sup> In addition to cynical jabs at the expense of Secretary Rusk, the article identifies a gaping loophole in Rusk's agenda. Although Rusk successfully gathered a majority vote in the O.A.S., he did not gain the support of four major Latin American powers, all of whom arguing the expulsion of Cuba constituted a serious violation of the Charter of the O.A.S., as no precedent existed for the expulsion of a member state.<sup>190</sup> Indicating a seemingly obvious concern, the editors highlight the U.S.'s flagrant disregard for the tenets imposed under the O.A.S. charter, providing ample opportunity for communists inside and outside of Cuba to engage in widespread

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid, 152.

<sup>188</sup> "The O.A.S. and the Obvious," *The Chicago Tribune*, 1 February 1962, 16.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

propaganda campaigns denouncing the aggressive imperialist objectives of the United States.<sup>191</sup> Despite a clearly critical assessment of U.S. behavior, the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* do not offer sympathy for Cuban communism.<sup>192</sup> The editorial concludes with a stern condemnation of the President personally, for failing to enforce the tenets of the Monroe Doctrine, criticizing both Secretary Rusk and President Kennedy for insufficient action against the encroaching Cuban communists.

Despite slight variances in the intensity of the criticisms directed toward the Kennedy Administration, both newspapers had converged upon a similar portrayal of U.S. policy concerning Cuba by March 1962. Throughout the next several months, both newspapers continued to engage in a series of questioning editorials, producing few concrete answers. However, as Cold War tensions began to rapidly increase during early September 1962, the consistency of the Press reporting again reverted to the well documented divisions of 1959-1961, now directed by polar political affiliations.

Beginning in early September 1962, the *New York Times* began reporting the movement of frequent Soviet arms shipments to Cuba, a development that does not seem to have alarmed the State Department.<sup>193</sup> Responding to the Soviet confirmation of weapons shipments and technicians to Cuba, the State Department appeared relatively bored by the development.<sup>194</sup> Despite the paper's recognition of the potential threat posed by the now tangible Soviet influence, the United States government dismissed the increasing presence of Soviet technicians as inconsequential.<sup>195</sup> While the editors of the

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>193</sup> Tad Szulc. "Modernized Army Called Cuba's Aim," *The New York Times*, 3 September 1962, 1.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

*New York Times* were seemingly satisfied with explanations offered by the White House, the paper did note the rising discontent amongst Republican members of Congress, who in the height of election season capitalized upon the potentially excessive tolerance exhibited by the Kennedy Administration.<sup>196</sup> Although the *New York Times* did not explicitly question the justifications offered by the Kennedy Administration, the underlying discontent was still evident in early September.

In comparison to the *New York Times*' carefully crafted reports indicating growing discontent within the Congress, the reports of *Chicago Tribune* special correspondent Andrew Fayall effectively demonstrated the true extent of American frustration following his trip to Cuba.<sup>197</sup> Describing Cuba as the "fortress island", Fayall described the considerable number of Soviet "technicians" present throughout the country.<sup>198</sup> Despite noting the daily arrival of Soviet "technicians", Fayall expressed concerns with the perspective of Cuban soldiers and the status of their economy. Noting declining economic conditions, exemplified by strict food rationing, Fayall noted the unquestioning acceptance of such conditions by the armed forces.<sup>199</sup> Though one soldier claimed that, "Our people don't mind some hardships while we are building up our defense strengths," the author argued that the words of one military figure obviously cannot represent the opinion of an entire country, deprived of free elections.<sup>200</sup> Throughout the article it is clear that Fayall is neither primarily concerned with the increasing Soviet presence, nor with the deteriorating economic situation; instead, the

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>197</sup> Andrew Fayall. "Reporter Lifts Secrecy From Soviet Aid to Cuba," *The Chicago Tribune*, 5 September 1962, 2.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

author's use of such conditions is only intended to further his ultimate agenda, concerned with undermining the Cuban Government and in support of intensified U.S. action.

Building upon articles such as Fayall's throughout September, the *Chicago Times* clearly intensified its criticisms of the Kennedy Administration for its public double speak and lack of direct action through editorials including "Kennedy on Cuba."<sup>201</sup> While the *Tribune* clearly expressed a growing impatience with the Cuban situation, it attacked the weak excuses of the Kennedy Administration justifying relative inaction to the Cuban threat. Ironically, despite serious implications of Presidential inaction, the authors agree that any immediate attempt to invade Cuba would constitute a ghastly error for the United States. Citing an unstable estimation of Cuban revolutionary support, the editors are clear that an invasion would only render the Cuban people unable to independently establish a suitable government, forcing the United States to intercede as a mediation force, likely to fail under intense opposition.<sup>202</sup> Though confirming the unfeasibility of an immediate invasion, the *Tribune* continues to lobby for intensified U.S. responses, condemning the President for failing to provide legitimate rationale for U.S. policies. In contrast to the consistent criticisms of Kennedy in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times*' short lived vendetta against the President had diminished to a level of tolerable resentment by September 1962.<sup>203</sup> Following widespread questioning surrounding a request for 150,000 military reservists, the paper again displayed the familiar defensive position justifying Kennedy's request with little more than circumstantial evidence.<sup>204</sup> Citing the call to arms as a precautionary measure, the editors desperately attempted to convince readers that the

