

De: National Security Archive archive@GWU.EDU

Objet: LBJ Regretted Ordering U.S. Troops into Dominican Republic in 1965, White House Tapes Confirm; Yet He Insisted, "I'd do the same thing right this second."

Date: 29 avril 2015 05:37

À: NSARCHIVE@HERMES.GWU.EDU

Washington, D.C., April 28, 2015 -- President Lyndon Johnson regretted sending U.S. troops into the Dominican Republic in 1965, telling aides less than a month later, "I don't want to be an intervenor," according to new transcripts of White House tapes published today (along with the tapes themselves) for the first time by the National Security Archive at George Washington University (www.nsarchive.org).

Johnson ordered U.S. Marines into Santo Domingo 50 years ago today. Three weeks later, he lamented both that the crisis had cost American lives and that it had turned out badly on the ground as well as for the United States' -- and Johnson's own -- political standing. Nevertheless, he insisted he would "do the same thing right this second."

In conversations with aides captured on the White House taping system, Johnson expressed sharp frustrations, including with the group surrounding exiled President Juan Bosch, whom the United States was supporting. Speaking in late May 1965, Johnson told an adviser, "they have to clean themselves up, as I see it, where we can live with them. Put enough perfume on to kill the odor of killing 20 Americans and wounding 100."

Johnson's public explanation for sending the Marines into Santo Domingo was to rescue Americans endangered by civil war conditions in the Dominican Republic. But his main motivation, the tapes and transcripts confirm, was to prevent a Communist takeover. Basing his decision largely on assertions by the CIA and others in the U.S. government that Cuba's Fidel Castro had been behind the recent uprising, Johnson confided to his national security advisor, "I sure don't want to wake up ... and find out Castro's in charge."

That intelligence, along with other information Johnson received during the crisis, turned out to be erroneous -- a possibility LBJ himself worried about at the time.

The tapes, transcript and introductory material presented in this posting were provided by David Coleman, former chair of the Presidential Recordings Program at the Miller Center at the University of Virginia, and a Fellow at the National Security Archive. As Coleman notes, the materials are revelatory about Johnson's personal conduct of the crisis and his decision-making style as president. The transcripts, in several cases newly created by Coleman, are crucial to understanding the material on the tapes, which can be hard to decipher and are therefore often of limited usefulness on their own to researchers.

* * * * *

Check out today's posting at the National Security Archive -- <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB513/>

Find us on Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/NSArchive>

Unredacted, the Archive blog -- <http://nsarchive.wordpress.com/>

THE NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE is an independent non-governmental research institute and library located at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The Archive collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). A tax-exempt public charity, the Archive receives no U.S. government funding; its budget is supported by publication royalties and donations from foundations and individuals.

PRIVACY NOTICE The National Security Archive does not and will never share the names or e-mail addresses of its subscribers with any other organization. Once a year, we will write you and ask for your financial support. We may also ask you for your ideas for Freedom of Information requests, documentation projects, or other issues that the Archive should take on. We would welcome your input, and any information you care to share with us about your special interests. But we do not sell or rent any information about subscribers to any other party.

