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FROM : CYRUS R. VANCE
TO : CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

TITLE : PROVISION OF SUITABLE RADAR EQUIPMENT FOR TEMPORARY INSTALLATION AT THE
BREAKWATER ENTRANCE TO THE PORT OF COLON, PANAMA

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JFK Reviews

Department of the Army EO 13526

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☐ Refer To _____

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

*Not used
Joint Staff
Msg
Instead*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Provision of Suitable Radar Equipment for Temporary Installation at the Breakwater Entrance to the Port of Colon, Panama

The recent reports of possible contraband shipments to Venezuela-Colombia originating from the Panama Free Zone were discussed at the Standing Group Meeting of the National Security Council on December 13, 1963. As a result of these reports and as part of an intensified effort to confirm and eliminate such traffic, I request that immediate action be taken to install a suitable radar capability at the harbor entrance to Colon. Contact with the Joint Staff confirms that CINCLANT has appropriate portable radar equipment for this purpose. It is desired that this equipment together with necessary operating personnel be situated in such a manner that day and night coverage is provided of shipping, entering and leaving the Breakwater north of Port of Colon. Present plans contemplate that this requirement may extend for a period of up to 120 days.

Appropriate coordination between CINCLANT and USCINCSO should be accomplished by the Joint Staff. USCINCSO is authorized to coordinate this matter with the Governor of the Panama Canal Zone and CAS Panama. In view of the urgency of this matter the equipment and operators should be in place not later than December 22, 1963. Major General Krulak, who participated as your representative at the December 13, 1963 meeting of the NSC Standing Group, is familiar with this requirement.

Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary of the Army

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DOD DIR 5200.10

UNILATERAL ACTION A

CIA View

CIA will propose authority be granted to conduct CIA or autonomous air strikes.

Comment

Advantages outweigh disadvantages provided "plausible denial" can be assured. CIA (US) personnel would risk this denial factor.

Used in book -
NSC Standing
Group Meetings

THE NATIONAL

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GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

This document consists of 10 pages
No. 1 of 3 Copies; Series B

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POSSIBLE FURTHER UNILATERAL AND BILATERAL
ACTIONS TO INCREASE PRESSURE ON CUBA
(SHORT OF USE OF FORCE)

I. Unilateral

A. Air attacks against carefully selected, important
economic installations by autonomous Cuban exile
group(s) operating from bases outside the United
States.

(Capability to be provided to autonomous group(s)
by CIA on "plausible denial" basis. Authorization
for such operations has been requested in past but
not granted.)

1. Advantages

- Possible substantial direct economic effects
- Indirect economic effects (maintenance of
military alert with consequent partial tying up
of labor force)
- Positive effects on morale of anti-Castro ele-
ments and waverers within Cuba
- Clear demonstration to Castro of determination
of opposition

2. Disadvantages

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UNILATERAL ACTION B

CIA View

CIA will recommend complete relaxation of present policy banning all independent Cuban exile maritime raids and air strikes against targets in Cuba from US and urge the British to do likewise for Bahama territory.

Comment

State course of action is preferable. Only selected reliable exile groups should be utilized for this purpose. The British would likely recoil from CIA proposal. Exile air attacks should not be authorized.

2. Disadvantages

- Technical difficulties and cost of providing capability
- Uncertainty of successful execution
- Risk of attributability
- Direct conflict with our well-known, public opposition to air attacks
- Marked raising of noise level
- Possible Soviet reaction, including negative effect on troop withdrawals
- Possible reaction against air surveillance

B. Selective covert relaxation of U.S. controls against Cuban exile groups in Florida wishing to undertake sabotage and infiltration activities.

(Involves discreet neutralization of obstacles to the operations of such groups established by United States enforcement agencies).

1. Advantages

- Possible additional (but minor) direct economic damage
- Possible indirect economic effects
- Provision of some screen for CIA's own operations

Possible

UNILATERAL ACTION C

CIA View

CIA will concur in this course of action.