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<sup>201</sup> "Kennedy On Cuba," *The Chicago Tribune*, 6 September 1962, 16.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>203</sup> "The Lessons of Cuba," *The New York Times*, 9 September 1962, 200.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, 200.

drastic increase of Soviet technicians in Cuba was a harmless occurrence, while simultaneously indicating the impossibility of a U.S. invasion Cuba without drastic ramifications to the delicate status of the Cold War.<sup>205</sup> Though it is clear that the *New York Times* recognized the global implications surrounding further U.S. interference, their embedded loyalty to President Kennedy was again becoming an unavoidable bias in the accurate assessment of the deteriorating political environment.

In contrast, the *Chicago Tribune* continued its critical analysis of the Kennedy Administration, often quoting boisterous Cuban Press releases, taunting rumored U.S. invasion plans for their continued futility.<sup>206</sup> The reemergence of several contrasting editorials, common throughout much of 1961, illustrated of the larger underlying political war raging within the United States. While the political affinity of the *New York Times* was only temporarily subdued by bruised egos, the critical nature of the *Chicago Tribune* was never publically linked to Republican opposition of the Kennedy Administration until 1962.

Historically critical of the Castro Government, in combination with a general lack of U.S. action, the *Chicago Tribune* trumpeted the passage of a joint resolution endorsing military action, if necessary, for the containment of communism to Cuba.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid, 200.

<sup>206</sup> Jules DuBois. "Attack By U.S. Would Fail, Castro Says," *The Chicago Tribune*, 11 September, 1962. 2.

<sup>207</sup> William Edwards. "Republicans Hit Kennedy Policy On Cuba," *The Chicago Tribune*, September 22, 1962. A-5.

“The President has debated and hesitated, there is a thinly veiled fear along the New Frontier that almost any act of principal committed by the U.S. will bring down upon us the wrath of Soviet Premier Khrushchev,” *The Chicago Tribune*

The publication of this article and others of a similar tone, clearly demonstrate the Republican allegiance of the *Chicago Tribune*. Devoid of any patience for the ‘timid and indecisive’ responses of President Kennedy, the editors made clear that a more drastic response is unavoidable in order to safeguard U.S. influence and integrity throughout the Western Hemisphere, specifically Latin America.

During mid-September the rapidly unraveling political situation cleverly disguised by the Kennedy Administration and the U.S. Press alike, suddenly became exposed in dynamic portions. Throughout the entire Cuban conflict, beginning in 1959, the *New York Times* had cautiously refrained from overtly connecting the presence of Soviet supplies and personnel to the larger issue. For its part, the *Chicago Tribune* although operating under a Castro-centric agenda, had often alluded to the true dilemma. However, neither paper blatantly placed the issue of Cuba within the context of the Greater Cold War.

Amid swirling rumors of yet another U.S. invasion attempt, Soviet Premier Khrushchev’s issued a rather pompous statement hinting that U.S. aggression could justify an atomic retaliation, exposing the conflict in Cuba as a part of the struggle for Latin American hegemony in the Cold War that all parties had carefully suppressed.<sup>208</sup> While the *Tribune* is nearly dismissive of Khrushchev’s atomic threats, the similar

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<sup>208</sup> “Khrushchev’s Threat,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 12 September 1962, 16.

reaction of the Kennedy Administration invoked an entirely different response from editors of the *Tribune*.<sup>209</sup> Interestingly, despite the gravity of the Soviet assertion, the *Tribune* celebrated the advantage the potential crisis afforded Republican candidates with Congressional elections looming.<sup>210</sup> Noting the rising indignation of the American people, equally frustrated with the runaway Cuban dilemma, the paper concludes;

“Mr. Kennedy may not be much a statesman, but he is a skillful politician, sensitive to the tides of public opinion. If he gets the notion that the people want firmness toward Cuba he will be firm enough to satisfy them. He is more afraid of what they can do to him than of what Khrushchev threatens.”

*The Chicago Tribune*.<sup>211</sup>

Strangely, despite the dangerous innuendos of Khrushchev’s speech, the *Chicago Tribune* deemed the threat so miniscule that its political agenda was considered more suitable reading material for its audience.

