



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
**Volume X**  
**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **121. Memorandum of Conversation**

Washington, April 18, 1961.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret. This memorandum apparently was based on a tape recording later transcribed by Wilhide. The transcription printed here begins, as indicated in mid-conversation. The earlier portion of the conversation may not have been transcribed, and no record of it has been found. Wilhide was Burke's aide at the time.

#### **ADMIRAL BURKE'S CONVERSATION WITH CDR WILHIDE, 18 APRIL 1961**

Adm Burke . . . Before we got started about 1140, I went down to his/1/ office--about ten minutes after I got the word. Then he heard that McNamara and Lemnitzer were coming back. So we went down to the garage into a little anteroom there and talked for a few minutes. Then McNamara and Lemnitzer went over in their car. Gilpatric, Buzz Wheeler, Breitweiser/2/ and I went over--I guess Breitweiser went in McNamara's car--all to the White House. We got over there in the Cabinet Room./3/ The President was talking with CIA people, State Department people and Rostow and a lot of other people. They were talking about Cuba. Real big mess.

/1/It is not clear to whom Burke was referring at this point. A chronology prepared from the records in Burke's office indicates that he received a phone call from Gilpatric at 11:27 a.m. proposing arrangements to go to the White House for a meeting on Cuba. (Ibid.) Since he went to the White House with Gilpatric, he may have stopped at Gilpatric's office.

/2/Major General Robert A. Breitweiser, Director for Intelligence of the Joint Staff.

/3/The President's appointment book indicates that this meeting began at noon and lasted until 1:25 p.m. Participants included, in addition to the President, Vice President Johnson, Rusk, McNamara, Robert Kennedy, Lemnitzer, McGeorge Bundy, Bohlen, and Foy Kohler. (Kennedy Library, President's Appointment Book) Burke's account indicates that the CIA was also represented and that other members of the Department of Defense, JCS, and the Department of State were present at the meeting.

Nobody knew what to do nor did the CIA who were running the operation and who were wholly responsible for the operation know what to do or what was happening. A lot of things have happened and they have caused to happen and we the JCS don't know anything whatever about. We have been kept pretty ignorant of this and have just been told partial truths. They are in a real bad hole because they had the hell cut out of them. They were reporting, devising and talking and I kept quiet because I didn't know the general score. Once in a while I did make a little remark like "balls." It wasn't very often. It was a serious meeting. They didn't know what the President should do. . . . When it came out as to what could the United States do--it was all Navy. The upshot of

it was that the President moved into his room--his office with Rusk, McNamara, Dulles, Lemnitzer and me. We talked a little bit in there about what could we do, Rusk not being in favor of doing very much. Then we came out. I was sent for again and I was asked could we find out what the score really was, by landing people in helicopters or something like that. That was all right. I wrote some dispatches/4/ and did some things. Over there. And I came back.

/4/Documents 122 and 123.

Then Bobby Kennedy called me up and said the President is going to rely upon you to advise him on this situation. I said it is late! He needs advice. He said the rest of the people in the room weren't helpful. (Call from the President)/5/

/5/The transcript indicates that the President called Burke again 20 minutes later. No further information is given regarding either call.

What do you do. He is bypassing Lemnitzer, the Chairman, the SecDef, SecNav, CIA and the whole works and putting me in charge of the operation. That is a helluva thing. We had better watch this one.

Cdr Wilhide: He must realize what he is doing.

Adm Burke: I told Bobby Kennedy this was bypassing. He said he knew.

[Here follows discussion relating to Admiral Burke's concern about the implications of short-circuiting the usual channels of responsibility in the management of the crisis.]

**122. Telegram From the Chief of the Subsidiary Activities Division (Gray) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 1:37 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Flash; Limited Distribution. According to the memorandum for the record prepared by Commander Mitchell, which traced the evolution of the rules of engagement, this message, sent on behalf of the JCS, was authorized by a telephone call to the JCS Operations Center from Admiral Burke at the White House. (National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 12, Cuba, Paramilitary Study)

JCS 994309. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. With unmarked naval aircraft fly photo and eyeball reconnaissance ASAP to determine situation on beach.
2. 12 Castro tanks reported on Red Beach operating against Cuban revolutionaries. We need data on situation ASAP.
3. Use officer observers with amphibious experience if quickly practicable, to give us judgement of situation. There may be Castro MIGs in area.
4. Aircraft protect themselves from attack. Take all possible precautions to avoid having operations identified as US. Make complete and frequent reports. More later.

**123. Telegram From the Chief of the Subsidiary Activities Division (Gray) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 2:49 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution. According to a memorandum for the record prepared by Commander Mitchell, this message, sent on behalf of the JCS, was authorized by a telephone call to the JCS Operations Center from Admiral Burke at the White House. (National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 12, Cuba, Paramilitary Study)

JCS 994317. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. Following preparatory actions directed at high-level conference in light of loss of Red Beach, tank and air attack on Blue Beach and reported four Castro T-33's and three Castro MIGs in action.

a. Prepare unmarked Navy planes for possible combat use. Number suitable in view of above left to your discretion. This instruction in addition to earlier message regarding recce mission./1/ Amphibious group move to within four hours steaming of landing area. Prepare unmarked boats for possible evacuation of anti-Castro forces.

/1/Document 122.

2. New subject. We are operating almost entirely in the dark. Forward assessment of situation as you see it. Any information at all would be helpful.

3. FYI. There is no intention of intervening with US forces.

**124. Telegram From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 3:23 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Limited Distribution. A "chronology of events on Cuba taken from the records in Op-00 immediate office" indicates that this message was sent as a back channel message. (Ibid.)

182023Z. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and RAdm Clark from Burke. There is little information here on status of operation. Few reports available indicate operation may be in desperate straits. No general uprising in Cuba yet.

What is most urgently needed here is information on which to make an assessment of the situation or a judgment on what to do at high levels.

Following questions at high-level conference were asked:

A. Can anti-Castro forces go into bush as guerillas?

B. Could anti-Castro forces be evacuated from beach by unmarked United States amphib boats?

C. Is there a possibility that anti-Castro forces can break through?

Following possible United States actions were discussed:/1/

/1/In his initial draft of this message Burke wrote: "Nobody here wants to commit United States forces to bail out this affair, but if situation is as bad as reported something may have to be done." (Ibid.)

- A. Unmarked Naval aircraft fly cover over beach area to protect anti-Castro forces from air attack.
- B. Unmarked Naval aircraft destroy Castro tanks.
- C. Unmarked Naval aircraft furnish close air support.
- D. Unmarked amphib boats from United States evacuate anti-Castro forces from beach.
- E. Land experienced Marines by either helicopter or boat to assess situation and give judgment on what to do.
- F. Large air drops by United States Air Force aircraft to anti-Castro forces.
- G. Danger in all above actions of United States involvement. No decision was made to do any of these but air drop. The same subjects may be discussed later.

**125. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 18, 1961, 4:42 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO.

182142Z. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, McElroy and O'Donnell from Clark. Bumpy Road Int Sum.

1. Pending recovery my eyeball recco flight following is summary of messages intercepted between CEF beach commander and Dolores plus some addressed to Mallard.
2. From Brigade Commander Blue Beach intercepted at 181715Z./1/ "Blue Beach must have jet air support in next few hours or will be wiped out. Under heavy attacks by MIG jets and heavy tanks." Intercepted at 1703Z./2/ "Blue Beach under attack by MIG 15s and T-33s. Request jet support or cannot hold. Situation critical." Intercepted at 1728Z./3/ "Without jet air support cannot hold. Have no ammo left for tanks and very little left for troops. Enemy just launched heavy land attack supported by tanks. Cannot hold for long." Intercept at 1509Z./4/ "Under heavy attack supported by 12 tanks. Need air support immediately. Red Beach wiped out. Request air strikes immediately."

/1/12:15 p.m. All times cited in the message are on April 18.

/2/12:03 p.m.

/3/12:28 p.m.

/4/10:09 a.m.

3. From Brigade Commander to Colonel Mallard relayed from *Marsopa*/5/ at 1825Z./6/ "Under heavy attack supported by 12 tanks. Need air support immediately. Red Beach wiped out. Request air strikes. Need ammo of all types immediately. 4 B-26 ETA beach head 181900Z. Request Navy air CAP for beachhead. If not provided expect loss 4 B-26. Confident you can provide. Advise."

/5/Code name for *Blagar*.

/6/1:25 p.m.

4. All above held by Mallard's boss by other means. My work with CEF to date indicates they are a well organized and professional group.

5. 6 B-26 passed over me heading north at 182120Z./7/

/7/4:20 p.m.

6. My eyeball recco report in about one hour.

**126. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Commander, Key West Forces (McElroy)**

Norfolk, April 18, 1961, 4:52 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate. Repeated to JCS, COMNAVB GTMO, and CTG 81.8.

182152Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for RAdm McElroy info RAdms O'Donnell, Clark, Gen Gray from Dennison. Up to 4 MIGs have been reported in the objective area. In the event we have to give support against MIGs desire you paint out US markings on six F3H, arm them with Sidewinders and/or Sparrows and prepare them for combat operations in the objective area by daylight 19 April. Any launch directive will be issued by CINCLANTFLT. Hold close and try conceal above preparatory measures.

**127. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 18, 1961, 5:12 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Emergency. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO.

182212Z. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, O'Donnell and McElroy from Clark. Bumpy Road. Eyeball recco report over area about 2120Z./1/

/1/4:20 p.m.

1. Convoy of large Castro tanks (10 to 14) with trucks and lorries on road from Gallinas extending to point about three miles south moving south and east. Only a few troops seen with convoy. No others sighted.
2. CEF tanks and trucks burned out alongside road near La Seiba. No sign of CEF troops.
3. No air activity seen. No sign of artillery or infantry action.
4. Own evaluation Red Beach wiped out. Attacks on other beaches thus far have been almost entirely by air.

**128. Telegram From the Chief of the Subsidiary Activities Division (Gray) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 5:29 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution. Repeated to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Admiral Clark from Gray.

JCS 994349. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. CIA received report from *Barracuda*/1/ that she has been hit by bomb and 20 MM in air attack.

/1/Code name for the *Barbara J*.

2. Request you render assistance. If unable to save, request you remove the crew and destroy.

**129. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

Norfolk, April 18, 1961, 6:06 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Bumpy Road. Exclusive for General Gray from Admiral Dennison. Repeated for information to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Clark from Dennison.

182306Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for General Gray info RAdm Clark from Dennison.

A. JCS 994317 DTG 181949Z Notal./1/

/1/Document 123.

B. CTG 81.8 182212Z./2/

/2/Document 127.

1. Have ordered Phibron 2 with BLT 1/6 embarked to move to an area bounded by latitudes 21 and 21-30N and longitude 80 and 81W. He will paint out markings on boats and be prepared to evacuate CEF forces if directed.

2. TF 24 including Northampton and Independence with attack air group CVG 7 aboard proceeding southward at 24 kts to Mayport area for possible further movement south.

3. Phibron 8 with BLT embarked ordered to expedite arrival at GTMO Opare ETA 222300Z./3/

/3/April 22, 6 p.m.

4. COMKWESTFOR ordered to sanitize 6 F3H2 equipped with air to air missiles to be available first light 19 April.

5. CTG 81.8 (Clark) reported results eyeball recco by reference B.

6. COMFAIRJAX undertaking on urgent basis to obtain covert high alt A3D photo recco of objective area. This to be done 18 April if possible but good result unlikely because of poor late afternoon light.

7. Appreciate the need to do all possible to minimize evidence of our participation but point out that all US aircraft are exclusively USN types and will be recognized as such.

8. New subject. I too have been operating in the dark which has been generated by not being completely advised of CEF operations, the sudden laying on of requirements which could have been forecasted, and no intelligence

assessment of situation within Cuba. My own assessment based on a very high degree of ignorance is that CEF operations are not going well and that if result is either inconclusive or total collapse we may expect strong retaliatory effort probably against Guantanamo.

9. It is inevitable that our participation will gradually become known to a degree at least by many people including those in Castro's government. Time is not on our side and it is certainly important to do all possible to tip the scales in favor of CEF. Have no suggestions at this time beyond continuing measures I have outlined above.

### **130. Memorandum of Conversation**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 6:50 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/4-1861. Confidential. Drafted by McSweeney.

#### **SUBJECT**

Cuba

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

The Secretary

Mr. McSweeney, Director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs

Mikhail A. Menshikov, Soviet Ambassador

Georgi M. Kornienko, Counselor, Soviet Embassy

The Secretary said he wished, on behalf of the President, to deliver to the Ambassador the President's reply to the statement from Chairman Khrushchev to the President. He referred to the fact that Khrushchev's statement had been made public and said that the President's statement would also be publicized. He then handed the President's letter to Chairman Khrushchev to the Ambassador. (Attached)/1/

/1/The text of the attached letter was released to the press immediately after it was conveyed to Ambassador Menshikov. It is also printed in Department of State Bulletin, May 8, 1961, pp. 661-662. Ambassador Stevenson read Kennedy's reply to Khrushchev during the evening session of debate in the First Committee on April 18. (U.N. doc. A/C.1/5R.1154) For Khrushchev's letter, see Document 117.

The Ambassador said that he would transmit the communication to his government, adding that personally he did not think it answered the question posed.

The Secretary said that if we were to understand that the Soviet Government planned to act in accordance with the doctrine set forth in the December 1960 communique of the Communist leaders,<sup>/2/</sup> then it is inevitable that there will be serious trouble. We believe that it is in the interest of both peoples and governments to seek out solutions which will insure peace, but this cannot be a one-sided effort--we must find the means of recognizing the real issues between us and bring our positions into adjustment. The Soviet Government must understand the importance to the United States of peace and well-being in this hemisphere. The President's reply is directed toward that point.

/2/Reference is to the manifesto issued from Moscow on December 6, 1960, by the leaders of 81 national and regional Communist parties, which proclaimed the unity of all Communists in a continuing struggle against

capitalism. (*The New York Times*, December 7, 1960)

Ambassador Menshikov said the Soviet Government will never recognize intervention in the affairs of other countries as indicating a desire to have peace. Such intervention, he said, would only produce the contrary of peace.

The Secretary said that he could not accept a lecture from the Soviet Union regarding intervention, having in mind the activities all over the world since 1945 of the Soviet Union.

Ambassador Menshikov said that the Soviet Union had never intervened in the affairs of other countries--that this is a strict policy of the Soviet Government which has been followed consistently. He said the Soviet Government cannot fail to notice the introduction of forces into other countries to suppress the freedom and independence of those countries.

The Secretary asked if Mr. Menshikov were referring to Hungary.

The Ambassador said he referred to Cuba. As regards Hungary, he said, the Secretary should know what happened there. Without going into details, he would only reaffirm that in the Hungarian affair the Soviet Union had been asked by the legitimate government to help suppress counter-revolution. This the Soviet Union did.

The Secretary indicated that further conversation seemed unnecessary and the Ambassador left.

**Attachment/3/**

/3/Unclassified.

### **Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev**

Washington, April 18, 1961.

Mr. Chairman: You are under a serious misapprehension in regard to events in Cuba. For months there has been evident and growing resistance to the Castro dictatorship. More than 100,000 refugees have recently fled from Cuba into neighboring countries. Their urgent hope is naturally to assist their fellow Cubans in their struggle for freedom. Many of these refugees fought along side Dr. Castro against the Batista dictatorship; among them are prominent leaders of his own original movement and government.

