Preface

The publication Foreign Relations of the United States constitutes the official record of the foreign policy of the United States. The volumes in the series include, subject to necessary security considerations, all documents needed to give a comprehensive record of the major foreign policy decisions of the United States together with appropriate materials concerning the facts that contributed to the formulation of policies. Documents in the files of the Department of State are supplemented by papers from other government agencies involved in the formulation of foreign policy.

The basic documentary diplomatic record printed in the volumes of the series is edited by the Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State. The editing is guided by the principles of historical objectivity and in accordance with the following official guidance first promulgated by Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg on March 26, 1925:

There may be no alteration of the text, no deletions without indicating the place in the text where the deletion is made, and no omission of facts which were of major importance in reaching a decision. Nothing may be omitted for the purpose of concealing or glossing over what might be regarded by some as a defect of policy. However, certain omissions of documents are permissible for the following reasons:

a. To avoid publication of matters that would tend to impede current diplomatic negotiations or other business.

b. To condense the record and avoid repetition of needless details.

c. To preserve the confidence reposed in the Department by individuals and by foreign governments.

d. To avoid giving needless offense to other nationalities or individuals.

e. To eliminate personal opinions presented in despatches and not acted upon by the Department. To this consideration there is one qualification: in connection with major decisions it is desirable, where possible, to show the alternative presented to the Department before the decision was made.
Documents were selected for inclusion in this volume in 1985–1986. The process of selection focused on two general areas:

(1) Ongoing efforts by the U.S. Government, both before and after Fidel Castro’s assumption of power, to appraise his motives and objectives as well as those of his close advisers. Included are numerous reports from the Embassy in Havana and the Consulate in Santiago, memoranda of conversations with Cubans and Americans, and assessments by the U.S. intelligence community related to this issue. Nearly all these documents deal with the question of whether Castro and/or his advisers were either Communists themselves or were under Communist influence.

(2) Formulation of U.S. Government policy in Washington. The emphasis is on policymaking at the National Security Council level, in the White House, and in the Department of State. Documents were also selected to illustrate the views and recommendations of mid-level officials in the Department of State. The editor was concerned with the issue of whether the attitudes or sympathies of U.S. officials facilitated the rise to power of Castro and his followers. Attention was given to interagency coordination involving the Department of Defense, particularly the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Department of the Navy, and the Central Intelligence Agency. The roles of Congress, American business interests, and the press are documented only to the extent that pertinent correspondence was found at the Eisenhower Library and in Department of State files.

The primary documentary source for this volume was the extensive files of the Department of State pertaining to Cuba. In addition to the decimal files, the editor relied heavily on the retired files of various components of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs and of the Embassy in Havana.

The Department of State documentation, however, is not complete. At the time the editor conducted research for this volume in the Department’s files (1985–1986), documents had been withdrawn from the Department’s central archives and not returned. These withdrawals were in response to Freedom of Information requests, congressional inquiries, or for other investigative purposes. Other copies of these missing documents could not always be found. The absent documents, however, do not appear to compromise the accuracy of the record presented in this volume.

Second, the Department of State often communicated with the Embassy in Havana by telephone. Although some records of these conversations have been found and are printed, there are references to other telephone conversations for which no records have been located. Presumably, there are still others not even alluded to.
Third, although Department of State officers frequently visited Cuba and Embassy officials often came to Washington for consultations, records of the conversations or recommendations made during these visits have not always been located. In such cases, the editors have provided editorial notes in an attempt to reconstruct from a variety of sources what transpired.

Finally, the telegraphic communications between the Department of State and the Embassy in Havana seem to have contained an unusually high incidence of garbles, misspellings, and delayed transmissions. The editors have sought to identify such problems and to provide explanatory notes where appropriate.

The records of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense were not systematically researched for this volume. The role of these agencies in the events documented here was marginal.

The Arleigh Burke Papers at the Naval Historical Center and various records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense supplemented Department of State files and the Eisenhower Library material. The memoirs of Ambassadors Earl Smith and Philip Bonsal and of various Cuban officials proved helpful in clarifying and amplifying the documentary record. Also helpful were several documentary publications, such as the Declassified Documents collection. The editors did not attempt to supplement the existing record further by interviews with surviving participants. For a complete listing of sources consulted, see page XI.

Nearly all the material selected by the editors for inclusion has been declassified. Deleted material consists primarily of brief references to intelligence activities. The editors consider only a few of the deletions to be of significance, but the omission even of this material does not, in their opinion, compromise the integrity of the volume.

**Editorial Methodology**

The documents in the volume are presented chronologically according to Washington time. Memoranda of conversations are placed according to the time and date of the conversation, rather than the date the memorandum was drafted. If applicable, incoming telegrams from U.S. missions are placed according to the time of receipt in the Department of State, rather than the time of transmission.

Editorial treatment of the documents published in the Foreign Relations series follows Office style guidelines, supplemented by guidance from the Editor in Chief and the chief technical editor. The source text is reproduced as exactly as possible, including marginalia or other notations, which are described in footnotes. Obvious typographical errors are corrected, but other mistakes and omissions in the source text are corrected by bracketed insertions: a correction is set in italic
type; an omission in roman type. Brackets are also used to indicate text that has been omitted because it deals with an unrelated subject (in roman type) or because it remained classified after the declassification review process (in italic type). The amount of material not declassified has been noted by indicating the number of lines or pages of source text that were omitted. All ellipses and brackets that appear in the source text are so identified by footnotes.

The first footnote to each document indicates the document’s source, original classification, distribution, and drafting information. The source footnote also provides the background of important documents and policies and indicates if the President or Secretary of State read the document.

Editorial notes and additional annotation summarize pertinent material not printed in this volume, indicate the location of additional documentary sources, describe key events, and provide summaries of and citations to public statements that supplement and elucidate the printed documents. Information derived from memoirs of participants and other first-hand accounts has been used where applicable to supplement the official record.

Declasification Review Procedures

Declasification review of the documents selected for publication was conducted by the Division of Historical Documents Review, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Department of State. The review was made in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, and the criteria established in Executive Order 12356 regarding:

1) military plans, weapons, or operations;
2) the vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, projects, or plans relating to the national security;
3) foreign government information;
4) intelligence activities (including special activities), or intelligence sources or methods;
5) foreign relations or foreign activities of the United States;
6) scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security;
7) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities;
8) cryptology; and
9) a confidential source.

Declasification decisions entailed concurrence of the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the Department of State, other concerned agencies of the U.S. Government, and appropriate foreign governments regarding documents of those governments. The British and Canadian Governments concurred in the declassification of their documents printed in this volume. The principle guiding declassifica-
tion review is to release as much information as is consistent with contemporary requirements of national security and sound foreign relations.

Ronald D. Landa compiled this volume under the supervision of Editor in Chief John P. Glennon. Robert McMahon conducted the initial gathering of documents. Suzanne E. Coffman assisted with various research tasks and preparation of the lists of sources, abbreviations, and names. Rita M. Baker performed the technical editing. Barbara A. Bacon of the Publishing Services Division (Paul M. Washington, Chief) oversaw production of the volume. Do Mi Stauber prepared the index.

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