Ironically, the *New York Times* was also quickly dismissive of Soviet threat, stating that “[Soviet] aid has not reached the point where it gives Cuba an offensive power or permits her to be a direct threat to the security of the United States.”<sup>212</sup>

Responding to the *Chicago Tribune*’s partisan warfare, the editorial attempted to liken the actions of the Kennedy Administration to the Monroe Doctrine, safeguarding the continental security of the United States.<sup>213</sup> Touting the supposedly undeniable ability of the U.S. to liquidate the Castro regime at its discretion, the *Times* attempted to justify the

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> “Kennedy, Cuba, and the U.S.S.R.,” *The New York Times*, 14 September 1962,24.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, 24.

passive actions of the Kennedy Administration through historical precedent. Though the comparison lacked the strength the *New York Times* editors may have desired, its notion of a Kennedy Doctrine would become the popular Democratic rhetoric both in the Press and on Capital Hill.

In a clever political re-direction of the *New York Times*'s labeling of the so called 'Kennedy Doctrine', the *Chicago Tribune* too compared the policies of the Kennedy Administration with those of the Monroe Doctrine, in a manner nearly mocking the praises of the *New York Times*.<sup>214</sup> The paper's many criticisms of the so called Kennedy Doctrine, include the half hearted approach to an embargo of Cuban shipping, a typical default response of the Kennedy Administration to the continued belligerency of Castro and the Soviet presence in Cuba.

“So the Administration's policy, if it can be dignified with that name, is that of taking a half step forward, a half step back, like Babar, King of the Elephants, wheeling his baby carriage. It is to nibble at the fringes of Soviet power in this hemisphere without ever coming to grips with the danger.”

The forthcoming nature of the *Tribune* editorial signified an important step in the continuing evolution of newspaper coverage of the Cuban situation. No longer simply concerned with the outlandish disobedience of the Castro Government, the now openly Republican *Tribune* plainly resorted to outright criticisms using the editorial space as a means of encouraging political change. Although both newspapers continue to discuss the Cuban situation within their editorial columns, it is clear that the remarks of Premier

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<sup>214</sup> “A Policy on Cuba,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 16 October 1962, A16.

Khrushchev are politically insignificant outside of the opportunity to use Soviet rhetoric in well phrased attacks against the Kennedy Administration.

While both papers reduce Khrushchev's atomic statements to nothing more than unsupported threats, this glaring oversight highlights the failure of both newspapers to accurately place Cuba within the proper context of the larger Cold War. Historian John L. Gaddis, author of perhaps the definitive modern work relating to the Cold War, weighs the Khrushchev speech with an elevated degree of political importance. Using information unavailable during 1962, Gaddis evaluates the threat as a tangible evidence that the Soviets understood to perhaps a greater degree than the U.S., that the West was winning the Cold War.<sup>215</sup> The potentially hazardous comments of the Soviet Premier were undoubtedly in retaliation to continuous attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro and Gaddis also connects unusual military maneuvers in the Caribbean during the Spring and Summer of 1962 as a precedent for Khrushchev's comments. Gaddis's explanation of the careless comment exposes U.S. endeavors never mentioned in either American newspaper, demonstrating that the political motivations of each paper respectively hindered the accurate dissemination of pertinent information to the public.<sup>216</sup>

Substantiating claims purported within Gaddis's work, including scantily published reports of attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro is the 4 October 1962 report on Operation MOONGOOSE, the secret military activities in Cuba.<sup>217</sup> In this report the

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<sup>215</sup> Gaddis, John L. *We Now Know; Rethinking Cold War History*. New York; Oxford University Press:1997, 261.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 262.

<sup>217</sup> CIA, Minutes, TOP SECRET, "Minutes of Meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) on Operation Mongoose," 4 October 1962, 1.

Attorney General emphasizing that “massive activity” against Cuba must continue. While the report notes that higher Government officials also favor continuing activity, it is implied that that any activity must maintain a ‘low profile’. While further clarification of ‘low profile’ is not specified, given the conversation about continuing an admittedly flawed plan to sabotage the Castro Government,<sup>218</sup> it can be logically inferred that the continued ‘low profile’ is a direct reference to restricting the access of the American Press from vital information.

While rumors of increasing infusions of Soviet arms to Cuba in the form of minor weapons continued to circulate throughout the U.S. Press, Kennedy Administration responded with limited concern to continuing developments. Unbeknownst to both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, the Kennedy Administration, largely through the Press releases by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, had again intentionally deceived the Press concealing knowledge of several short range ballistic missiles sites now present in Cuba. In reality, the Department of Defense demonstrated an acute awareness of not only the presence of such missiles but their intended usage throughout several Department of Defense (DOD) memos dated 15 October and 16 October 1962 respectively.<sup>219</sup> While aerial photographs presented during the 15 October DOD meeting produced inconclusive findings intended to substantiate the discovery of Soviet missiles or launch site, a lack of information prompted President Kennedy to forbid military action for the next thirty days; however, it is clear that the motivations of the DOD committee superseded even

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>219</sup> Department of Defense. Transcripts, SECRET, “Notes Taken From Meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, October-November 1962; Dealing With the Cuban Missile Crisis,” October 15, 1962, 1-3.