These are unmistakable signs that Cubans find intolerable the denial of democratic liberties and the subversion of the 26th of July Movement by an alien-dominated regime. It cannot be surprising that, as resistance within Cuba grows, refugees have been using whatever means are available to return and support their countrymen in the continuing struggle for freedom. Where people are denied the right of choice, recourse to such struggle is the only means of achieving their liberties.

I have previously stated, and I repeat now, that the United States intends no military intervention in Cuba. In the event of any military intervention by outside force we will immediately honor our obligations under the inter-American system to protect this hemisphere against external aggression. While refraining from military intervention in Cuba, the people of the United States do not conceal their admiration for Cuban patriots who wish to see a democratic system in an independent Cuba. The United States Government can take no action to stifle the spirit of liberty.

I have taken careful note of your statement that the events in Cuba might affect peace in all parts of the world. I trust that this does not mean that the Soviet Government, using the situation in Cuba as a pretext, is planning to inflame other areas of the world. I would like to think that your government has too great a sense of



responsibility to embark upon any enterprise so dangerous to general peace.

I agree with you as to the desirability of steps to improve the international atmosphere. I continue to hope that you will cooperate in opportunities now available to this end. A prompt cease-fire and peaceful settlement of the dangerous situation in Laos, cooperation with the United Nations in the Congo and a speedy conclusion of an acceptable treaty for the banning of nuclear tests would be constructive steps in this direction. The regime in Cuba could make a similar contribution by permitting the Cuban people freely to determine their own future by democratic processes and freely to cooperate with their Latin American neighbors.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that you should recognize that free peoples in all parts of the world do not accept the claim of historical inevitability for Communist revolution. What your government believes is its own business; what it does in the world is the world's business. The great revolution in the history of man, past, present and future, is the revolution of those determined to be free.

John F. Kennedy/4/

/4/Printed from a copy that indicates President Kennedy signed the original.

### **131. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 7:57 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution. Repeated to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Clark from Gray.

JCS 994363. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray. For your info possibility exists that C-130 A/C with markings removed may be used for night drops on Blue Beach beginning 19-20 April until further notice./1/

/1/A note on the memorandum for the record prepared by Mitchell concerning the rules of engagement reads: "These air drops by C-130 were never conducted." (National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 12, Cuba, Paramilitary Study)

### **132. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 7:59 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution. Repeated to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Clark from Gray.

JCS 994364. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray. As feasible and without violating current restrictions request you determine location of airfields from which fighter aircraft attacking CEF beachhead are operating.

### **133. Telegram From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 8:37 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Limited Distribution. Drafted by Burke. A "chronology of events on Cuba taken from the records in Op-00 immediate office" indicates that this message was sent as a back channel message. (Ibid.)

190137Z. Exclusive for Adm Dennison from Burke. Bumpy Road. Authorities appreciated CTG 81.8 182212Z/1/ but still want to know whether CEF can go into bush as guerrillas at a time Commander CEF thinks organized resistance no longer feasible. Johnny/2/ maybe could get dope from Mallard.

/1/Document 127.

/2/Admiral Clark.

Authorities would like to be sure CEF could become guerrillas whenever they desire so that point could be emphasized in our publicity, i.e. that revolutionaries crossed the beach and are now operating as guerrillas. In other words if CEF can not hold beach head or fight their way inland it would be desirable for them to become guerrillas and head for a known destination and be supplied by air. Anything you can do to get answer to that question would be appreciated.

Next subject was getting wounded out if that becomes necessary. I suggested that wounded could be taken off beach in CEF ships who later could ask *Essex* to take them as humanitarian move. Clark would have to make arrangements through Mallard. Wounded should be kept in *Essex* until suitable hospital arrangements could be made on beach in some place inaccessible to news hawks.

New subject.

Authorities are concerned that if CEF cannot become guerrillas for any reason Cardona may ask United States to evacuate those who can not get into bush. I replied we could evacuate with Phibron Two tomorrow night if U.S. Government made decision to do so. Boats would necessarily have to be handled by U.S. personnel. We could send some Marines ashore, if U.S. made decision to do so, to cover evacuation. We might also have to fly air cover to protect evacuation from air attack. I did not know whether this operation should be done at night or in daylight if evacuation were necessary. Request advice.

If it does become necessary to evacuate, Clark will need also to use what helicopters he can to get data as well as men.

Suggest you fly another recon over beach in morning to get data but JCS should be informed you intend to do so.

#### **134. Telegram From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 18, 1961, 9:17 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Limited Distribution. Repeated to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Clark from Burke.

190217Z. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and RAdm Clark from Burke. Bumpy Road. I was asked once again if it were possible to land an experienced Marine (or Naval officer who has amphibious knowledge) on beach with CEF without danger of him being killed or captured or it becoming known U.S. was involved. The urgency stems from lack of knowledge here of true situation on beach and what should be done now without overtly involving United States. If Johnny/1/ thinks it could be done within his own resources with little danger it should be done. I have said it too likely to fail but I may be wrong.

/1/Admiral Clark.

Please advise, Exclusive to Burke only, on this one along with any further information on situation or comments on how to get dope.

**135. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 18, 1961, 11:52 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate. Passed to JCS at 2:01 a.m. in CINCLANT telegram 190701Z, Exclusive for Gray from Dennison. (Ibid.)

190452Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Dennison from Clark.

1. Following clear text from Brigade Commander to base intercepted "Do you people realize how desperate the situation is? Do you back us up or quit? All we want is low jet cover and jet close support. Enemy has this support. I need it badly or cannot survive. Please don't desert us. Am out of tank and bazooka ammo. Tanks will hit me at dawn. I will not be evacuated. Will fight to the end if we have to. Need medical supplies urgently."

2. Following intercepted from *Marsopa*/1/ "If we cannot get Santiago to cover us on way in and out and low jet cover feel Cuban crew will mutiny. Crew ready to mutiny now. Request immed answer."

/1/Code name for the *Blagar*.



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **136. Telegram From the Central Intelligence Agency to Agency Personnel in Nicaragua**

Washington, April 18, 1961./1/

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency Files: Job 85-00664R, Box 4, Vol. I. Top Secret; Flash.

/1/A handwritten note on the source text indicates the time of transmission of this telegram was between 11:26 and 11:52 a.m. The action authorized in the telegram indicates, however, that the telegram must have been drafted after 11:58 p.m. on April 18. See the source note, Document 140.

4739. Ref: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] 833 (IN 4292).

1. Immediately upon receipt this message launch fifty percent B-26 strike aircraft armed your discretion destroy tanks and vehicles on approaches beachhead. Conserve Cuban crews for max effort night attacks target one.
2. US Navy air CAP over beachhead area will provide fighter cover your aircraft.

### **137. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 1:27 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS.

190627Z. Exclusive for Clark from Dennison info Gray.

1. At your discretion and with due regard for security your forces and need for concealing involvement U.S. conduct eyeball recco objective area first light 19 April.
2. New subject. If CEF effort has not been fully effective desire all info earliest as to whether guerilla operations have been started. If this is the case then it might be possible for us to arrange support by air drops etc. As you must realize I am groping in the dark and any info you can supply (possibly through Col Mallard's sources) would be of great help.
3. Another subject. We may be called upon for evacuation of wounded. This might involve helicopters and stop off in *Essex* prior transfer to yet undetermined destination.

**138. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 2:01 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret.

190701Z. Exclusive for Admiral Burke from Dennison.

A. Your 190137Z./1/

/1/Document 133.

B. My 190627Z./2/

/2/Document 137.

1. See Ref B to CTG 81.8 info JCS.

2. Evacuation of wounded is completely out of the question without overt involvement of US forces. Furthermore, I know of no haven in some place "inaccessible to news hawks." Evacuation either by day or night is a fantastically unrealistic project unless I am permitted to put sufficient force ashore, with air and gunfire support from the sea, to provide a beach head. Alternative would be for CEF ships to bring wounded from beach to sea.

**139. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 2:11 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret.

190711Z. Exclusive for Admiral Burke from Dennison.

A. Your 190217Z./1/

/1/Document 134.

It is impossible to give guarantee that I could land observer on the beach without danger of being killed or captured. On the contrary I could guarantee that any observer landed would be completely ineffective at best and probably would involve the United States. I have no information about contact sources on the beach, no info on communications ashore and no information on positions of CEF forces. The proposal is completely unrealistic and I will have no part of it./2/

/2/An unidentified handwritten note on the source text at this point reads: "He may have to."

**140. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 3:37 a.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Exclusive; Flash. Also sent to CTG 81.8. A chronology maintained in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations

indicates that the instructions in this telegram resulted from a conference at the White House. (Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials) The conference cited in the chronology was the one listed in the President's appointment book as having begun at 11:58 p.m. on April 18 and concluded at 2:46 a.m. on April 19. No participants are listed for this off-the-record meeting on Cuba, and no other record of the meeting has been found. (Kennedy Library, President's Appointment Book)

JCS 994369. Bumpy Road. Exclusive to Adm Dennison and RAdm Clark from JCS.

1. TG 81.8 to furnish air cover of 6 unmarked aircraft over CEF forces during period 0630 to 0730 local time 19 April to defend CEF against air attack from Castro forces. Do not seek air combat but defend CEF forces from air attack. Do not attack ground targets. Pilots carry as little identification as practicable. If necessary to ditch, ditch at sea.

2. CEF transport aircraft, to include C-46, C-54 and possibly C-130 types, are scheduled to air drop supplies to CEF forces in beachhead from 190630R to 190730R./1/ Friendly B-26's are scheduled to attack Castro tanks and forces in vicinity of beachhead during same period.

/1/6:30 to 7:30 local time.

3. U.S. Col. Robertson will land on beach by small boat during same period for consultation with CEF commander.

4. CEF very short of supplies and are being requested by other agencies to break out from beach as soon as practicable either as organized force or as small bands of guerillas. If this is not possible it may become necessary to evacuate CEF forces at last resort. Should this be necessary will probably use CEF ships but have Phibron 2 in position about 30 miles from beach by 191300R/2/ prepared to conduct evacuation from Blue Beach or other designated beach at 191700R/3/ using unmarked amphibious craft with crews in dungarees so that they will not be easily identified on beach. If evacuation by U.S. ships ordered furnish air cover to protect landing craft and keep amphibious shipping not less than five miles from beach so as not to indicate U.S. ships are involved. What is latest time you will need executing order to evacuate at 191700R?

/2/1 p.m. local time.

/3/5 p.m.

5. Make frequent reports after operation begins.

6. New subject. Furnish air cover to CEF ships more than 15 miles from coast as practicable./4/

/4/At 6:30 a.m., Clark cabled to Dennison: "Will devote my entire resources to execution JCS 190837Z [JCS 994369]." (CTG 81.8 telegram 191130Z to CINCLANTFLT; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

#### **141. Telegram From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 3:41 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Exclusive.

190841Z. Exclusive for Adm Dennison from Burke. Your 190701Z/1/ not very helpful. You may have to

evacuate CEF or wounded only. We realize US forces would be involved but we would want to hold involvement to as low a level as possible. If you evacuate wounded hold them in *Essex* and I will inform you location of haven. God knows this operation is as difficult as possible and we are trying to do all we can without much info and without having been in on all initial stages. I too am irked and tired and I realize many of these suggestions are most difficult. Yet we will have to do all we can to help even if it is not the way we would like to do it. Don't let the flag etc.

/1/Document 138.

#### **142. Editorial Note**

General Gray briefed the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the situation in Cuba at 7:30 the morning of April 19, 1961. Intelligence reports indicated that internal resistance in Cuba, aside from the CEF force, was limited to 1,000 guerrillas in the eastern part of Oriente Province, 850 guerrillas inland from Cienfuegos, and 100 guerrillas in the Pinar del Rio area. Only two of six scheduled CEF B-26 bombers had attacked San Antonio de los Banos during the night, and the crew of the *Blagar* had refused an order to deliver supplies to the beach because they could not finish the mission before daylight and no air cover was visible. Another effort was planned between 6:30 and 7:30 while CTG 81.8 air cover was scheduled. Two CEF C-54s had air dropped supplies in the area of the beach during the night, and one C-46 had landed on the air strip and unloaded. The last CTG 81.8 reconnaissance flight indicated that the late afternoon CEF strike on Cuban tank forces was a success. Several trucks and tanks were reported damaged.

Despite the few positive developments that Gray was able to report, his briefing emphasized the fact that the situation at the Bay of Pigs was becoming desperate. Gray noted that the CEF Brigade Commander had asked during the night: "Have you quit? Aren't you going to support me any more?" He stated that he could not hold out without help, but later radioed: "Regardless of whether you help or not, I will fight on regardless." The question, however, was how long he would be able to fight. Information received during the briefing indicated that as of 7:50 a.m. the CEF battalion on Blue Beach was under artillery and air attack, and a truck convoy was advancing on the beach from the north. At 10 a.m. a call from CIA indicated that CIA was conferring and would probably recommend evacuation of the CEF. (J-5 Briefing 730R, 19 April 1961; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

#### **143. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 19, 1961, 8:40 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret. Repeated to JCS.

191340Z. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, from Clark. Bumpy Road. Your 190627Z./1/

/1/Document 137.

1. All evidence indicates CEF ashore still are organized fighting unit and not shifting to guerilla activity. Believe one body of survivors from Red Reach attempting to join main body at Blue Beach. Nothing was delivered to beach area by sea during the night. Indications are that CEF ashore is low on all supplies, including ammo and is hard pressed if not desperate. Air drops by CEF planes poorly delivered. Most fall into sea.

2. All above from intercepted CEF traffic.

3. All this radio traffic is addressed for either action or info to Cdr. Millard's boss, who is the same as Col. Mallard's boss.

**144. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 10:46 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS.

191546Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for RAdm Clark from Dennison, info Gen Gray.

A. CTG 81.8 191448Z./1/

B. JCS 994247 DTG 172035Z./2/

C. JCS 994309 DTG 181837Z./3/

D. JCS 994369 DTG 190838Z./4/

/1/In this telegram, sent to Dennison and Gray at 9:48 a.m., April 19, Clark reported a request to his Task Group from the CEF for close air support to meet an attack led by tanks against the CEF position on the beach. (Ibid.) Clark had reported 34 minutes earlier that CEF forces on Blue Beach were under artillery fire. (CTG 81.8 telegram 191414Z to CINC-LANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

/2/Document 115.

/3/Document 122.

/4/Document 140.

1. Close air support cannot be furnished. Restrictions of ref B are applicable. Only exceptions to 15 mile limitation so far authorized are refs C and D./5/

/5/At 10:33 a.m., Clark reported to Dennison that the CEF commander had repeated his plea for close air support; the CEF was under continuing artillery fire and had been attacked twice by aircraft. (CTG 81.8 telegram 191533Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials) At 11:09 a.m., Clark suggested that he be authorized to take advantage of the fact that two hostile planes were circling near one of his destroyers in order to launch an air strike from the *Essex*. (CTG 81.8 telegram 191609Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

**145. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 11:24 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Emergency; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS.

191624Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Clark, info Gen Gray from Dennison.