Comment

This course of action should only be undertaken if a US policy decision to do away with Castro by all means short of invasion is forthcoming. Otherwise it constitutes a costly and marginally effective course of action.

- Possible dilution of Cuban defenses of benefit to CIA operations
- Positive effects on Cuban exile morale
- Some positive effects on morale of anti-Castro elements and waverers within Cuba
- Method of signalling to Castro change to "harder" U/S. policy

2. Disadvantages

- U.S. acquiescence quite evident
- Direct conflict with our statements and actions concerning U.S.-based exile raids
- Uncertainty of control over choice of targets (e.g., Soviet vessels)
- Raising of noise level
- Possible negative effects on Soviet withdrawal of military personnel

C. Military Feints

(Movement of U.S. air and surface units over and in international waters near Cuba in manner designed to keep Cuban military forces in state of alert and uncertainty. To be effective, movements would have to be extended over time)

1. Advantages

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UNILATERAL ACTION D

CIA View

CIA will concur for both intelligence and psychological effect.

Comment

Flights can and should be resumed particularly if reports of stepped up Soviet Arms deliveries continue. In addition consideration should be given to initiating night photography missions in areas of suspected military activity.

1. Advantages

- Indirect economic effects of maintenance of military alert
- Psychological harassment of Castro and other leaders
- Opportunities for escalation, if desired

2. Disadvantages

- Risk of reaction by Castro, with consequent danger of escalation
- Investment of U.S. forces over time in essentially psychological exercise
- Possible negative effects on morale of anti-Castro elements and waverers within Cuba when nothing substantial happens
- Possible negative effects on Soviet withdrawal of military personnel

D. Occasional, selected low-level "reconnaissance" overflights by U.S. aircraft

(Flight paths would be designed to reduce to a minimum the possibility of effective Cuban counter-action against aircraft)

1. Advantages

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UNILATERAL ACTION E

CIA View

CIA will support this action and seek additional US sanctions against Canada, the UK, Spain and Japan.

Comment

NASM 220 provides that a ship that engages in the Cuban trade on or after January 1, 1963 is proscribed from carrying US government cargoes. This ship can be removed only if the owner contracts to remove it and all other ships owned by his firm from the Cuban trade. The State course of action is a fairly significant step which should increase pressure on Cuba. The State paper appears to underplay somewhat the effects of this action.

1. Advantages

- Most emphatic method of signalling a change to "harder" policy
- Possible tie-in to need for intelligence on Cuban capabilities for delivering arms to Latin America
- Possible beneficial intelligence side effects.

2. Disadvantages

- Risk of escalation (Cubans on formal record concerning reaction to low-level flights)
- Possible reaction against high-level flights
- Possible negative effects on Soviet withdrawal of military personnel
- Possible raising of public and Congressional apprehension that offensive weapons systems have been reintroduced

E. Free-world shipping

(Examples: extension of NSAM 220 to cover all ships owned or controlled by a firm with ships in the Cuban trade; denial of commercial, as well as U.S.-financed cargoes in U.S. ports to ships in Cuban trade)

1. Advantages

BILATERAL ACTION A

CIA View

Unknown.

Comment

The State paragraph is merely a generalized dissertation on the complexities of US relations with its allies.

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1. Advantages

- Some limited reduction of number of free-world vessels in Cuban trade
- Heightened appearance of forward movement because of Congressional and press sensitivity to shipping question

2. Disadvantages

- Relatively small practical returns
- Political costs with maritime nations
- Possible legal difficulties involved in some unilateral measures

II. Bilateral

A. General

Essentially, the effort in the bilateral field would represent a continuation, sharpening and intensification of programs already in effect.

Measures of a bilateral nature, outside and within the Hemisphere, would be strengthened and facilitated by OAS decisions and recommendations emerging from the Venezuelan case. Wherever possible, the OAS resolutions would request the cooperation of other countries.

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BILATERAL ACTION B

CIA View

As noted previously CIA will favor strong US sanctions against free world nations involved in the Cuban trade especially Canada, the UK, Japan and Spain.