Presidential orders.<sup>220</sup> Inadvertently foreshadowing coming events, the Secretary of State seemed confident in remarking that despite an official order prohibiting military action, “. . . he [Kennedy] does not control forthcoming events.”<sup>221</sup> Ironically, the following day the DOD miraculously obtained conclusive evidence confirming the Cuban possession of at least three missiles with a capacity to strike targets at a distance of 700 to 1100 miles.<sup>222</sup> Despite the gravity of the newly obtained information, whether embellished or actual, reports of missile discovery were absent from both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* for nearly one week.

The 20 October 1962 meeting of the CIA in which the presence and more importantly the now undeniable danger posed by three confirmed short range ballistic missiles, presented the Kennedy Administration with an issue of such magnitude that the President could not ignore.<sup>223</sup> The report offered several possible responses not limited to blockades and military response, but did not provide the final course of action.<sup>224</sup>

Unable to further postpone direct action without some form of public disclosure, President Kennedy’s 22 October address to the nation revealed previously censored information in addition to somewhat fabricated rationales.<sup>225</sup> Claiming that the United States had only possessed definitive evidence of missiles in Cuba for a period of one week, the President engaged in a lengthy explanation of the danger to Americans which could be solved with a seven step agenda. In addition to the complete quarantine as the

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid, 2

<sup>222</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>223</sup> CIA Special National Intelligence Estimate. “Major Consequences of Certain U.S. Courses of Action Against Cuba,” 20 October 1962, 1-8.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>225</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, 1.

primary recourse against Cuba, the U.S. military now on standby would be deployed if increased surveillance revealed further threats, or if the Soviets chose to attack any nation in the Western hemisphere.<sup>226</sup> Also calling for several political sanctions against the Soviet Union from organizations including the O.A.S., Kennedy appealed to Premier Khrushchev to remove his missiles from Cuba in the interests of world security, a moral appeal which Kennedy himself contradicts shortly thereafter, nearly proclaiming the event to be one unsolvable through direct negotiation.<sup>227</sup> Though Kennedy's address to the nation was designed to elevate a sense of national panic in order to justify less than agreeable political actions, the reactions of the Press reflect more confusion and political maneuvering than panic.

Responding to the President's national address, national security concerns forced the *Chicago Tribune* to step down from its political soap box, responding to rumors of a planned U.S. invasion of Cuba.<sup>228</sup> The paper was surprisingly defensive of the Kennedy Administration, denouncing rumors of a potential nuclear war in response to the American quarantine of Cuba.<sup>229</sup> The editors, perhaps somewhat naively, are reticent in their belief that a President as indebted to America as President Kennedy would never expose his country to the dangers of an atomic war.<sup>230</sup> However, within several days of its surprising defense of Kennedy, the *Tribune* returned to its general pragmatic attitude, questioning the underlying factors that led to such a sudden crisis in Cuba.<sup>231</sup> Following the denunciation of Kennedy by several Republican Senators, claiming to have "fully

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> "Our Course Is Set," *The Chicago Tribune*, 23 October 1962, 14.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> "Sudden Cuba Crisis A Puzzle in Deception," *The Chicago Tribune*, 26, October 1962, 1.

confirmed” reports of missiles in Cuba a week prior to date noted in the address to the nation, the *Tribune* questions how the Soviet Union was able to construct missile bases, a lengthy project, without U.S. detection.<sup>232</sup> While the editors cannot identify a simple reason for this serious oversight, the paper attributes the failure to factors ranging from CIA ineptitude to surveillance interference as a result of a recent hurricane.<sup>233</sup> While it seems that the *Tribune* was reluctant to publically claim that the Kennedy Administration again withheld evidence from the Press, surprisingly the *New York Times* was much more forthcoming than its usually overcritical counterpart.

Contradicting the claims set forth by Republican Senators, namely Kenneth B. Keating, mentioned within the *Tribune* article, the *New York Times* reaffirms President Kennedy’s claims that missiles were only definitively identifying in Cuba one week prior to the national address.<sup>234</sup> Admitting that the *Times*, in addition to several other prominent newspapers, had learned of the missiles earlier in the day prior to the President’s speech, all papers in question chose to omit such information from morning headlines.<sup>235</sup> The editors cite fear of the Soviet Union as the primary reason for complying with the requests of the White House, fearing that reporting information ahead of the Presidential address would jeopardize the President’s planned course of action.<sup>236</sup> Though the White House again mislead and withheld information from the Press, which once inspired great anger and resentment in the editors of the *New York Times*, the censorship request in this situation, combined with a significantly more forthcoming

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> “Capitals Discussions on Crisis Kept a Tight Secret for a Week,” *The New York Times*, 23 October 1962, 19.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

explanation, seems to have successfully reconciled the relationship between the *Times* and the Kennedy Administration.