1. Dispatch 2 DD to take station off Blue Beach to determine whether there is any chance for evacuation.



2. Provide air cover to protect DDs.
3. Fly recco over beach to determine situation./1/

/1/At 11:18 a.m., Clark reported to Dennison that he had received the following message from the CEF brigade ashore: "We are out of ammo and fighting on the beach. Please send help. We cannot hold. (Signed) Pepe." (CTG 81.8 telegram 191618Z to CINC-LANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

4. Report immediately by fastest possible means results observations.
5. CEF ships have been ordered to move into Blue Beach.
6. Final instructions on evacuation will follow.

#### **146. Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison) to the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark)**

Norfolk, April 19, 1961, 11:32 a.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Emergency; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS.

191632Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for RAdm Clark info Gen Gray from Dennison.

1. Provide continuous air cover over beaches today to protect CEF from air attack.
2. Protection from ground attack not authorized./1/

/1/At 11:31 a.m., Clark reported to Dennison that he had received the following message from Blue Beach: "Out of ammunition. Men fighting in water. If no help given Blue Beach lost." (CTG 81.8 telegram 191631Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

#### **147. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 11:57 a.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8. A chronology maintained in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations indicates that the instructions in this telegram resulted from a conference at the White House. (Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials) It is not clear from the President's appointment book which conference at the White House produced these instructions; President Kennedy was busy throughout much of the morning of April 19 in meetings with the visiting Prime Minister of Greece, Constantine Karamanlis. No meeting that might be interpreted as dealing with the crisis in Cuba was listed for the morning of April 19. (Kennedy Library, President's Appointment Book)

JCS 994382. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. Confirming phone conversation with Adm Burke/1/ send 2 destroyers off Blue Beach to determine whether there is any chance of evacuation or not.

/1/The chronology cited in the source note above indicates that this telephone conversation took place at 10:20 a.m. between Burke and Dennison.

2. Fly reconnaissance over beach to determine situation.
3. CEF ships have been ordered to move to beach.
4. Fly air cover for destroyers, CEF shipping and own air reconnaissance. This means active air to air combat against any aircraft in the area. You will be notified of time of any future friendly B-26 aircraft in area. No attack against ground forces authorized.
5. Report immediately by fastest means possible results of reconnaissance. Final instructions will be sent later.

#### **148. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State**

New York, April 19, 1961, noon.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.37/4-1961. Top Secret; Niact; Eyes Only. The outgoing copy of this telegram at USUN indicates that it was drafted by Yost and Pedersen and cleared in draft by Stevenson. (USUN Files: NYFRC 84-84-002, Outgoing Tels 1962)

2937. For President and Secretary from Stevenson. Cuba.

1. Atmosphere in UN, among both our friends and neutrals, is highly unsatisfactory and extremely dangerous to U.S. position throughout world. Sovs and Castro Cubans have been able capture and so far hold moral initiative. This is at least partly due to lack of advance planning on how to defend ourselves politically.
2. With sufficient high level approaches to friendly govts explaining our policy, Dept should be able assure enough votes to provide blocking third against Sov/1/ or Rumanian res/2/ and against any Asian res or compromise if it is sufficiently slanted against us. If LA's prepared vote against Mexican res/3/ because of their own, we might be able defeat it as well. 7-power res/4/ is best we can do. How strongly we should come out for it in capitals at this point, however, I am as yet uncertain but will make recommendation shortly.

/1/On April 19 the Soviet Union submitted a draft resolution in the First Committee that called for the General Assembly to condemn armed aggression against Cuba, which the Soviet Union stated was sponsored by the United States, and called upon member states to render such assistance to Cuba as might be necessary to repel such aggression. (U.N. doc. A/C.1/L.277)

/2/Romania submitted a draft resolution on April 17 that called for the General Assembly to demand the immediate cessation of military activities against the Republic of Cuba and to issue an urgent appeal to the states whose territory and means were being used to support the attack to stop such assistance. (U.N. doc. A/C.1/L.274)

/3/On April 18 Mexico submitted a draft resolution in the First Committee that made reference to the obligation of observing the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of any state. The resolution called for the General Assembly to make an urgent appeal to all states to ensure that their territories were not being used to promote a civil war in Cuba and to urge cooperation in the search for a peaceful solution to the situation in Cuba. (U.N. doc. A/C.1/L.275)

/4/An additional draft resolution was submitted in the First Committee on April 18 by Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela. This resolution made reference to the general obligation to seek a peaceful solution to disputes and called for the General Assembly to encourage the member states of the Organization of American States to lend assistance in achieving a settlement. It also called for the General Assembly to exhort all member states to abstain from any action that might aggravate existing tensions. (U.N.

doc. A/C.1/L.276)

3. So far we have received virtually no support in speeches of others. Immediate approaches in capitals is necessary if Dept desires favorable speeches. Situation so difficult here no one will speak, except those hostile to us, without definite instructions on their gov't's policy. Introduction by 7 LA's of res may help this because it gives focus around which to turn debate.

4. We are also exposed with large number of other dels with whom we have policy disputes on other issues in UN. At just wrong moment we have managed alienate Arabs on Palestine refugees item and on Jordanian case in SC against Israeli Jerusalem parole. We are in difficulty with whole Brazzaville group because of Cameroon plebiscite. If we had known we would have to face current situation we would have undoubtedly followed different policies and could have avoided present strained relations which are seriously damaging our bargaining power with them on Cuba.

5. Everyone, of course, friend or foe, believes we have engineered this revolution and no amount of denials will change their minds. Our prestige is thus committed, particularly in Latin America. Some states--Communist and "positive neutralists"--are very hostile. Others are uneasy. And those who are for us, especially LA's, are afraid to speak out because they fear internal repercussions of fight in Cuba on their own countries; they pray that this revolt will succeed within hours. Also urgently need if possible language to meet universal view that aiding, instigating and organizing from outside is as culpable as intervention in international and inter-American law.

6. Whatever happens now we are in for period of very serious political trouble. If revolution succeeds within days without overt U.S. intervention our problem minimized but by no means overcome. If it fails, we will lose stature and strength, with all that this implies for our position in OAS, the Alliance for Peace Program, the attitude of LA's toward Sov blandishments, and their ability resist other Cubas in LA; these stakes are high and having started this operation and having already paid heavy political price for it, I hope we will use covert means to maximum, to make it succeed and succeed fast. If nevertheless it fails we can then only say we were not involved, we are appalled at victory of oppression; and we are confident that in time Cuban people will again be free. From viewpoint U.S. position in world as reflected in UN, overt U.S. intervention in Cuba, after all we have said, would probably be worse than failure present effort. Green (Canada) told me today if U.S. intervened directly it would put us in impossible situation.

7. If worse comes to worst and there is prolonged military stalemate in Cuba which we are committed to support most serious situation will arise which will put us in grave difficulties in UN. Overt U.S. military support of rebels in absence legal framework or adequate provocation would be politically disastrous. It would be considered as another Suez and we would have to expect world to react accordingly. Overt aid, if decided upon, must be based on sound legal position even if it is fiction. We feel there must, for example, at least be rebel govt established in Cuba with control of substantial section of Cuban territory and including major city as capital and which can appeal for help before we even consider such step. I wish make clear I am not recommending this be done; considerations which govern such decisions are not sufficiently known to me here. But if this point should be reached we must have legal position at least as firm as USSR has in Laos.

Stevenson

**149. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 19, 1961, 12:06 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Emergency; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASEGTMO.

191706Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, McElroy, O'Donnell from Clark. Bumpy Road.  
Your 191624Z./1/

/1/Document 145.

1. Para 3. Area held by CEF appears to be one quarter to one half mile along the beach to a depth of about one quarter under artillery fire with tanks and vehicles to both east and west. Believe evacuation impossible without active engagement with Castro forces.

2. Destroyers on the way for observation only./2/

/2/Clark followed this telegram with another to Dennison at 12:44 which reads: "2 DD are proceeding to Blue Beach but feel I must point out that they will be subjected to air attack and surface artillery fire and in my opinion will not be able to make any contribution to decision as to feasibility of evacuation which is feasible if we stand ready to support by air cover and counter battery fire and start at once." (CTG telegram 191744Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

### **150. Telegram From Central Intelligence Agency Personnel in Nicaragua to the Central Intelligence Agency**

Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, April 19, 1961, 12:07 p.m.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/LA/COG Files: Job 82-00679R, Box 3, Gen Maxwell Taylor, Green Study Group, Vol. II. Top Secret; Flash.

902. 1. Situation for air support beachhead completely out of our hands. This morning's effort extended us to the limit. Have now lost 5 Cuban pilots, 6 co-pilots, 2 American pilots, and one co-pilot, and observer either killed or captured. Unknown number aircraft out of commission. (Will advise.)

2. Two crews shot down today were shot down during period "positive aggressive" Navy air support and cover granted and for one hour 1130Z to 1230Z 19 April. Per Hqs. 4834/1/ (OUT 7237).

/1/Telegram 4834 to the Air Commander at Puerto Cabezas, April 19, 3:04 a.m., informed him that the Navy would provide 1 hour of air cover over the beaches at the Bay of Pigs, and enjoined him to make the best possible use of the opportunity to attack Cuban forces on the approaches to the airfield. (Ibid.) For text, see the Supplement.

3. Still have faith. Awaiting your guidance.



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
**Volume X**  
**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **151. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 1:12 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Flash; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8.

JCS 994392. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. Direct DD to take personnel off the beach and from water to limit of their capability. We are anxious to save people as long as you can do so. We are extremely reluctant to become engaged but as long as we have some prospects of saving significant number of people to make hazards worthwhile, save the people.
2. Use CEF boats and craft as practicable. Provide air cover. If DD fired on they are authorized to return the fire to protect themselves while on this humanitarian mission.
3. Report when on the way and frequently thereafter.
4. If in your judgement there are substantial numbers that can be evacuated inform us ASAP, so that we can announce here that US will assist in evacuation. Naval commander in full charge of evacuation. Instructions to that effect are being sent by CIA to CEF commander. God be with you./1/

/1/At 1:45 p.m. Dennison ordered Clark to comply with the instructions in JCS 994392. (CINCLANTFLT telegram 191845Z to CTG 81.8, April 19; *ibid.*)

### **152. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 19, 1961, 1:57 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Emergency; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO.

191857Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, McElroy, O'Donnell from Clark. Bumpy Road.

1. AD-5W unable track Castro aircraft to and from bases. Observed unidentified jet following my returning CAP to seaward for about 20 miles then returning.

2. Castro B-26 orbiting over beach, probably gun spotter. I am initiating air to air combat over beach area./1/

/1/In response to this message, Dennison sent an order at 2:16 p.m. to the Commander of the air unit based at Key West, and the Commander of the naval base at Guantanamo: "Be prepared provide fighter assistance to CTG 81.8 on his request." (CINCLANTFLT telegram 191916Z to COMKWESTFOR and COMNAVBASE GTMO, April 19; *ibid.*)

**153. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 19, 1961, 2:17 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Flash; Exclusive. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO.

191917Z. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, McElroy, O'Donnell from Clark. Bumpy Road. CTU 81.8.3 reports following intercepted:

CEF ship Commander reported to his 2nd in command "that Blue Beach was lost and no troops were on Blue Beach. Men fled into woods." CTF 81.8.3.2 passed yacht with 200 people on board possibly from beach. Report is that nothing left to salvage on the beach and that Castro is waiting on the beach./1/

/1/In light of the apparently hopeless situation on the beach, Clark reported to Dennison at 2:57 p.m. that he had ordered his air and surface units to fire only in self defense. (CTG 81.8 telegram 191957Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

**154. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 3:10 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8.

JCS 994409. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray.

1. Based on report from CEF Commander ashore that he was destroying communications CIA has assumed he has taken to the woods.

2. CIA has ordered their shipping to disperse and proceed to various ports. *Blagar* and LCU's have been ordered to point CC. Request you assume operational control at CC and take action as feasible to salvage ships and cargo./1/

/1/At 7:27 p.m., the JCS amended this order to read: "Retain operational control of LCU's only." The CIA had directed that the crews of the LCUs be transferred to the *Caribe* and remain under CIA control. (JCS telegram 994463 to CINCLANT, April 19; *ibid.*)

**155. Telegram From the Commander of Special Task Group 81.8 (Clark) to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

USS *Essex*, Caribbean, April 19, 1961, 3:45 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate;

Exclusive. Repeated to JCS, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO.

192045Z. Exclusive for Dennison, Gray, Smith, O'Donnell, McElroy from Clark. Bumpy Road.

1. Final report from CTU 81.8.3 "saw nothing to indicate any chance of evacuation. Beach appears completely held by light Castro forces."

2. My destroyers are clear of beach and rejoining CEF ships./1/

/1/At 3:20, Clark reported: "CTU 81.8.3 straddled by shore battery. Ordered withdrawal full speed." (CTG 81.8 telegram 192020Z to CINCLANTFLT, April 19; *ibid.*)

### **156. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 19, 1961, 8:42 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8.

JCS 994464. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from JCS. Bumpy Road. Direct one destroyer to remain off beach during night outside of shore based gun range. Destroyer boat to patrol off beaches to pick up any evacuees. Destroyer keep boat under radar control. Destroyer depart area one hour before sunrise. Report results of search during night and on completion of patrol./1/

/1/At 5:10 p.m. Burke pressed Clark for more information: "Dammit, make lots of reports. We need data. Even negative helps." (CNO telegram 192210Z to CTG 81.8, Exclusive for Clark from Burke, April 19; *ibid.*)

Realize this is most difficult and hazardous assignment but it is necessary./2/

/2/The JCS informed Dennison at 8:52 that existing instructions with respect to air and surface protection remained in effect, but there was no further requirement for an air CAP in the beachhead area. Dennison was directed to instruct his naval units in the area, with the exception of CTG 81.8, to resume normal operations. (JCS telegram 994465 to CINCLANT, April 19; *ibid.*)

### **157. Memorandum From the Attorney General (Kennedy) to President Kennedy**

Washington, April 19, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, April 1961. No classification marking. A covering note indicates that the Attorney General sent the memorandum to the President through Presidential Special Assistant Kenneth O'Donnell. (*Ibid.*)

The present situation in Cuba was precipitated by the deterioration of events inside that state. The news that 100 Cuban pilots were being trained in Czechoslovakia, the information that MIGs and other jet planes had already been shipped to Cuba and that these shipments were expected to continue, that thousands of tons of military equipment had arrived each month in Havana, were all matters of consternation. Cuba it was realized was swiftly becoming a major military arsenal for all of the activities of the Communist Bloc in the Western Hemisphere. For these arms were sent to Cuba not only to keep Castro in power but to provide the necessary tools for Communist agitators in other South American and Central American countries to overthrow their governments. A hundred jet fighters based in Havana and roaming the skies around Florida and Central America will have major repercussions. The psychological effect, let alone the military result of this show of power could conceivably be catastrophic.

The alternative to the steps that were taken this past week would have been to sit and wait and hope that in the future some fortuitous event would occur to change the situation. This, it was decided, should not be done. The immediate failure of the rebels' activities in Cuba does not permit us, it seems to me, to return to the status quo with our policy toward Cuba being one of waiting and hoping for good luck. The events in the last few days makes this inconceivable.

Therefore, equally important to working out a plan to extricate ourselves gracefully from the situation in Cuba is developing a policy in light of what we expect we will be facing a year or two years from now! /1/ Castro will be even more bombastic, will be more and more closely tied to Communism, will be better armed, and will be operating an even more tightly held state than if these events had not transpired.