Comment

Additional US denial efforts are required.

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The basic limiting factor in the intensification of our political and economic pressure on other countries bilaterally is, of course, the balance that must be struck between our interests with respect to Cuba and other broad interests at play in our bilateral relations. For example, Spain's increasing commercial and transportation relations with Cuba are a matter of concern in terms of our Cuban policy, yet the political and economic pressure we can exert on Spain is circumscribed by the need to safeguard our other political and military interests in Spain.

B. Economic Denial

This program involves overt and covert, legal and extra-legal, diplomatic and private, efforts to deny Cuba access to free-world markets and sources of supply for commodities critical or important to the Cuban economy. A major inhibiting element in this effort is the short world supply of sugar which increases Cuban leverage on free-world sugar consumers. In addition, there is a general (but varying) reluctance on the part of free-world countries to interfere with trade in items which are not strategic in

BILATERAL ACTION B

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in the internationally accepted sense (COCOM, Battle Act). This fact puts a premium on direct overt and covert pressures on the companies involved, as distinguished from governments.

Progress has been made in our economic denial program, and effective operations have been carried out cooperatively by State, Treasury, Commerce and CIA. There is, however, considerable additional effort required, especially because Castro is now engaged in a major attempt to broaden trade with the free-world. No new authority is required at this time, but rather an intensification of efforts through the Inter-Departmental Coordinating Committee on Cuba.

A more restrictive legal interpretation by the Executive Branch of the various legislative provisions on trade with Cuba could have considerable impact, if we were prepared to accept the costs to our other interests in the offending countries and if we were prepared tacitly to indicate that existing legal interpretations had been in error.

C.

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BILATERAL ACTION C

CIA View

Unknown.

Comment

Concur

(See Tab _____, Section I)

BILATERAL ACTION D

CIA View

Unknown

Comment

The US-USSR Civil Air Agreement will seriously erode our efforts to establish barriers against air service to Cuba. The US should risk offending those countries which fail to respond to current US efforts to restrict air services to Cuba.

C. Free-World Shipping in Cuban Trade

An additional immediately available step would be the conclusion of an agreement involving the amendment of NSAM 220 with the British shipowner, Mavroleon, to guarantee the withdrawal by early 1963 of all his ships in return for the progressive removal from the blacklist of his vessels as they get out of the trade. This agreement should have beneficial effects on other important ship owners.

A selective refusal to exercise the Presidential waiver of the Cuban shipping provisions of the new Foreign Aid Authorization act could increase our diplomatic pressures on the maritime nations, if we were ready to incur the costs to our broad interests in the offending countries.

D. Air Service to and from Cuba

Our efforts to reduce, restrict and harass air services (free-world and Communist) to and from Cuba should be strengthened by the provisions of the new Foreign Aid Authorization act, if, again, we are prepared to accept the costs to other interests in the offending countries. On the other hand, a

US-USSR

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BILATERAL ACTION C

CIA View

Unknown.

Comment

Concur

(See Tab _____, Section I)

BILATERAL ACTION D

CIA View

Unknown

Comment

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US-USSR civil air agreement could have erosive effects on the always precarious barriers we have established against air services to Cuba.

E. Anti-Subversive Program

Essentially, the problem here is to strengthen both the will and the capability in Latin America to take the politically and technically difficult measures which have been recommended. The basic lines of the anti-subversive program have been laid out, and they are being followed with varying degrees of success in the different countries. Constant follow-up, technical advice and assistance, and training are essential to improvement in the execution of the program.

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Bilateral Action E

CIA View

CIA would favor early recognition of the Dominican and Honduran governments to assist in holding the Latin American line against Castro. CIA would favor bilateral arrangements with Latin American governments for joint measures to detect and to prevent arms smuggling and subversive activity by land, sea, or air. Venezuela should be given first priority.

Comment

DOD should favor the CIA view above. Balanced corrective action in the key target areas of Venezuela and Columbia will require improved military communications and an increased US military presence (MTTS).

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