In the week separating the Presidential address and the 28 October agreement with Soviet Premier Khrushchev essentially stabilizing the crisis, the *New York Times* published a nervous array of articles ranging from fearful reports of the Soviet menace to confident appraisals of blame.<sup>237</sup> Brushing aside relevant concerns for public safety and frankly the general condition of global affairs, the *New York Times* displayed such confidence in the superiority of the U.S. in handling the missile crisis that it resumed its partisan warfare during the height of the crisis. An article published 25 October 1962, “The Issues ‘Death’ Does Not Preclude an Autopsy”, described in detail the Democratic victory symbolized by the President’s quarantine of Cuba over Republican accusations of the President’s previous “do nothing policies.”<sup>238</sup> Other editorials printed during this time, including “The Way Toward Peace,”<sup>239</sup> acknowledge the dangers presented by the crisis. The editors attribute blame solely to the Soviets, subsequently encouraging Premier Khrushchev to conform to the stipulations of U.S. demands.<sup>240</sup> Although the *New York Times* clearly demonstrated a responsible coverage of the crisis, the political agenda of the editors continued to be highly apparent even surrounding widespread

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<sup>237</sup> “Cuba Buildup Involves Missiles, Tanks and Jets, *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 24; Jack Raymond, “Navy Tells Ships of Danger Areas; Vessels Advised to Avoid Sea Lanes Near Cuba, *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 20,; “The Way Toward Peace,” *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 38,; Tad Szulac, “Caution Modifies Castro’s Defiance on Blockade ; Premier Maintaining Alert, Is Avoiding Incidents With U.S. Ships or Planes, *The New York Times*, 26 October 1962, 20.

<sup>238</sup> Arthur Krock. “The Issues ‘Death’ Does Not Preclude An Autopsy,” *The New York Times*, 25, October 1962, 38.

<sup>239</sup> “The Way Toward Peace,” *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 25.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

reports of global protest and criticisms to U.S. action during these critical moments.<sup>241</sup> To under informed readers, the presence of political grandstanding during this week may have signified a devaluation of a potential atomic war, weighing future political outcomes with parallel importance.

Following the relatively successful compromise between the Soviet Union and the United States on 29 October 1962, diminishing the immediate nuclear threat, post crisis reports in the American Press were cautiously optimistic about future Cold War relations. Heralding prevailing reason as a key factor in Soviet Premier Khrushchev decision to remove missiles from Cuba, the *New York Times* was outwardly pleasant in its description of Soviet leadership, although imbedded criticisms were abundant as the article progresses.<sup>242</sup> Indicating Khrushchev's initial difficulty in agreeing to the tenets of the U.S. ultimatum, which the paper notes may be linked to a divided outlook in the Kremlin, the editors emphasized that the quarantine must continue until aerial reconnaissance quantifies Soviet promises of missile removal.<sup>243</sup> While the editors clearly attempt to maintain the U.S. position of hope for improved East-West relations as emphasized in the Post Mortem on Cuba prepared for the President,<sup>244</sup> the editors remained skeptical that such relations would come to fruition.<sup>245</sup> Clearly relieved that immediate atomic threats had subsided, the cautious analysis offered within the *The New*

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<sup>241</sup> "Cuban Crisis Weighing Heavily On the Minds of Calm Berliners," *The New York Times*, 26 October 1962, 19; No "Red China Charges Blockade Is Piracy," *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 1; "Blockade of Cuba is Opposed by U.A.R.," *The New York Times*, 25 October 1962, 22.

<sup>242</sup> "A Triumph of Reason," *The New York Times*, 29 October 1962, 26.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid*, 26.

<sup>244</sup> White House Press Secretary. "Memorandum For the President, Post Mortem on Cuba," 29 October 1962, 1-3.

<sup>245</sup> "Triumph," 26.

*York Times* surprisingly paralleled many of the conclusions drawn by its politically opposite counterpart *The Chicago Tribune*.

*The Chicago Tribune* article published 29 October 1962, “Nikita Pledge OK’d By U.S.,” expresses notions of hesitant relief similar to those expressed by the editors of the *New York Times*, while providing a greater analysis of the specific details of the compromise.<sup>246</sup> Brimming with confidence that the Soviet Premier had conceded to U.S. demands for fear of an imminent U.S. invasion of Cuba, the *Tribune* cautiously reiterates the belief that a peaceful solution in Cuba might indicate the probable easing of tensions for other Cold War dilemmas.<sup>247</sup> Exposing the tentative peace agreement as the Premier’s second attempt, the first requesting the removal of U.S. ballistic missiles from Turkey, a request soundly rejected by President Kennedy, the editors reflected on the revisions as indicative of Soviet desires to avoid a situation of mutually assured destruction.<sup>248</sup> While much of the article reiterated points mentioned in the *Times* article, the *Tribune* was also guilty of political posturing even in the aftermath of the crisis.<sup>249</sup> In the midst of discussing the tenets of the peace agreements, the *Tribune* highlighted the President’s sudden retreat to his country home in Middleburg VA, despite ongoing negotiations for a lunchtime hiatus, as if to imply that resolution of the crisis was not of the upmost importance.<sup>250</sup> While providing a thorough analysis of the peace terms, perhaps in more detail than the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune* continued to demonstrate its disapproval of President Kennedy, even in times of general public approval for successfully averting a global crisis.