/1/The Attorney General underscored the first sentence of this paragraph by hand, and added the exclamation point.

Our long-range foreign policy objectives in Cuba are tied to survival far more than what is happening in Laos or the Congo or any other place in the world. Because of the proximity of that island our objective must be at the very least to prevent that island from becoming Mr. Khrushchev's arsenal. In our concern over the present situation, we must not lose sight of our objective.

There are three ways that that can be accomplished: Number (1) to send American troops into Cuba; Number (2) to place a strict military blockade around the island of Cuba; Number (3) to call upon the nations of Central and South America to take steps to insure that all arms from outside forces (both American and Russian) are kept out of Cuba.

You have rejected Number (1) for good and sufficient reasons (although this might have to be reconsidered). Number (2) has the same inherent problems as Number (1) although possibly not as acute. On the other hand, it is a drawn-out affair which would lead to a good deal of worldwide bitterness over an extended period of time.

The only way to carry it out successfully would be to be able to demonstrate to the governments of Central and South America that because of the MIG fighters, the tanks and equipment provided by the Communist bloc, that the whole hemisphere is in danger. From my limited knowledge of the situation I suppose it would be most difficult to get them to agree to concerted action.

As for Number 3 and to some extent, Number 2, if it was reported that one or two of Castro's MIGs attacked Guantanamo Bay and the United States made noises like this was an act of war and that we might very well have to take armed action ourselves, would it be possible to get the countries of Central and South America through OAS to take some action to prohibit the shipment of arms or ammunition from any outside force into Cuba? At the same time they could guarantee the territorial integrity of Cuba so that the Cuban government could not say that they would be at the mercy of the United States.

It seems to me that something along these lines is absolutely essential. Maybe this is not the way to carry it out but something forceful and determined must be done. Furthermore, serious attention must be given to this problem immediately and not wait for the situation in Cuba to revert back to a time of relative peace and calm with the U.S. having been beaten off with her tail between her legs.

What has been going on in Cuba in the last few days must also be a tremendous strain on Castro. It seems to me that this is the time to decide what our long-term policies are going to be and what will be the results of those policies. The time has come for a showdown for in a year or two years the situation will be vastly worse. If we don't want Russia to set up missile bases in Cuba, we had better decide now what we are willing to do to stop it.

## **158. Notes on Cabinet Meeting**



Washington, April 20, 1961.

//Source: Yale University, Bowles Papers, Box 392, Folder 154. Personal. Drafted by Bowles. A handwritten notation on the source text indicates that the notes were written in May 1961. The President's appointment book indicates that the meeting took place between 11 a.m. and noon. Those listed as participants included the President, the Vice President, Bowles, Dillon, McNamara, Attorney General Kennedy, Postmaster General Day, Udall, Freeman, Secretary of Labor Goldberg, Secretary of Commerce Gudeman, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Ribicoff, David Bell, Director of the Bureau of the Budget, John Macy, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, and Jerome Wiesner, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology. (Kennedy Library, President's Appointment Book)

## NOTES ON CUBAN CRISIS

Cabinet Meeting on Thursday, April 20th, the first day immediately after the collapse of the Cuban expedition became known.

I attended the Cabinet meeting in Rusk's absence and it was about as grim as any meeting I can remember in all my experience in government, which is saying a good deal.

The President was really quite shattered, and understandably so. Almost without exception, his public career had been a long series of successes, without any noteworthy set backs. Those disappointments which had come his way, such as his failure to get the nomination for Vice President in 1956 were clearly attributable to religion.

Here for the first time he faced a situation where his judgment had been mistaken, in spite of the fact that week after week of conferences had taken place before he gave the green light.

It was not a pleasant experience. Reactions around the table were almost savage, as everyone appeared to be jumping on everyone else. The only really coherent statement was by Arthur Goldberg, who said that while it was doubtful that the expedition was wise in the first place, the Administration should not have undertaken it unless it was prepared to see it through with United States troops if necessary.

At least his remarks had an inherent logic to them, although I could not agree under any circumstances to sending troops into Cuba--violating every treaty obligation we have.

The most angry response of all came from Bob Kennedy and also, strangely enough, from Dave Bell, who I had always assumed was a very reasonable individual.

The discussion simply rambled in circles with no real coherent thought. Finally after three-quarters of an hour the President got up and walked toward his office. I was so distressed at what I felt was a dangerous mood that I walked after him, stopped him, and told him I would like an opportunity to come into his office and talk the whole thing out.

Lyndon Johnson, Bob McNamara, and Bob Kennedy joined us. Bobby continued his tough, savage comments, most of them directed against the Department of State for reasons which are difficult for me to understand.

When I took exception to some of the more extreme things he said by suggesting that the way to get out of our present jam was not to simply double up on everything we had done, he turned on me savagely.

What worries me is that two of the most powerful people in this administration--Lyndon Johnson and Bob Kennedy--have no experience in foreign affairs, and they both realize that this is the central question of this period and are determined to be experts at it.

The problems of foreign affairs are complex, involving politics, economics and social questions that require both understanding of history and various world cultures.

When a newcomer enters the field and finds himself confronted by the nuances of international questions, he becomes an easy target for the military-CIA-paramilitary type answers which are often in specific logistical terms which can be added, subtracted, multiplied, or divided.

This kind of thinking was almost dominant in the conference and I found it most alarming. The President appeared the most calm, yet it was clear to see that he had been suffering an acute shock and it was an open question in my mind as to what his reaction would be.

All through the meeting which took place in the President's office and which lasted almost a half hour, there was an almost frantic reaction for an action program which people would grab onto.

[Here follows the remainder of Bowles' notes; see Document 166.]

### **159. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Lemnitzer)**

Washington, April 20, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Top Secret.

The President has asked that the Defense Department develop a plan for the overthrow of the Castro government by the application of U.S. military force. The plan should include:

1. An appraisal of the strength of the Cuban military forces.
2. An appraisal of the probable behavior of the Cuban civilian population during the period of military action.
3. An analysis of alternative programs for accomplishing the objective; e.g., a complete naval and air blockade vs. an armed invasion.
4. For the recommended program:
  - a. A detailed statement of the U.S. forces required.
  - b. A timetable and a description of the specific actions considered necessary to accomplish the objective.
  - c. An estimate of the potential U.S. and Cuban casualties.
  - d. An estimate of the time required to accomplish the action.
  - e. A list of contingencies which we should be prepared to face during the action.
  - f. A detailed statement of the U.S. air, ground, and sea forces available for action elsewhere in the world during the period of the Cuban operations, and an appraisal of the extent to which such forces could cope with potential military conflicts in Laos, South Viet-Nam, and Berlin.

The request for this study should not be interpreted as an indication that U.S. military action against Cuba is

probable.

By what date may I expect to receive a draft of your report on this subject?

Robert S. McNamara/1/

/1/Printed from a copy that indicates McNamara signed the original.

**160. Memorandum From the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Coerr) to Secretary of State Rusk**

Washington, April 20, 1961.

//Source: Department of State, ARA Files: Lot 62 D 24, Cuba--Misc. March-April 1961. Confidential.

**SUBJECT**

Today's Developments Relating to Cuba

Cuban developments continue in the headlines. The Castro Government claims complete victory over the invading forces. The Revolutionary Council has announced that at the cost of tragic losses sustained by a holding-action unit, the bulk of its forces has fought its way into the Escambray and linked up with other Freedom Fighters there. This latter announcement is also being broadcast by a new radio station in the Escambray mountains.

There is no further word as to the fate of the invading forces defeated at Cochinos Bay.

World reaction and press comment, as reported by incoming cables, continue adverse. Nehru, Nasser, and others charge the US with responsibility for events in Cuba and for violation of the principle of non-intervention. Anti-US demonstrations are reported from many cities on both sides of the Iron Curtain. There has as yet been no serious loss of property or American lives. Latin American demonstrations have for the most part been carried out by Communist and pro-Communist groups, have not yet elicited any general response from the rest of the population and have been fairly effectively controlled by local security forces.

President Kennedy delivered a forceful speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He made clear our sympathy for Cuban patriots struggling against a Cuban dictator, reminded listeners that we had not intervened, but warned "our restraint is not inexhaustible"./1/ In plain language he called upon the free nations of the Hemisphere to face up to their responsibilities. The President's speech was most timely and useful and may be expected to provoke immediate and wide-spread reaction.

/1/Kennedy further amplified the warning: "Should it ever appear that the inter-American doctrine of non-interference merely conceals or excuses a policy of nonaction--if the nations of this Hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration--then I want it clearly understood that this Government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations which are the security of our Nation." For text of the President's address, see *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961*, pp. 304-306.

I am informed that IO will brief you fully on UN developments relating to Cuba.

At the OAS, discreet soundings were made as to the possibility of Council action appealing for humanitarian treatment of prisoners taken by the Castro regime. Little encouragement was received on this score, as it appeared inevitable that any such move would only lead instead to a wide-ranging discussion of the entire Cuban

problem. Word is expected tomorrow as to whether or not the Secretary General of the OAS might himself undertake such action. Steps are also being taken to attempt discreetly to focus public attention upon the prisoners and to interest the International Red Cross and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on their behalf./2/ The Human Rights Commission meets tomorrow at 10:30 am to discuss the possibility of a message to the Castro Government appealing on humanitarian grounds for information on battle casualties and prisoners and expressing the hope that international practices will be observed.

/2/An instruction was cabled today to the Consul General at Geneva to communicate with the International Red Cross regarding this matter. [Footnote in the source text.]

There are continuing indications of a wave of general repression in Cuba including the arrest and other harassment of US citizens. Confirmation is being sought of a Habana radio broadcast late today that Henry Raymond, UPI Bureau Chief there, had been executed.

### **161. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 20, 1961, 7:46 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8, COMCARIBSEAFRON, COMKWESTFOR, and COMNAVBASE GTMO. In a telephone conversation with Commander Tazewell Shepard on April 21 Admiral Burke indicated that this order originated with President Kennedy, who was "deeply anxious" to rescue CEF survivors. (Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

JCS 994569. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison. Info RAdms Clark, Smith, McElroy and O'Donnell from Gen Gray.

1. Following is in order to indicate continuing US support for the counter revolutionary committee and for a Free Cuba.
2. Take charge CEF ships and personnel and get them safely to Vi-eques. Navy on-scene commander can relay message to CEF ships via me.
3. Conduct destroyer patrol off Blue Beach tonight for possible evacuation of survivors and instruct CO he is authorized to ground his ship if it will facilitate mission. Use of amphib ship and craft authorized in addition to DD if desired. Repeat patrol tomorrow night approaching area within sight of land but outside gun range prior darkness. Provide air cover. Rules of engagement during patrols same as before.
4. Mallard's boss has directed CEF ships to divert to Vieques. They may require logistic support in addition to protection.

### **162. Editorial Note**

According to a memorandum for the record prepared by Admiral Burke, Secretary of Defense McNamara met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretaries of the Services on April 21, 1961, to assess the impact of the Bay of Pigs failure. McNamara noted that the outcome of the operation had been a shock to the government and to the allies of the United States. He anticipated that there would be recrimination and "a tendency to have off with the heads." It was critical, he emphasized, for the military services to accept appropriate responsibility and to avoid backbiting. McNamara stated that there were important lessons to be learned from the exercise, and he noted that the President was going to establish a high-level committee to reexamine the entire operation and make recommendations. McNamara felt that one lesson to be drawn was that military operations should be run by military personnel. Another lesson, he felt, was that the government should never start anything unless it could

be finished, or the government was willing to face the consequences of failure. And he felt that the United States had to develop a coherent national policy concerning indirect aggression.

In assessing the specific implications of the Bay of Pigs, McNamara stated that a plan for an invasion of Cuba would have to be drawn up, although he added that an invasion was "unlikely." In the context of this plan, he noted that it was necessary to examine the type of air and naval blockade that would facilitate a fast invasion of Cuba, as well as the requirements necessary to a more deliberate invasion. General Lemnitzer observed that the daily U-2 flights over Cuba had been resumed, and he emphasized the importance of the information obtained. If the CIA lost its nerve as a result of the Bay of Pigs, Lemnitzer felt that the JCS should provide what support was necessary for the rebels in Cuba through Admiral Dennison's command. (Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

### **163. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy**

Washington, April 21, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 65 A 3464, China-Cuba, 1961. Top Secret. A note on the source text reads: "For: Secretary McNamara and Mr. Gilpatric Only."

#### **SUBJECT**

##### **The Problem We Face**

1. Right now the greatest problem we face is not to have the whole of our foreign policy thrown off balance by what we feel and what we do about Cuba itself. We have suffered a serious setback; but that setback will be trivial compared to the consequences of not very soon regaining momentum along the lines which we have begun in the past three months.

[Here follows Rostow's assessment of the existing lines of U.S. foreign policy and his recommendations concerning reestablishing initiative and momentum.]

9. As for Cuba itself, I have little background and little wisdom. There are, evidently, three quite different threats which Cuba poses, which are now mixed up in our minds and in our policy. There is the military question of Communist arms and of a potential Soviet offensive base in Cuba. If we are not immediately to invade Cuba ourselves, we must decide whether we shall permit Castro, so long as he remains in power, to acquire defensive arms; and we must decide what the touchstones are between defensive arms and the creation of a Communist military base threatening to the U.S. itself. I assume that evidence of the latter we would take virtually as a cause of war, although we should bear in mind what the placing of missiles in Turkey looks like in the USSR. Second, there is the question of Cuba as a base for active infiltration and subversion in the rest of Latin America. Here, evidently, we must try to do more than we are now doing, and we should seek active hemispheric collaboration--wherever we can find it--in gathering and exchanging information on the networks involved and on counter-measures. This is, however, essentially a covert, professional operation. The more we talk about it--the more we overtly seek to pressure Latin American nations to join with us--the less likely we shall be able to get their cooperation in doing anything useful. Third, there is the simple ideological problem. Cuba is a Communist state, repressing every value we treasure. But on that ground alone we are prevented by our treaty obligations from acting directly and overtly. On the other hand, we are overtly also committed beyond sympathy to the support of those Cubans fighting for freedom. Here, how we proceed--what is to be done overtly and covertly--is a most searching question. I have no advice to give except this: Let there first be a first-class and careful intelligence evaluation of the situation inside Cuba, of Castro's control methods; of the nature and degree of dissidence of various groups; of recent trends and their pace; and an assessment of vulnerabilities.

10. As I said to the Attorney General the other day, when you are in a fight and knocked off your feet, the most dangerous thing to do is to come out swinging wildly. Clearly we must cope with Castro in the next several years--perhaps sooner, if he overplays his hand and gives us an acceptable legal and international basis. But short of that, we must think again clearly and coolly in the light of the facts as they are and are likely to be. We may emerge with a quite different approach to the Castro problem after such an exercise, or we may proceed with more of the same. But let us do some fresh homework.

11. In the meanwhile, what we must do is to build the foundation and the concepts, in Latin America, the North Atlantic Alliance, and the UN, which would permit us, next time round, to deal with the Cuban problem in ways which would not so grievously disrupt the rest of our total strategy.

[Here follows Rostow's recommendation that the President make a speech outlining "urgent action items" at home and abroad.]