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<sup>246</sup> Laurence Burd. “Nikita Pledge OK’d By U.S.,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 29 October 1962, 1.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

The depictions of the Kennedy Administration in both the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* coverage of the period preceding and during the Cuban Missile Crisis are an important component in evaluating the information each paper chose to report, and more importantly exclude. While the *New York Times* initially maintained its distance from the Administration following its deceptive actions during the Bay of Pigs period of 1961, by September 1962 it is clear that Kennedy had regained the admiration of the *New York Times* although somewhat more cautiously.

The political alliances of each newspaper are particularly important in evaluating the coverage of each paper during 1962. Acknowledging the Republican advantage entering 1961 following the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the *Chicago Tribune* dedicated much of its editorial space to the condemnation of President Kennedy for his continued indecisiveness, which the paper eventually labeled the ‘do nothing’ policy. Using the paper as a method of furthering the Republican agenda, many of the stories published in the *Tribune* demonstrated an important shift from imbedded criticisms of the Kennedy Administration surrounded by critical analysis of the Castro Government, to blatant attacks against the U.S. Administration and its inability to control the Soviet threat.

The *New York Times* is equally guilty of evaluating information based on its political leanings. The editors of the *Times* chose to suppress evidence of an increasing Soviet presence in Cuba, despite potentially serious implications. Despite the paternalistic intentions of the editors to protect President Kennedy through various justifications of limited action in response to the increasing Soviet threat, the *Times* coined the phrase the Kennedy Doctrine, attempting to tie the policies of Kennedy toward historical responses to Cuban issues found in the Monroe Doctrine. It also must be noted that these

comparisons, aggrandizing the relatively limited responses of the Kennedy Administration during September of 1961, were designed to bolster the political importance of Kennedy and the Democratic party in the preparation for forthcoming Congressional elections. Such imbedded political maneuverings were common place throughout 1962, at times reducing the significance of the missile crisis to an opportunity for political showmanship.

The impact of each newspaper's political affiliation during the Cuban Missile Crisis undoubtedly influenced the objectivity of the information presented to the public, as well as to the level of toleration demonstrated toward the policies of the U.S. Government. While much of the reports published from the *New York Times* are nothing more than regurgitation of White House press releases, glorifying the wise decisions of the President, the alternative demonstrated in early 1962, the over critical analysis of U.S. policy is reflective of bruised egos and does not represent an accurate analysis of the political situation.

The *Chicago Tribune* although obviously guilty of interjecting its Republican sentiments throughout its editorials, provided the most accurate information throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis. Perhaps an important component of this accuracy was the *Tribune's* early critical assessment of the Castro Government and later disapproval of Soviet influence in Cuba. Historically less than supportive of the Kennedy Administration, the *Chicago Tribune* chose to avoid the political conundrums experienced by the often-unquestioning *New York Times* through a series of pragmatically bold editorials. In essence, though operating under its own political biases undoubtedly lending an often over critical assessment of U.S. policy decisions, the

*Tribune* demonstrated a unilaterally questioning attitude toward all parties involved, providing its readership with a more complete and often more accurate chronology of unfolding events.

The events leading to the culmination of the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962 demonstrate numerous important revelations in the method in which both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times* chose to present the available information. While both papers identified the actions or relative inaction of the Kennedy Administration as political ammunition to further each paper's respective political agendas, the manipulation of information presented throughout the course of 1962 presented the public with a diminished version of events. Essentially, both papers were more concerned with evaluating the policy of the Kennedy Administration rather than threats to world safety. They failed to effectively substantiate circulating rumors of Soviet missiles in Cuba independent from White House denials, blindsiding the public about an undeniable Soviet threat as the missile crisis unfolded. In hindsight, the political agenda of each paper during the Cuban Missile Crisis effectively placed the Cuban situation in proper context after three years of argument and analysis as an over glorified vessel of Cold War frustrations.

## Conclusions

In the era prior to twenty-four hour news networks, the Press fulfilled a critical societal role, disseminating pertinent information to the public. As the primary source of information for many, the implied belief in the unbiased reporting of American newspapers was thoroughly destroyed in 1961 during the Cuban era of the Cold War. Encompassing a three year period beginning in 1959, the Press portrayal of Governmental action throughout the Eisenhower and later Kennedy Administrations exemplified the true impact of political affiliations upon the presentation of news. The political influence upon the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* was particularly evident during this period, initially stratifying the perceptions of the emerging Castro Government, later erupting into a forum for political showmanship at the expense of accurately representing the true threat of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The toppling of the American supported Fulgencio Batista regime in late 1958 by the revolutionary forces of Fidel Castro immediately inspired divided reviews in both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*. Initially applauding the great humanitarian actions of the young revolutionary, the *New York Times* exhibited a visibly hopeful presentation of events, one that began to demonstrate a gradual change following

continuous infringements upon American capitalist ventures. Reflecting the concerns of the Eisenhower Administration surrounding issues of eminent domain surrounding land in use by the American based United Fruit Company, the *New York Times* slowly progressed to editorials urging Cuban compliance in the interests of world trade. In addition to the threat posed to American corporate interests, the new Castro Government significantly challenged the overwhelming American influence exercised by U.S. President's since the conclusion of the second world war. The *New York Times* effectively employed its power of suggestion to depict the Castro Government as a communist menace.

In contrast to the *New York Times* reiteration of Government reports, the *Chicago Tribune* wisely chose to withhold official judgment of the new Cuban Government for the first several days of its existence. Carefully evaluating the emerging political policies of Fidel Castro, the *Chicago Tribune* developed a critical attitude toward the young revolutionary, immediately subscribing to U.S. Government fueled rumors of Cuban communist infiltration. The relatively constant attitude of the *Chicago Tribune* is crucial to a proper evaluation of newspaper articles as the editors of the *Tribune* formed their negative impressions of the Cuban Government early into the reign of Fidel Castro, only wavering slightly in their criticisms throughout 1962, in contrast to the inconsistency of the *New York Times*.

While the first year of Fidel Castro's tenure is important from a newspaper standpoint in establishing the initial perceptions of both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, the first year was relatively without incident in comparison to the events of 1961 and the dramatic implication of such events upon newspaper coverage in

the United States. While the *New York Times* generally supported the rhetoric of the Eisenhower Administration, its dedication to President John F. Kennedy reflects an unparalleled admiration. Dedicating numerous editorials to the promising notions presented in President Kennedy's inauguration speech, it seems that the *New York Times* made a conscious decision to ignore the inconsistencies of the former Senator's viewpoints regarding Cuba, drastically altered for political purposes during the Presidential campaign. While the *Times* praised Kennedy's "humanitarian" extension of a peace agreement, the paper was critical of the skeptical willingness of the Castro Government to reach a mutually beneficial consensus. Despite such promising overtones, the uncompromising nature of the Kennedy Administration, unwilling to respect Cuban sovereignty, ultimately prevented a negotiated peace, a fact largely ignored by the *New York Times*.

The excitement clearly demonstrated throughout the inauguration and early policies of President Kennedy within the *New York Times* in comparison to the astutely reserved *Chicago Tribune* represent both naïve and mature perspectives. Although the *Chicago Tribune* certainly celebrated the inauguration of the new American President, praise for Kennedy was more reserved, highlighting the discrepancies between Kennedy's pre-campaign and inaugural positions on the situation in Cuba. The *Tribune's* identification of Kennedy's inconsistencies is well documented within his own book *The Strategy For Peace*, a critical assessment of the policies of the Eisenhower Administration. In this work published in 1959, a mere year prior to his inauguration, Kennedy's bold accusations indicating inflexible U.S. policies were largely to blame for the "fiery young rebel's" transition to communism, provide a stark contrast to Kennedy's

uncompromising suit for peace, designed to protect American interests with little regard for the principals of the Cuban Revolution.<sup>251</sup> While the *Chicago Tribune* clearly identified the flaws of Kennedy's political tenets to further its own muted Republican agenda, the paper's attempt of disclosure provides a more biased perspective of world events than does the *New York Times*, who consumed with admiration for the young President, neglected its duty to provide accurate information to the public.

The escalation of the Cuban situation throughout 1961 prior to its culmination in the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion represents a period of overwhelming conjecture in which both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* consistently reported misleading and unsubstantiated information. Ironically, the only reports either paper was able to determine was the complete dissatisfaction of the Cuban masses, perhaps the greatest miscalculation of both the Kennedy Administration and the American Press.

While the circulating rumors foreshadowed a future U.S. invasion of Cuba throughout much of 1961, such rumors were fueled largely from the Cuban Revolutionary Council, the de-facto government in exile, and the nervous posturing of Fidel Castro himself. While the *Chicago Tribune* consistently reported the claims of the Castro in great detail and with much disdain, the *New York Times* chose to essentially reprint the denials issued by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, often verbatim.

Despite the idyllic relationship between the *New York Times* and the Kennedy Administration, it was the article published by James Reston, carefully reporting U.S. involvement in the training and execution of Cuban rebels in various locations in Florida,

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<sup>251</sup> Trumbull Higgins. *The Perfect Failure; Kennedy, Eisenhower, the C.I.A. and the Bay of Pigs*, Canada; Penguin Books Canada: 1987, 58.