#### **164. Editorial Note**

On April 21, 1961, the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly completed debate on the Cuban agenda item and considered the several draft resolutions submitted during the debate. (For summaries of these resolutions, see footnotes 1-4, Document 148.) The Representatives of Romania and the Soviet Union elected not to press for a vote on their respective draft resolutions. The seven-power draft resolution, submitted by Latin American members and supported by the United States, was then adopted by a vote of 61 to 27 with 10 absentions. The Mexican draft resolution was adopted by a vote of 42 to 31, with 25 absentions. (U.N. doc. A/4744, April 21, 1961) In its report to the General Assembly on April 21, the First Committee recommended adoption of both draft resolutions. (Ibid.) The General Assembly acted on the report at its 995th plenary meeting, also on April 21. A compromise was effected under which the seven-power draft resolution was adopted, minus the key operative paragraph that would have referred the matter for action to the Organization of American States. (U.N. doc. A/RES/1616 (XV)) The Mexican draft resolution was not adopted.

#### **165. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, April 21, 1961, 9:19 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Operational Immediate; Limited Distribution; Exclusive. Repeated to CTG 81.8. In a telephone conversation with Dennison on April 22, Burke explained that this telegram was cleared by McNamara and the President, and that the President was directing the rescue operation personally. (Transcript of a telephone conversation, April 22; *ibid.*)

JCS 994676. Bumpy Road. Exclusive for Adm Dennison and Adm Clark from Gen Gray. CIA advises that there are 3 UDT men with complete gear aboard *Marsopa*./1/ They request they be introduced nite of 22nd April in vicinity of burned out patrol craft in effort to make contact with CEF personnel./2/ The UDT personnel plus any CEF personnel should be retrieved nite of 23 April. Suggest provision for additional small boats and rafts on nite of 23 April in case CEF group is contacted. Request comments so that CIA may be advised.

/1/Code name for the *Blagar*.

/2/At 5:47 p.m. on April 21, the JCS informed CINCLANT that information had just been received that several hundred CEF personnel had seized a Cuban patrol boat and had run it aground on the west side of the Bay of Pigs while trying to escape. Dennison was instructed to search for and protect the CEF personnel on the patrol boat. (JCS telegram 994644 to CINCLANT, April 21; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials) Shortly thereafter Burke informed General Gray that he had just learned that the patrol boat had been sighted, but it was burned out and no CEF survivors were visible. (Transcript of a telephone conversation, April 21; *ibid.*)



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **166. Notes on the 478th Meeting of the National Security Council**

Washington, April 22, 1961.

//Source: Yale University, Bowles Papers, Box 392, Folder 154. Personal. Drafted by Bowles in May.

#### NOTES ON CUBAN CRISIS

[Here follow 3-1/2 pages of Bowles' notes; see Document 158.]

NSC Meeting, Saturday, April 22nd

There were some thirty-five people at the NSC meeting on Cuba. Again Bob Kennedy was present, and took the lead as at the previous meeting, slamming into anyone who suggested that we go slowly and try to move calmly and not repeat previous mistakes.

The atmosphere was almost as emotional as the Cabinet meeting two days earlier, the difference being that on this occasion the emphasis was on specific proposals to harass Castro.

On two or three occasions I suggested that the greatest mistake we could make would be to pit the United States with its 180 million people in a contest against a Cuban dictator on an island of 6 million people. I stressed that while we are already in a bad situation, it would be a mistake for us to assume that it could not disintegrate further and an almost sure way to lose ground was to reach out in ways that would almost surely be ineffective and which would tend to create additional sympathy for Castro in his David and Goliath struggle against the United States.

These comments were brushed aside brutally and abruptly by the various fire eaters who were present. I did think, however, that the faces of a few people around the table reflected some understanding of the views I was trying to present, notably Dick Goodwin, Ted Sorensen (which is surprising), Arthur Schlesinger, and above all Jerry Wiesner.

The President limited himself largely to asking questions--questions, however, which led in one direction.

I left the meeting with a feeling of intense alarm, tempered somewhat with the hope that this represented largely an emotional reaction of a group of people who were not used to setbacks or defeats and whose pride and confidence had been deeply wounded.

However, I felt again the great lack of moral integrity which I believe is the central guide in dealing with tense

and difficult questions, particularly when the individuals involved are tired, frustrated, and personally humiliated.

If every question in the world becomes an intellectual exercise on a totally pragmatic basis, with no reference to moral considerations, it may be that we can escape disaster, but it will certainly be putting the minds of the White House group to a test when it becomes necessary to add up the components, large and small on the plus or minus side of a ledger, and when the minds that are attempting to do this are tired, uneasy, and unsure, the values and the arithmetic are unlikely to reflect wise courses.

[Here follows the remainder of Bowles' notes; see Document 184.]

### **167. Record of Actions at the 478th Meeting of the National Security Council**

Washington, April 22, 1961, 10 a.m.-noon.

//Source: Department of State, S/S-NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95. Top Secret. A note on the record of action indicates that the President approved the record on April 24. The time of the meeting is taken from the President's appointment book. (Kennedy Library)

The President presided at this meeting. The Secretary of the Treasury and the Director, Bureau of the Budget, participated in the actions below. The Attorney General; the Acting Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director of Central Intelligence; the Director, U.S. Information Agency; the Under Secretary of State; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Army; the Secretary of the Navy; the Acting Secretary of the Air Force; the Deputy Under Secretary of State; the Counselor, Department of State; the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense; the Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Executive Secretary, National Aeronautics and Space Council; General Maxwell Taylor; General David Gray, U. S. Army; the Deputy Director (Plans), Central Intelligence Agency; the Special Counsel to the President; the Special Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs and for Science and Technology; Mr. Bromley Smith, National Security Council; and the Acting Executive Secretary, National Security Council, attended the meeting. The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, and the Adviser to the President on Disarmament participated in NSC Action No. 2408. The Deputy to the Adviser to the President on Disarmament and the Deputy Director, U. S. Disarmament Administration, attended the meeting for NSC Action No. 2408.

#### 2406. U.S. Policy Toward Cuba

- a. Noted the President's view that there should be no further discussion outside the Government of the meaning of recent landings in Cuba, since the object now is to move forward.
- b. Noted the President's view that U.S. citizens in Cuba should be shortly advised again of the view of this Government that they should leave Cuba, and that at an appropriate time publicity should be given to this advice.
- c. Noted the President's view that U.S. assistance to active guerrillas in Cuba should, for the present, be extended only where there is a moral obligation, or to assist in survival or evacuation. Guerrillas with whom the United States may be in contact should be advised to lie low for the present. This directive should, however, be constantly reviewed in the light of the changing internal situation in Cuba.
- d. Discussed the training of Cuban soldiers, and agreed that the question of possible forms of large-scale, open enlistment of Cuban soldiers should be studied by the Departments of State and Defense./1/

/1/After the NSC meeting, Secretary of the Army Elvis J. Stahr sent to McNamara a copy of the discussion paper that he used during the meeting to elaborate on this proposal. Stahr proposed the creation of a "Freedom Brigade" in the U.S. Army composed of volunteers from among Cuban refugees in the United States. After basic training, the unit would be given Special Forces type training. The object would be to create a highly trained,



flexible force that could be used for such purposes as guerrilla or unconventional operations in Cuba to spearhead a U.S. invasion of Cuba and to undertake occupation responsibilities in the post-combat phase of an invasion. The assumption was that if U.S. forces did intervene in Cuba, they should "get in and get out" quickly and leave occupation responsibilities to refugee groups such as a "Freedom Brigade," which would underpin any government that the United States might recognize. (Memorandum from Stahr to McNamara, April 22; Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive)) McNamara sent a memorandum to Nitze on April 22 in which he instructed ISA, on the basis of the actions taken at the NSC meeting, to: "Explore with the State Department the political and military implications of recruiting and training volunteer Cuban nationals as a part of the U. S. Army. The Cubans might be organized into a 'Freedom Brigade' or alternatively they could be integrated into existing units." (Ibid., Nitze Cuba File)

Action Memo sent to State and Defense/2/

/2/All of the action memoranda listed in this record were issued on April 25 to the agencies indicated as National Security Action Memoranda. The titles of the memoranda requiring action were as follows: NSAM No. 42 "Assistance to Cuban Refugees", NSAM No. 43 "Training to Cuban Nationals", NSAM No. 44 "Caribbean Security Agency", NSAM No. 45 "Coverage of Castro Activities in the United States", NSAM No. 46 "Attitude of Various Governments during the Cuban Crisis", and NSAM No. 47 "Soviet Assist-ance to Cuba". (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series)

e. Discussed the support of refugees, and noted the President's directive that levels of support should be reported to him with recommendations for their improvement, and his desire that such support should be open and overt. The President also directed that the adjustment of Cubans to life in the United States should be given particular attention by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Action Memo sent to HEW and CIA

f. Noted that an interdepartmental study group would be considering an increase in U. S. assistance to Latin American countries in matters relating to internal security and counter-guerrilla activities, and agreed that a representative of the Department of Justice should be added to this group.

g. Noted the President's desire that there be prompt recommendations with regard to trading with Cuba from the Departments of State and the Treasury.

h. Noted the President's directive that the possibility be studied of creating a Caribbean Security Agency, to which we and the other Caribbean countries would contribute forces, and to whom any nation attacked could appeal for help.

Action Memo sent to State and Defense

i. Noted that the Attorney General and the Director of Central Intelligence would examine the possibility of stepping up coverage of Castro activities in the United States.

Action Memo sent to Justice and CIA

j. Noted that the Secretary of State had established an Operations Group in the Department under Ambassador Achilles, who would be responsible for all action with respect to the Cuban situation.

k. Noted the President's request that he and the Vice President receive from the Department of State prompt information as to which governments have been helpful in various parts of the Cuban crisis, and which unhelpful.

Action Memo sent to State

I. Noted the President's desire that a prompt and up-to-date report on Soviet assistance to Cuba be furnished by the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency to the Director, U. S. Information Agency, and the Department of State.

Action Memo sent to Defense and CIA

### **168. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke)**

Washington, April 22, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Confidential.

In accordance with the discussions at today's NSC meeting, please have J-2 move at once to coordinate with CIA in the prompt presentation of the material exposing the degree of Soviet Bloc military support to Cuba, and if possible Bloc participation in recent military actions. The object of this project should be to produce the most forceful possible public exposure on this matter. If some sacrifice of intelligence sources should be required to make the presentation effective, this could be considered. This project should be completed by Wednesday, the 26th.

Robert S. McNamara

### **169. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 22, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret. Drafted on April 23 in the CIA. The Taylor committee, composed of Taylor as chairman, Robert Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, was established by President Kennedy on April 22 following a 10 a.m. meeting between the President and Taylor. Taylor recorded in his memoirs that the President called him in New York on April 21 and asked him to come to Washington to discuss the situation growing out of the Bay of Pigs problem. Kennedy asked Taylor to take leave of his responsibilities as President of the Lincoln Center and conduct an investigation into the causes of the failure of the Bay of Pigs operation. The President's instructions to Taylor, contained in an April 22 letter, were "to take a close look at all our practices and programs in the areas of military and paramilitary, guerrilla and anti-guerrilla activities which fall short of outright war. I believe we need to strengthen our work in this area. In the course of your study, I hope that you will give special attention to the lessons which can be learned from recent events in Cuba." (Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: Norton, 1972), pp. 180-184)

#### **SUBJECT**

First Meeting of General Maxwell Taylor's Board of Inquiry on Cuban Operations Conducted by CIA/1/

/1/The subject line of the original draft of this memorandum reads: First Meeting of the Green Study Group. (National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Cuba, Box 12, Memoranda of Meetings) The group was usually referred to as the Cuba Study Group.

#### **TIME AND PLACE**

1400-1800 hours, 22 April 1961, Quarters Eye

## PARTICIPANTS

### Study Group Members

General Maxwell D. Taylor

Attorney General Robert Kennedy

Admiral Arleigh Burke

Allen W. Dulles

Department of Defense

Major General David W. Gray

Colonel C. W. Shuler

Commander Mitchell

CIA Personnel

General C.P. Cabell

C. Tracy Barnes

Colonel J.C. King

Jacob D. Esterline

*[name not declassified]*

Colonel Jack Hawkins

1. After discussion of procedural matters, it was decided that all papers and documents stemming from the inquiry would be retained by General Maxwell Taylor. Colonel J.C. King, Chief, Western Hemisphere Division, was designated recorder of the first meeting.

2. Mr. Dulles, in his opening remarks, cited the document which authorized CIA to conduct paramilitary operations. This document, NSC 5412,<sup>/2/</sup> was described as one of the most secret documents in the U. S. Government. Mr. Dulles said that under this authority CIA is directed to engage in activities such as the Cuban operation under the general supervision of the National Security Council. General Taylor indicated that he wanted a copy of this document to be made available to him for his study. General Gray indicated he had a copy and would give it to General Taylor.

<sup>/2/</sup>NSC 5412, March 15, 1954, was the National Security Council directive on covert operations. (Eisenhower Library, White House Office Files, Files of the Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, NSC 5412/2) The oversight committee for covert operations was, therefore, referred to as the 5412 Committee.

3. Colonel King was then asked to describe Agency activities on the Cuban problem prior to the establishment of the Task Force, i.e., Branch 4 of the Western Hemisphere Division on 18 January 1960. In his remarks Colonel King stated that in late 1958 CIA made two attempts (each approved by the Department of State) to block

Castro's ascension to power. The first attempt was made in November 1958 when contact was established with Justo Carrillo and the Montecristi Group. The second attempt was made on or about the 9th of December 1958 when former Ambassador William D. Pawley, supported by the CIA Chief of Station in Havana, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] and Colonel King, approached Batista and proposed the establishment of a Junta to whom Batista would turn over the reins of government. Colonel King was queried by the Attorney General as to the approximate date that the Agency concluded that Castro was unacceptable to the U.S. politically, if not actually a Communist, and when this conclusion reached the Secretary of State and the President. Colonel King commented that there were reports as early as June or July 1958 during the period that sailors from Guantanamo were held by Castro forces which indicated beyond a reasonable doubt that the U.S. was up against an individual who could not be expected to be acceptable to U.S. Government interests. Admiral Burke also made reference to the fact that he had been in at least one meeting with Colonel King on or about 29 December 1958 in which officials of the Department of State, except for Under Secretary Robert Murphy, appeared to feel that Castro was politically compatible to U.S. objectives. Considerable discussion involving all members of the Investigating Committee followed on this point with the Attorney General requesting assurance that Agency reports at that time reached the highest authority.

4. Reference was made to the first few days of January 1959 in Havana when a primary target of the advance guard was the Communist files in BRAC.

5. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reported that on 21 September 1959 he assumed the responsibility for planning for potential Agency action in contingency situations that might evolve in Latin America. He stated that this was a staff position that conducted liaison with existing desks in an attempt to identify the existence or non-existence of basic information which was an essential preliminary to the planning of clandestine operations within any given country. Most of the countries of Central America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador) were identified as potential contingency problems because of the instability of their governments. The Isle of Hispaniola--Haiti and the Dominican Republic--was a high priority target. In South America, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina were included among the countries which required review and potential action. Cuba, quite naturally, emerged as the number one target for contingency planning. Because of the national policy affecting Latin America, it was ascertained early in the survey that the operating desks did not have available in collated fashion the type of information that was required for planning purposes for covert operations. As a result of this discovery, the entire intelligence community was given a requirement to produce certain information on the various countries involved with special emphasis on Cuba as rapidly as possible. In time, a three-volume study was produced which included basic intelligence, political and psychological information, operational data, geographical information, selected potential areas for clandestine operations, and related operational data.

6. The Cuban situation continued to deteriorate rapidly and in December 1959, it was decided that CIA needed to consider urgently the activation of two programs:

A. The selection, recruitment and careful evaluation (including medical, psychological, psychiatric and polygraph) of approximately thirty-five (35) Cubans, preferably with previous military experience, for an intensive training program which would qualify them to become instructors in various paramilitary skills, including leadership, sabotage, communications, etc.

B. The instructor cadre would in turn, in some third country in Latin America, conduct clandestinely a training of additional Cuban recruits who would be organized into small teams similar to the U.S. Army Special Forces concept, and infiltrated with communicators, into areas of Cuba where it had been determined numbers of dissidents existed who required specialized skills and leadership and military supplies.

At this time, the basic Agency concept of operations was that the members of the instructor cadre would never be committed to Cuban soil. The members of the paramilitary leadership groups would be introduced covertly into the target area.

7. As a result of this fundamental decision [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] went [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] in mid-December 1959 to survey certain isolated areas [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] to determine the potential usefulness of these areas for the training of the instructor cadre. In addition to the survey, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] held meetings with CINCARIB Lt. Gen. Ridgely Gaither, and CGUSARCARIB Major Gen. Charles Dasher, to familiarize them with the basic Agency thinking in the Cuban matter.

8. Mr. Esterline outlined the organization of the Task Force and the steps which led to the paper presented to the President on 14 March 1960 and approved 17 March 1960,<sup>/3/</sup> which was the first authorization to mount an operation to get rid of Castro. General Taylor requested the original T/O of that Task Force. He also requested other T/O's, including the present one, which will illustrate the buildup of the Force.

<sup>/3/</sup>For text, see *Foreign Relations*, 1958-1960, vol. VI, pp. 850-851.

9. Mr. Bissell discussed the 17th of March approval. The concept then presented persisted for approximately 10 months. There were four major courses:

A. Creation of a political opposition. This took 4 to 5 months and during that period it was found less and less possible to rely on the Cuban politicians.

B. Mass communications to the Cuban people.

C. Covert intelligence and action originating inside Cuba.

D. The building of an adequate paramilitary force outside Cuba which called for cadres of leaders.

10. The original budget did not provide for the mounting of an organization of the type which eventually developed.

11. General Taylor then requested that the exact procedure followed in the clearance in this basic paper of 17 March 1960 be described.

12. Through 1958, 1959, 1960 and so far in 1961, weekly meetings have been held with the Assistant Secretary of State, his deputy, Special Assistant, and a representative from the Office of Special Operations in State, for the purpose of briefing them on the highlights of intelligence. Since the approval of the paper, they have also been kept informed in general terms of major operational aspects.

13. Mr. Bissell said that the language of the basic paper was general as we did not know then how large a force would be built up. During the autumn months of 1960, the military force took shape and the original concept went through subtle changes.

14. In June 1960, the FRD (Frente Revolucionario Democrático) came into being. This was one of the first orders of business. It was needed as an umbrella for the recruiting and training of a nucleus of a military force. The thinking then was that this military group would be used in small teams and serve as a catalyst for uprisings in Cuba.

15. The Attorney General then asked was it conceived that Castro could be overthrown with a catalyst force at that time. Mr. Bissell replied that the original concept was to generate various pressures on Castro including this force, and it was expected that the classic guerrilla pattern would be followed. The Attorney General then asked what step should we have taken at that time if we had known what we know now, and did we have any policy then. Mr. Dulles replied we did have a policy, which was to overthrow Castro in one way or another.

16. General Taylor asked if the plan was based on capabilities or on what we actually needed, to which Mr. Dulles replied in the negative. Mr. Bissell said we thought we could build up guerrilla resistance through teams being infiltrated to groups inside, which would lead to the formation of a large enough group to facilitate air drops of arms and other materiel.

17. Mr. Esterline said we had a navy of sorts which ran operations for the ex/infiltration of personnel and the introduction of arms and other materiel with better than 50% success. The buildup of guerrillas did not occur as expected and the number of successful drops was very low. This led to the further expansion of our military force to the point that it had gotten beyond the covert state about 1 November 1960.

18. General Taylor requested the date that military training began. He was informed that thirty (30) selected leaders were sent to a jungle area [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] in July 1960. These were all recruited and carefully screened by the FRD.

19. General Taylor asked if maximum effort was made to raise manpower. Mr. Esterline answered that at first we were very selective and the troops came in at a trickle. Later they came in at a greater rate than we could handle. Mr. Esterline described the method of selection and screening. General Taylor asked if figures were available as to how many ex-officers of the Cuban army were recruited and as complete a breakdown as possible of personnel.

20. Mr. Barnes stated that beginning about mid-November 1960, there were weekly discussions in the Special Group. Mr. Dulles said recommendations from the Task Force were considered at these meetings. Special Group references show that on 16 November 1960, the changing concept of the operation was noted by Under Secretary Livingston Merchant. By November 1960, it was recognized that guerrilla warfare operations in the Escambray were not going well; we were having difficulty with air drops and some change in approach was needed.

21. Mr. Bissell said that one of the problems at this time was the Department of State's concern about tainting Guatemala and Nicaragua if the size was augmented. The Agency was asked to consider with-drawing from Guatemala and setting up an American base. After further consideration, the use of a base in the continental U.S. was ruled out.

22. In answer to General Taylor's question as to what bottle-necks existed, it was stated that there were no bases immediately available for the training of large numbers of the troops and that recruits came in at a trickle until the political base was broadened.

23. The Attorney General asked what was the purpose of a Strike Force, to which Mr. Bissell replied they would administer a strike which could lead to a general uprising or a formation of larger guerrilla units in the mountains with which dissidents could join forces. The Strike Force was not in repudiation of the guerrilla concept but in addition to it.

24. Col. Hawkins stated there never was a clear-cut decision in his mind policy-wise to use a Strike Force.

25. Mr. Bissell read excerpts from a memorandum of 8 December 1960 of a meeting of the Special Group where a changing concept had been presented by various members of the Task Force. General Taylor said that all members of the board want a copy of this paper./4/

/4/Not found.

26. Among the items requested in this memorandum, officers from the Special Forces for the training of the Strike Force were authorized, the use of an air strip at Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua was approved, supply missions

were approved, and on Tuesday, 19 April, the use of American contract pilots was approved. Records are in General Lansdale's office.

27. General Taylor asked what discussions there were with President Eisenhower during this period and requested copies of any existing memoranda.

28. Mr. Dulles said that the only minutes of the meetings of the 5412 Group were prepared and kept by CIA. These could be consulted by authorized individuals of other departments.

29. Mr. Bissell quoted from the minutes of a 5412 meeting where doubt was expressed that a covert force could succeed and consequently overt action might be required. About 1 January 1961, recruiting was greatly stepped up.

30. In reply to General Taylor's question as to when did we reach concept number three, Mr. Esterline said about 1 March 1961. In January and February 1961, JCS teams were sent to the camps under special arrangement and furnished the necessary instructor force for training of a larger strike force.

31. The Board agreed that one set of papers only would be kept, these to be by General Taylor. Documents desired are:

[Here follows a list of the documents requested by the committee.]

#### **170. Editorial Note**

On April 22, 1961, Chairman Khrushchev wrote to President Kennedy in reply to Kennedy's letter of April 18 concerning Cuba (attachment to Document 130). In an 8-page letter, Khrushchev reiterated and expanded upon the charge of aggression against Cuba that he had leveled against the United States in his letter to Kennedy on April 18 (see Document 117). It had been proved beyond doubt, he stated, "that it was precisely the United States which prepared the intervention, financed its arming and transported the gangs of mercenaries that invaded the territory of Cuba." Khrushchev dismissed Kennedy's concern for "freedom" in Cuba as in fact concern on the part of the United States to reestablish control over the Cuban economy, and he again pledged Soviet support for the revolutionary government of Fidel Castro. As he had done in his previous letter, Khrushchev implied that the Soviet Union would retaliate against U.S. aggression in Cuba by menacing United States interests elsewhere: "there can be no stable place in the world if anywhere war is aflame." He stated, however, that the Soviet Union did not seek advantages or privileges in Cuba. "We have no bases in Cuba, and we do not intend to establish any." (Department of State, Presidential Correspondence: Lot 77 D 163, Pen Pal Series, 1961-1964, Special US-USSR File, 1961) For text of the letter, see *Foreign Relations*, 1961-1963, volume VI, pages 10-16.

The Department of State issued a statement on April 22 in response to the letter from Khrushchev that day. The Department dismissed the letter as unworthy of further reply: "The President will not be drawn into an extended public debate with the Chairman on the basis of this latest exposition of the Communist distortion of the basic concepts of the rights of man." (Department of State *Bulletin*, May 8, 1961, page 663)

#### **171. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All Posts in Latin America**

Washington, April 23, 1961, 3:58 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/4-2361. Secret; Priority; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Berle and cleared in L by Chayes and by Rusk. Repeated to Ciudad Trujillo.

1661. Re Depcirtel 1662./1/ Take early occasion to discuss with highest authorities available following problems flowing from Cuban situation:

/1/In circular telegram 1662 to all posts, the Department provided background information for high-level official discussion relating to the Bay of Pigs operation. The tenor of the information was that it was a Cuban operation in inspiration and personnel, with some official and private U.S. support. (Ibid.)

US deeply concerned over attempts of Sino-Soviet bloc to undermine free institutions everywhere. As new Administration has made amply clear it places maximum emphasis on this Hemisphere and its accelerated development in freedom. Unfortunately Hemisphere now facing unparalleled threat. US now considers dominance Castro regime by Sino-Soviet bloc established beyond possibility reasonable doubt by following facts:

Khrushchev's public message to President, /2/ disclosure Communist supplied arms and planes in large quantities, known presence of at least 300 bloc technicians including almost certainly military personnel, imposition of totalitarian methods in all branches of economic cultural life, calibration bloc and Commie apparatus in all parts of world with Castro regime's interests. Effect is to build up formidable armed power center in Hemisphere whose hostile attitude towards all other Hemisphere governments is openly proclaimed by regime's speeches and propaganda.

/2/See Document 170.

US now considers situation that of intrusion of extra-continental power into Hemisphere menacing Hemisphere peace and security and calling for measures of Hemispheric defense, defense of neighboring countries threatened and conceivably of self-defense of US.

Hemispheric defense matter for consideration under Rio Treaty and other Inter-American procedures but defense of threatened countries or of US may be subject of unilateral or bilateral action or group agreement between countries involved. In this case if OAS fails to take multilateral action or authorize action by one or more powers those governments threatened or in need of defense or prepared assume responsibility implied in obligations to oppose extra-continental aggression may act on their own singly or in group. Distinction between "intervention" in internal affairs of another State and defense against widening area of domination by extra-Hemispheric powers is vital one.

We plan going forward with vigorous preparations for Alliance for Progress meeting and implementation but clearly Alliance can be implemented only by free men in free Hemisphere.

Kindly obtain and report views of government to which accredited and get feeling regarding either (1) meetings of Foreign Ministers or (2) special session OAS or (3) organization consultation Rio Treaty under Article 6 on ground capture and use of Castro government by bloc threatens security of American states and peace of Americas.

FYI. Sentiment of several Latin American Ambassadors here suggests their governments hope for and would approve extremely vigorous action by US. Report promptly as our line of action will be decided quickly. Dept will carry on parallel conversations with Ambassadors here. /3/ End FYI.

/3/The Department sent out another circular telegram on April 24 expressing concern over the continued transit of the territory of countries friendly to the United States by Soviet bloc aircraft en route to Havana. (Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/4-2461)

Rusk

**172. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to Secretary of Defense McNamara**



Washington, April 24, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Top Secret. Also sent to Rusk and Dulles.

## SUBJECT

### Notes on Cuba Policy

Herewith, as promised, some notes on a possible approach to the problem of Cuba. You may wish to consider these tentative notions as you develop your own views in coming days.

1. The Approach. The line of approach suggested has these two characteristics:

a. it would deal separately with each of the five separate threatening dimensions of the problem represented by Castro.

b. it would deal with these problems in ways consistent with--and, if possible--reinforcing to our world-wide commitments and, especially, to our relations with other Latin American states.

2. The Five Threats. The argument begins by identifying these five threats to us represented by the Castro regime.

a. it might join with the USSR in setting up an offensive air or missile base.

b. it might build up sufficient conventional military strength to trigger an arms race in the hemisphere and threaten the independence of other Latin American nations.

c. it might develop its covert subversive network in ways which would threaten other Latin American nations from within.

d. its ideological contours are a moral and political offense to us; and we are committed, by one means or another, to remove that offense, including our commitment to the Cuban refugees among us.

e. its ideological contours and success may tend to inflame disruptive forces in the rest of Latin America, accentuating existing economic, social, and political tensions which we, in any case, confront.

Notes on possible lines of action towards each follow.

3. The Threat of an Offensive Base. Following the opening in Khru-shchev's latest note,<sup>/1/</sup> Thompson should be instructed, at an early but cooler moment, to tell Gromyko: we note with satisfaction the Soviet commitment to forego an offensive base in Cuba; that, in line with the President's speech to the newspaper publishers,<sup>/2/</sup> this is one of the minimum conditions for world stability. A further action on this threat is noted in paragraph 4, below.

<sup>/1/</sup>See Document 170.

<sup>/2/</sup>See footnote 1, Document 160.

4. The Threat of an Arms Build-up. An OAS meeting should be called soon, but after careful diplomatic preparation. The objective would be to achieve common assertion of the following propositions:

a. The constructive tasks of this Hemisphere--symbolized by the Alliance for Progress--are such that we cannot

afford to divert excessive resources to arms, picking up here from the proposal of Alessandri for hemispheric arms limitation.

b. We are not prepared to see extra-hemispheric military forces emplaced in the Western Hemisphere.

On the basis of such declarations, the OAS would immediately mount arrangements for: hemispheric arms limitation; cooperative military arrangements to cope with any military extension of Castro's power; a demand that Castro accept arms limitation appropriate to the size of his country, under the common rules of the game; an assertion that the hemisphere will jointly act to prevent the creation of a foreign military base or other form of intrusion into the hemisphere.

If Castro failed to play, we would move towards a selective OAS blockade of Cuba, designed to prevent arms shipments to him by sea, if not by air.

5. The Threat of the Castro and Other Communist Networks. Quite independent of the OAS actions suggested under 4, above, we should begin covert cooperation with Latin American states to build up knowledge of the Communist network and to develop common counter-measures. Latin American governments will be able to work with us seriously to the extent that the effort is not made an overt political issue. Moreover, this is mainly a professional, not a political, job.

6. The Ideological Threat of the Castro Regime Itself. Here the first step is to make a fresh analysis, on the basis of all the rich intelligence available to us, of the vulnerabilities of the Castro regime. This involves two things. First, a detailed assessment of the Cuban order of battle; of Castro's control mechanism; of attitudes of key individuals located at strategic points in the regime; of class and regional attitudes towards the regime and recent and foreseeable trends in those attitudes. We need a map of the cohesive forces and tensions within the Castro system. Second, we require a systematic analysis of various alternative means of exploiting in our interest the weaknesses of the regime that lie within our present capabilities or capabilities that might be developed.