Louisiana, and Guatemala, that prompted the Kennedy Administration to exploit the President's personal friendship with *New York Times* editor Turner Catledge. In a gross violation of trust, the White House provided the editorial staff with a fabricated series of events involving some two thousand-rebel forces in such a compelling manner that the paper was convinced to withhold information from the public in the interests of national security. Despite the paper's admiration of the new President, it is doubtful, given the prior publication of Reston's carefully questioning articles, that the *New York Times* would have refrained from publishing further information had the President not personally "confided" in Catledge. Given this severe breach of trust, the *New York Times*'s reaction to the White House's purposeful untruth's surrounding the Bay of Pigs invasion produced, arguably, the most candid depictions of U.S. motivations and the Kennedy Administration seen throughout the Cuban period in its entirety.

For a period of nearly one year, the critical articles published in the *New York Times* throughout much of 1961 and early 1962 rival the more critical nature perspective reflected in the *Chicago Tribune*, reflecting an American Press deeply dissatisfied with the foreign policy of its Government. Yet, it is the curious revitalization of friendly relations between the *New York Times* and the White House following February 1962 that fully exposes the true ramifications of political affiliations of the period, providing a clear rationale for the generally divided representations of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

In a situation bearing many similarities to the April 1961, the White House again approached the *New York Times* and several other prominent newspapers with a request to omit information surrounding the rapidly escalating Cuban Missile Crisis, again in the

interests of national security. While the situations appear nearly identical in nature, the *New York Times*' insisted that instead of agreeing to a complete omission, the editors, wisely agreed to omit pertinent information for a twenty-four hour period, allowed the President the opportunity to present the dire situation to the public. The actual openness of the White House in this situation is highly debatable, as the Kennedy Administration purposefully mislead both the Press and the public in regard to the actual danger of Soviet missiles in Cuba, while minimizing the amount of time the Administration had officially known of Soviet intentions. Despite serious deviances from actual intelligence, openly questioned in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times* seems to have been satisfied with the amount of disclosure shared by the White House, despite its questionable validity.

Given the historical example set forth by each newspaper over the course of the Cuban period, the political affiliations of each respective paper provide an important context to both the level of submission and the critical questioning each paper demonstrated in response to policies both domestic and foreign in nature. The baseline throughout this study, the *Chicago Tribune*, though never overly critical of the Eisenhower Administration, was less optimistic about the emerging Castro Government, quickly capitalizing on the growing communist presence within the new provisional Cuban Government. The *Tribune* was also among the first major American newspapers to emphasize the reemerging bonds between the Soviet Union and Cuba as a significant danger to world security, accurately implicating Cuba as the newest 'hot spot' of the Cold War. The overt Republican sentiments of the paper became evident during the inauguration of President Kennedy, highlighting the continued inconsistencies of the

young President and providing criticism in scolding undertones. Despite a growing awareness of political affiliations, it was not until the dawning of Congressional election season in 1962 that the failures of the Kennedy Administration, and more generally the Democratic party, that the Cuban situation became the ideal campaign platform for challenging Republican candidates.

In contrast, the *New York Times* demonstrated a youthful optimism throughout the entirety Cuban period ranging from highly optimistic observations of the new Castro Government, to hopeful reports that the troubled Castro Government could be safely transformed into a successful democratic regime with the willing aid of the United States. The paper did not demonstrate a negative opinion until the interests of American businesses could no longer be protected from the rapidly revolutionizing Cuban Government, subsequently revising its positions to reflect a growing discontent within the Department of State. Although the paper's affiliations with the Democratic Party were muted prior to 1960, the inauguration of President Kennedy dramatically altered the transparency of the *Times*, allowing the paper to become more vulnerable to the whims of the White House.

Resulting from the partisan affiliations of each respective paper, the version of events presented to the American public during the period of 1959-1963 represent two significantly different depictions of the state of world affairs. While it is nearly impossible to definitively conclude which paper presented the most accurate depiction of events during the Cuban period in general, exposing the political agendas of each respective paper is important in determining the causality for each paper's decisions. The objective of this study sought to expose the differences and similarities of each paper's

representation of events, exposing the significant amount of discretion allotted to each newspaper in determining which stories are in fact 'newsworthy'. Therefore, it is important to note that neither paper overall was more or less correct than the other, as each paper demonstrated a weakness or fallibility that the other did not. While the *Chicago Tribune* nearly immediately placed Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution in the proper context of the Cold War, the *New York Times* inadvertently exposed the highly temperamental, capitalistic motivations of the U.S. Government, aggravated by the intrusion of Soviet 'technicians'. In combination, *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune*, writing within the confines of its respective political tenets, questioned, criticized and applauded certain actions of both the American and Cuban Governments, providing astute members of the American public with a more complete depiction of Cold War motivations, clearly demonstrating the true discretionary powers of the American Press.

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