It is possible that we shall conclude that an invasion of one sort or another is the only way to unseat the regime; but alternative forms of action may emerge. In any case, it is essential that we think again before acting in the old grooves.

7. The Threat of Castroism in Other Latin American States. The roots of Castroism lie in Latin American poverty, social inequality, and that form of xenophobic nationalism which goes with a prior history of inferiority on the world scene. The vulnerability of the Latin American populations to this form of appeal will depend on the pace of economic growth; the pace at which social inequality is reduced; and the pace at which the other Latin American nations move towards what they regard as dignified partnership with the U.S. What is required here is a radical acceleration and raising of sights in the programs being launched within the Alliance for Progress.

8. A Contingency Plan. We do not know what Castro's policy towards the U.S. will be; nor do we know what Soviet policy towards Cuba will be. A situation may arise at any moment when it will be required in the national interest to eliminate that regime by U.S. force. A fully developed contingency plan is evidently required.

9. The Ottawa Speech. If we can develop and agree a new line of approach to the Cuban problem in coming days, one possible occasion for suggesting some of its elements might be the President's address in Ottawa, scheduled (I believe) for 17 May. This would be particularly appropriate if we propose to induce Canada to join in the OAS. Other occasions, however, could easily be found; and it is, of course, essential that we make various soundings in the Hemisphere before committing ourselves to this course, notably those outlined under paragraphs 4 and 5.

10. A Final Point. In two of the four areas where we inherited Communist enclaves of power in the Free World on January 20, we have, initially, not done terribly well. Laos, at best, will yield in the short run a muddy and

weak Free World position; in Cuba our first effort at a solution failed. There is building up a sense of frustration and a perception that we are up against a game we can't handle. This frustration and simple anger could lead us to do unwise things or exert scarce national effort and resources in directions which would yield no significant results, while diverting us from our real problems. There is one area where success against Communist techniques is conceivable and where success is desperately required in the Free World interest. That area is Viet-Nam. A maximum effort--military, economic, political, and diplomatic--is required there; and it is required urgently.

It is not simple or automatic that we can divert anxieties, frustrations, and anger focussed on a place 90 miles off our shores to a place 7,000 miles away. On the other hand, I believe that the acute domestic tension over Cuba can be eased in the short run if we can get the OAS to move with us along the lines suggested here; and a clean-cut success in Viet-Nam would do much to hold the line in Asia while permitting us--and the world--to learn how to deal with indirect aggression.

In the end--given our kind of society--we must learn to deal overtly with major forms of covert Communist aggression. And we must teach the Free World how to do it. The combination of the suggested approaches to Cuba and Viet-Nam could help./3/

/3/On April 26, Paul Nitze sent a memorandum to McNamara discussing the Cuban aspects of Rostow's April 24 memorandum. He concluded: "The suggestions which have merit are the proposed actions (a) to quietly build up the internal capabilities of Latin American countries, (b) to develop all possible intelligence on the Castro regime, (c) to exploit this intelligence, (d) to develop a contingency plan, and (e) to think again before acting in the old grooves." The suggestions that he felt were of doubtful merit were: "(a) to deal separately with individual dimensions of the Castro problem, (b) to make consistency with our other policies a criterion of action against Cuba, and (c) to make public statements to the Soviets and to the world indicating the approach we intend to take toward Cuba." (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive))

### **173. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 24, 1961.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Secret. Prepared by Colonel Hawkins.

#### **SUBJECT**

Factors which Hampered Preparations for and Conduct of Effective Paramilitary Operations (Cuba)/1/

/1/On May 5 Hawkins drafted a 48-page memorandum for the record that detailed the background and development of the Bay of Pigs operation. A copy is in Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/DDP Files: Job 78-01450R, Box 1, Area Activity-Western Hemisphere-Cuba.

1. The following factors tended to limit the effectiveness of paramilitary operations:

a. Lack of clear-cut, detailed policy directives, in writing, from proper governmental authority. (The March 17 directive/2/ was general in nature. Additional written directives should have been issued from time to time setting forth in detail concept, missions, objectives and authorized procedures. Verbal instructions do not suffice in matters of great import.)

/2/An apparent reference to the program of covert action against Cuba approved by President Eisenhower on March 17, 1960.

b. Slowness of governmental machinery in resolving policy questions once presented. (For example, two and a half months were requested to obtain the services of Special Forces training teams after original request by the Paramilitary Staff. Results of Special Group meetings were often inconclusive. Proceedings were verbal and minutes were recorded by individual departments. This led to misunderstanding. The Group itself did not have authority to resolve major questions, and there were no written policy directives forthcoming after meetings were conducted.)

c. Over Centralization of Control. (Examples: The Special Group had to be consulted before launching each over-flight mission. Tactical headquarters were in Washington, whereas it has long been recognized that tactical operations must be controlled by a tactical headquarters in the field or at sea. It would have been better to place paramilitary operations under control of a special task force within the Unified Command. This task force should have included representatives from Army, Navy, Air Forces, Marine Corps and C.I.A.--all under a naval commander, since the target country was an island.)

d. Lack of adequate organization, procedures, equipment, facilities and staff within C.I.A. for management of paramilitary operations. (The organization and procedures of C.I.A. are not suitable for control of paramilitary operations and its paramilitary staff is very small. C.I.A. must call upon the Defense Department for equipment, supplies and personnel to establish training bases, conduct training and prepare plans. It would be better to assign paramilitary responsibilities to the Defense Department which has vast resources, both human and materiel, for such purposes.)

e. Failure to approve use of U.S. bases for training. (The paramilitary training base in Guatemala was entirely unsatisfactory. Troops had to live in prison-camp conditions and there were no adequate training areas or facilities available. Location of the base in Guatemala also introduced political complications and created tremendous logistical problems which were very difficult for C.I.A. to handle.)

f. Failure to use U.S. bases for air logistical and tactical operations. (The air base in Guatemala was at too great a distance for satisfactory supply flights for support of agents and guerrilla organizations. The air base in Nicaragua was too distant for satisfactory B-26 operations. Two sorties per day were the maximum that could be programmed, and pilot fatigue made this impossible for a period longer than one or two days. Location of the air bases in third countries complicated security and political problems and increased the likelihood that use of the bases would be denied soon after commencement of operations. Location of bases in third countries also multiplied logistical problems.)

g. Denial of the request to use American contract pilots for aerial supply of agents and guerrillas. (Cuban pilots demonstrated at an early date their inability to fly successful missions. Of twenty-seven attempted only four were successful. American pilots, on the other hand, have demonstrated their ability in this field in many areas of the world, working with a variety of indigenous guerrilla forces. The failure to supply guerrilla organizations was a critical failure in the over-all operation.)

h. Denial of the request to use American contract pilots for B-26 strikes. (The paramilitary staff expressed in writing on January 4, 1961/3/ its doubts regarding the ability of the Cuban pilots to conduct satisfactory tactical air operations. Request for use of American pilots had been previously made to the Special Group which authorized their hiring but not their employment.)

/3/See Document 9.

i. Long delay in obtaining Special Forces personnel for infantry training. (This request was submitted by the paramilitary staff on October 28, 1960. Personnel were not made available until January 12, 1961.)

j. Rejection of the preferred invasion plan (Trinidad). (This plan was recommended by the paramilitary staff as the best possible plan and was endorsed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the plan most likely to succeed.)

k. Restrictions imposed upon the conduct of effective tactical air operations. (The State Department from the outset opposed any tactical air operations. The paramilitary staff, on the other hand, consistently informed all authorities concerned that the operation could not be conducted unless the opposing air force was knocked out before the landing, and unless the landing force was continually supported by effective tactical air operations as long as it was in a combat situation.

The preferred plan presented by the paramilitary staff called for full scale air attacks on all airfields, using all available aircraft, commencing at dawn of D-1 and involving another full scale sortie in the afternoon and continuation of full scale operations on D-Day and thereafter.

Political decisions led eventually to a half strength attack on D-2 on only three airfields. After this strike, photographic interpretations and pilot debriefing indicated that the opposition still retained a number of offensive aircraft in operational condition.

This disadvantage could still have been overcome if full scale attacks on all airfields at dawn on D-Day had been permitted as planned.

Cancellation at the last moment, while the troops were already off the beaches preparing to land, of the air attacks planned for D-Day doomed the operation to failure. The paramilitary staff predicted loss of all shipping when informed of this decision at about 2230 on the night of the landing.

If this decision had been communicated to the paramilitary staff a few hours earlier, the operation would have been halted and the ships withdrawn with troops on board.

Restrictions on the use of napalm also contributed to failure. Use of this weapon against concentrated aircraft, tanks and trucks clearly visible in available photographs could have been a decisive factor. For example, photographs showed one concentrated tank park with 36 tanks and a truck park with 150 trucks.

Political considerations regarding use of air led to the selection of the Zapata area as an alternative of the preferred plan. A political requirement was established to seize an airfield capable of supporting B-26 operations. A study of all Cuba showed that there was no airfield that the Cuban force could hope to seize and hold except in Zapata.

The curtailment of tactical air must be regarded as the one factor which insured failure of the operation.)

l. Failure to include all members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at high level meetings in which military matters were to be discussed. (The practice of including only the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at such meetings is, in the opinion of the writer, dangerous. It cannot be expected that any single military officer can advise on all the technical aspects of air, sea and ground warfare. The Cuban operation was essentially a seaborne invasion. Such operations are a specialty of the Navy and Marine Corps. Therefore, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations, if present at all meetings, would have been able to contribute invaluable advice at the proper time.

It is the hope of this writer that serious consideration will be given to the question posed above as military matters of greater significance are dealt with in the future.)

J. Hawkins/4/

Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps

Chief, WH/4/PM

/4/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

**174. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 24, 1961.

//Source: National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Cuba, Memoranda of Meetings. Top Secret. Drafted by [text not declassified].

SUBJECT

Second Meeting of the Green Study Group

TIME AND PLACE

1020-1700 hours, 24 April 1961, CIA Administration Building

PARTICIPANTS

Study Group Members

General Maxwell D. Taylor

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy

Admiral Arleigh Burke

Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Allen W. Dulles

Department of Defense

General David W. Gray

Commander Mitchell

Colonel Stanley W. Beerli

Colonel Ingelido

Central Intelligence Agency

General C.P. Cabell

Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

Colonel J.C. King

Mr. C. Tracy Barnes

Mr. Jacob D. Esterline

Colonel Jack Hawkins

[Here follows discussion of record-keeping procedures.]

7. Mr. Bissell then commenced the discussion by resuming the chronological account of the development of the Project. He said on Saturday, 22 April, a review had been made of November and December, 1960, developments. By early January, the original concept of a 300-man force broken up into small teams for infiltration--after possible training in the United States--became shifted to the concept of a much stronger strike force. To Gen. Taylor's query as to whether this shift was covered by a formal paper, Mr. Bissell replied that there was no formal recording of the shift. The expansion of the forces in Guatemala was accelerated and on 12 January 1961, we received 38 officers from the Special Forces Group. Following the arrival of these officers at the camp, the character of the training changed.

8. At the end of January, 28 January to be precise, the President was briefed on our Agency plan. At this time, little more was involved than a presentation, largely oral, of the status and a decision was obtained to continue with the activities but there was no implication that military action would be undertaken. Gen. Taylor asked if this was the first time the plan had been presented to the President and Mr. Bissell said yes, but added that the President did not offer an opinion concerning it. Mr. Bissell said we were seeking authority to continue all our activities--overflights, etc. and to call attention to the fact that we were recruiting and moving men and accumulating material and expending money against mere contingencies, and that we were anxious to present our plan to Gen. Lemnitzer. (Gen. Gray was asked to provide a copy of this plan from his file. He remarked that this was the plan which the JCS had approved on 3 February 1961.)/1/

/1/JCSM-57-61; for text, see Document 35.

9. Mr. Bissell stated that on or about 17 February 1961, another meeting, including the President, was held./2/ By this time the JCS had evaluated the military plan which had been developed by Col. Hawkins. Gen. Taylor asked if this plan was considerably different from the final plan adopted and was answered affirmatively. At this February meeting, we felt a sense of urgency as the military plan called for a D-Day of 5 March. At the 17 February meeting, it became clear that there would be no immediate decision and that the plan would have to "slip" by one month. It was recalled that the President, the Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, Mr. Bissell, Mr. Barnes, Gen. Gray, Col. Hawkins, Mr. Mann and Mr. Berle and possibly others, were present. Gen. Taylor asked if the outcome of that meeting was to decide to let D-Day slip and Mr. Bissell answered affirmatively adding that certain questions had been raised with respect to military implications.

/2/See Document 48.

10. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper he had prepared on 11 March/3/ which was a statement of the status of preparations, actions, timing and possible alternate courses of actions. This was presented at a meeting attended by much the same persons who attended the 17 February meeting./4/ At this juncture, Mr. Dulles called to the attention of the committee a copy of Mr. Bundy's record of action of the 28 January meeting (of the NSC?)/5/ He stated he had no authority to disseminate copies but he would read it, which he did. The paper reported that the Director of Central Intelligence had reported on the situation in Cuba, that Cuba was rapidly becoming a communist state and that the United States had undertaken a program of covert action, propaganda, sabotage and assistance to exiles. The paper reported that the present estimate of the Department of Defense was that no program existed at this time which had capability of correcting the situation. The President, according to the document, authorized the continued activities of the Agency, including overflights. The Department of State was instructed to propose actions which could be taken in concert with other countries of the hemisphere, such as Brazil and Colombia. Mr. Dulles read the paper in full and stated it was available at any time to members of the committee.

/3/Document 58.

/4/See Documents 59 and 60.

/5/See Documents 30 and 31. The January 28 meeting was not an NSC meeting.

11. Mr. Bissell read from a memorandum of the 11 March meeting concerning the status of immediate alternative courses of action:

A. Use of force in such a way as to minimize appearance of an invasion, including amphibious infiltrations by night.

B. Commit the PM force to a surprise attack, accompanied by use of tactical air force.

C. Employ two successive landings--one a diversionary force to be followed by landing of the main force 24 hours later.

D. Send the force into an inaccessible area where it could hold the beachhead for considerable time.

"A" and "D" were included because at the 17 February meeting, the President and the Secretary had urged an examination of all possible alternatives. No affirmative decision came out of the 11 March meeting.

12. Mr. Dulles then proceeded to read the statement of action of the meeting of 8 February./6/ (A discussion of the two February dates ensued--8 February and 17 February--with Mr. Bissell conceding that there was no meeting on 17 February, but that the paper had been prepared for a meeting which had been cancelled or postponed.)/7/ Mr. Dulles stated that the President was not present at the 8 February meeting/8/ but the discussion resulted in a decision by the President to authorize the encouragement of the establishment of an exile Junta and Revolutionary Council and discussion with exile leaders looking toward such a development. No other action pending further word from the President, was authorized.

/6/See Document 40.

/7/The meeting scheduled for February 17 was postponed until February 18; see Document 48.

/8/President Kennedy was present at the February 8 meeting.

13. Mr. Dulles then read from a paper covering the 11 March meeting, noting the President had decided on the following courses of action:

(1) Every effort should be made to assist the Cubans to form a political organization. This is to include publicity for the leading political figures.

(2) The United States Government should prepare a "White Paper" on Cuba and assist the Cubans to do the same.

(3) The Department of State would explore possibilities of a de-marche in the United Nations (?)./9/

/9/The question mark in the source text indicates some question as to the accuracy of the statement. According to the available record of the March 11 meeting, the statement is accurate as written.

(4) President expects to offer United States' support for Cubans to return to their homeland. However, best plan for achieving this has not yet been presented. New proposals for action should be submitted.



Gen. Taylor commented that it would appear the President was favorable to the concept but was not satisfied with the proposals to date.

14. Mr. Bissell then read an account of a 15 March meeting./10/ According to this paper the plan for the Cuban operation submitted on 7 March 1961/11/ was unacceptable as it was not a program of infiltration but a World War II type of assault. That in order for a plan to be politically acceptable it must:

/10/See Document 65.

/11/An apparent reference to the CIA paper of March 11; see Document 58.

A. Be an unspectacular landing at night in an area where there was a minimum likelihood of opposition.

B. If ultimate success would require tactical air support, it should appear to come from a Cuban air base. Therefore, territory seized should contain a suitable airfield.

The paper contained a brief outline of a second military plan prepared by Col. Hawkins which was approximately the plan later adopted.

15. Mr. Bissell next read from notes on a meeting held on 16 March./12/ at which time two operations were proposed:

/12/See Document 66.

A. Trinidad--Probably an opposed landing in daylight with air support required.

B. Zapata--Unopposed landing with no tactical air until opposed.

Consequently, as of 16 March, there were two plans still under consideration as indicated above. Between the 16th of March and the end of March another postponement was called due to the visit of Prime Minister Macmillan. The target date for action was postponed to 10 April, later to 15 April and finally to 17 April.

16. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper covering a meeting held on 12 April./13/ By this time, the plan had crystallized and this covered the concept of the operation:

/13/See Document 92.

1. Modification of air plans to provide for air operations limited basis on D-2, and again on D-Day. Shortly after the first strike on D-2, Cuban pilots would land at Miami. Other details not discussed.

2. Diversion or cancellation. Not feasible to halt embarkation but if necessary, ships could be diverted.

Gen. Taylor asked why it was not feasible to halt the embarkation and Mr. Bissell replied that the staging and loading of the troops was already underway. Mr. Bissell said that approval was given on continuing stages but that on April 12, D minus 5, the President still had the power to stop it. Staging started D minus 7 and 2/3s had already been moved from camps and first vessel sailed on D minus 6 and the last on D minus 4. Mr. Kennedy commented that the plan appears to have been approved but the "GO" signal not given. He asked with whom the plan had been coordinated. Mr. Dulles stated that an Internal Departmental Task Force had been set up early in March 1961 and various tasks were assigned to the separate departments. The IDTF was composed of representatives from State, Defense and CIA, specifically, Mr. Braddock, former Charge at Habana representing State, Gen. Gray representing Defense, and Mr. Barnes representing CIA. At the end of the 16 March meeting agreement was reached to set up the IDTF. Mr. Bissell said it was the sense of the 16 March meeting that the

Zapata plan was preferable. Admiral Burke commented that the JCS did not agree at that time. Mr. Bissell stated there was a review of the plan by the JCS and that Gen. Gray would later elaborate on that.

17. Mr. Bissell stated that by 12 April the plan had crystallized but we still had no "go ahead" signal, whereupon Mr. Kennedy asked how we came to that conclusion and how was it actually worked out. He asked if anyone formally presented a plan for approval. When actually did the President and others examine the plan and give it their approval? Gen. Gray stated that 16 March was the date. Gen. Taylor asked if it was approved on that date and Mr. Bissell stated it was approved as the plan to be implemented but that no "go ahead" signal was given. Gen. Taylor inquired as to what the JCS had done with respect to the plan and Adm. Burke replied that on 15 March 1961, the JCS was briefed on the alternate plan and that the evaluation concluded that the alternate Zapata plan was considered the most feasible. He then started to discuss the three alternatives when Gen. Gray interrupted with the suggestion that the discussion was getting out of step; that the Trinidad plan should be discussed first and then the three alternative plans.

18. Col. Hawkins' Presentation--Before going into the details of the Trinidad plan, Col. Hawkins said he would like to provide background information showing what factors were available and factors not available in connection with planning of that Project. He stated that when one is confronted with the requirement for non-attributability you introduce tremendous difficulties for a covert plan. For example, in a regular military operation, you know what forces you have, bases, state of training, etc., but in a PM covert plan you don't know much of anything. He said that last September when he joined the Project, the question of bases for the strike force and for supplying guerrillas in the mountains was not resolved. The only bases available were two bases in Guatemala. These were training bases, a shelf on the side of a volcano with room for 200 men at most (we ended up with 1400). These were the training facilities--which were very poor.

19. The air base in Guatemala was 750 miles from Central Cuba--too far for supply operations. C-46's could not reach Eastern Cuba with satisfactory loads. C-54's could. The distance was too great for tactical air operations using B-26 or smaller planes. All sorts of studies were made to locate a satisfactory base. The United States was ruled out but Col. Hawkins did not agree with the reasoning therefor. *[1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]* Consequently, we had no base from which to conduct satisfactory operations. However, we later learned that President Somoza of Nicaragua would cooperate and we selected Puerto Cabezas as the site since it had an airfield, dock facilities, and other advantages. We were still 500 miles from Central Cuba, still far but feasible.

20. Late in the autumn of 1960 we feared we would lose Guatemala bases and recruiting stopped, and we looked around for other bases. We could never be sure how many troops we could get as the recruiting was often slowed down due to political infighting of exile leaders.

21. Training--We did not have facilities for PM training. Last fall we only had four CIA personnel. On 28 October, Col. Hawkins requested three Special Forces teams--a total of 38 people--for training the forces in Guatemala. Because of political considerations, it was two and a half months, 12 January 1961, before they got there. We were facing amphibious operations, the most difficult of all military operations, and we had no ships. The question was: should we buy ships, recruit crews, or should we charter ships? We finally bought two LCI's in Miami, not fitted for landing troops but we modified them, we recruited Cuban crews, it took months (until January 1961) to get the ships to sea. The crews were made up of former Cuban navy personnel. We also recruited American contract personnel for these ships, the two LCI's. These two ships could carry only 150 men so this did not answer our problem. We had to charter ships. We contacted a Cuban ship owner named Garcia who had six small freighters of the 1500-2000 ton variety. This man, Garcia, offered the most and asked the least of all the Cubans we were in touch with. He asked that we cover the operating expenses. At first we wanted two ships for our 750-man force. We armed the LCI's and kept them as command ships. We also used them for other operations such as the raid on the Santiago refinery.

22. Air Picture--This was a problem in the autumn of 1960. We had few trained crews. There was always the question of whether the Cubans would measure up. We didn't know whether the air force was adequate. The

covert approach is extremely difficult. PM operations of any size at all cannot be covert. Col. Hawkins commented that we may have to adjust our thinking to the need for coming out in the open as our enemies are doing.

23. Policy Questions--Policy questions had a bearing on our plans. Some unanswered questions by early January were these:

Will a strike be conducted?

Will an air operation be permitted?

Will American pilots be used?

Will Nicaragua be used as a base?

Col. Hawkins then read from a paper dated 4 January 1961,/14/ which he had prepared. This paper outlined the current status of our operation and set forth policy questions which had to be resolved. (Col. Hawkins provided a copy of this paper for inclusion in the record. Consequently, no attempt is made to reproduce it in these minutes.)

/14/Document 9.

24. From the above mentioned paper, Col. Hawkins outlined the concept of the strike operation:

1. Securing of a small lodgement on Cuban soil by 750-man force.
2. This to be preceded by tactical air strike which would destroy the air force, naval vessels.
3. Following this, other military targets would be attacked, such as tank parks, artillery parks, motor transport, etc.
4. Close air support for strike force on D-Day and thereafter.
5. The initial mission was to seize a small area preferably with an air field and access to the sea, with contingency plans for air drops if field and port not available.
6. Force should try to survive and not break out until time opportune or U.S. intervened.
7. Expected widespread popular support and general uprisings.
8. If this did not develop, there was the possibility that the fighting might bring on assistance from other Latin American countries and the U.S. with the resultant fall of Castro.
9. Plan called for continuation of regular PM operations: sabotage, guerrillas, etc.
10. If driven from the beachhead, the force would continue guerrilla operations.

25. Gen. Taylor stated that this concept raised fundamental questions. What was the magnitude of the air cover you expected and did you expect to stay on shore indefinitely, and if so what size force did you plan to employ? Col. Hawkins said that the force was to have been composed of 750 men and that they expected to have an air force of 15 B-26's, whereupon Gen. Taylor questioned whether 15 B-26's could have done all that was expected. Col. Hawkins explained that the plan was to eliminate the enemy air force. We anticipated that he had twelve operational planes, including six B-26's, 4 T-33's, and from two to four Sea Furies. This turned out to be a fairly

accurate estimate. We felt that fifteen B-26's could do the job.

26. Gen. Taylor asked on what intelligence did we base our belief that there would be popular uprisings. Col. Hawkins said that we had our own agents up and down the length of Cuba--some 60 to 70 agents including 25 radio operators--who gave us a picture of large members of people begging for arms in order to fight Castro. We had difficulty supplying the arms via the air drops. The Cuban pilots were not sufficiently qualified for this work. The flights were rarely opposed but the aircraft encountered difficulty in finding the drop zones. (Mr. Esterline commented that at no time were our surface craft interdicted by Cuban navy craft and surface deliveries were much more successful.)

27. Col. Hawkins then quoted other extracts from his paper of January 4, summarizing the size of our air force--ten B-26's but only five pilots; seven C-54's; a few C-46's--with grossly inadequate transport crews. Five hundred Cubans training in Guatemala. FRD (Frente) recruitment not going satisfactorily. Special recruiting teams being sent from camps to Miami to assist. Expect to have 750 men in time but unless Special Forces training they could not be ready before late 1961. All this time, Col. Hawkins said, Castro was building up his military capability and in September we thought he still had 75% of the population behind him, although his popularity was then declining. Gen. Taylor asked in retrospect what would have been the best timing (for the strike to have occurred?) and Col. Hawkins replied early March.

28. Col. Hawkins said at the time of the preparation of his paper of 4 January we did not know whether the new administration would approve the project and this needed to be resolved immediately in order that the operation could be stopped and considerable expense saved. He therefore recommended that the Director of CIA attempt to get a decision from the President-Elect. Col. Hawkins felt that if the decision was made in mid-January the force could be ready to move by the end of February. We were then under pressure from the Guatemalan government. Time was not entirely in our favor. We anticipated that Castro would soon have a jet capability. Heavy equipment was being assembled throughout the country and the establishment of a police state was advancing rapidly. In his paper he recommended that the operation be carried out not later than 1 March 1961.

29. Col. Hawkins terminated reading his paper. Mr. Dulles asked what disposition was made of it and Col. Hawkins said it was directed to Chief of WH/4 (chief of the Cuban operation). Mr. Esterline, C/WH/4, said he directed it to higher authority. Gen. Taylor asked for the identity of the higher authority and was told it went to the Chief of the Division (Col. King), the Assistant Deputy for Plans (Mr. Barnes), and the Deputy for Plans (Mr. Bissell). Mr. Bissell stated that the paper did not go much further than his office, and added that we did eventually get the air crews, the B-26's, etc. Avon Park was readied. American contract pilots were readied. He stated that with respect to the major policy decisions raised by Col. Hawkins, these issues will emerge when limitations on use of the tactical air force are discussed. Mr. Esterline commented that we battled with State for months and we only got watered down more and more for our efforts.

30. Mr. Kennedy asked why, if Col. Hawkins' presumptions and conclusions were correct, and if State and others felt it wasn't feasible or desirable, wasn't the project called off? Mr. Bissell explained that what actually happened was that Col. Hawkins' position was stated and first there was agreement on air strikes on D minus 2, D minus 1, and D-Day; and then later an absolute minimum calling for strikes on D minus 1 and D-Day. And what finally was called for was a maximum effort on D-Day.

31. Mr. Kennedy asked Col. Hawkins if he would have approved the operation as it ultimately came to occur--that is, would he have or did he approve of the watered down plan? Col. Hawkins replied that he did not approve but must say this with qualifications. He said he always maintained that we must get rid of the opposing air force. He insisted the three major airfields must be attacked. He was not in favor of limiting the number of aircraft (he eventually got the number raised)--he was not satisfied with the limited application of air power and he thought we would have had a satisfactory sweep on D-Day of all the Cuban airfields. Gen. Taylor asked how many planes we had on D-Day and Col. Hawkins stated fifteen. Admiral Burke asked if all the factors raised by Col. Hawkins were ever listed in check off form--and were they checked off as achieved? The reply was that we

had no formalized check list but we knew where we stood as we went along. Col. Hawkins said we had the capability on the morning of D-Day with the 15 B-26's but we weren't given an opportunity to do the job.

32. Col. Beerli stated that prior to D-Day we had an accurate count of the enemy air force and knew where every craft was kept. He had a total of 36. Col. Beerli described them by category. We estimated 50% of these planes were in flying condition. On the D minus 2 strike we destroyed over 70% of their air power. We had 15 planes left to employ to knock out the remainder. *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* showed the enemy planes were concentrated at San Antonio. On D-Day one Sea Fury was knocked out and another fell into the ocean. They were down to three T-33's. Gen. Taylor asked then why did the strike fail? Col. Beerli replied that we had strikes planned for San Antonio, Libertad, and 11 other targets, but were not permitted to carry them out. Gen. Taylor commented that we had done well with our air force and Col. Beerli replied that we had them pinned down and we based this belief on *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* and photography. He added that every aircraft we lost was due to the T-33's. Mr. Kennedy asked how many aircraft did Castro have on D-Day. Col. Beerli said he had 2 Sea Furies, B-26's and 3 T-33's. Col. Hawkins repeated that we had planned a fifteen plane raid at dawn on D-Day but were not permitted to carry it out. Mr. Dulles asked if subsequent events bore out the correctness of our air O/B and Col. Hawkins replied in the affirmative.

33. Mr. Kennedy asked for information on the report that MIG's were in the air. Col. King said that MIG's did not appear until the final date. They may have been in crates and quickly assembled. Mr. Dulles commented that aerial photography never picked up any MIG's. Mr. Bissell said we had no reports from agents of MIG air flights. Gen. Taylor asked concerning the characteristics of the T-33's and was told they are jet trainers armed with two 50 cal. machine guns. Gen. Gray said that on D plus 1 a request was made of our destroyers to attempt to locate the field. Col. King said the report of MIG's in crates indicated San Julian air base. Col. Beerli terminated his remarks by saying that as of D-Day the air picture was in our favor.

34. Trinidad Plan. Col. Hawkins then proceeded to discuss the Trinidad Plan. He utilized charts showing the composition of the strike force and maps of the areas discussed. First he described the composition and organization of the assault force and how it was trained. He said at first there was no one to train the troops so he sent Col. Egan and Capt. Monk with directives to conduct individual training, small unit training, etc., and an 8 week course was provided. With large influx of recruits, concurrent recruit, small unit and combined training had to be conducted. Gen. Taylor asked where they found room in view of Col. Hawkins' previous statement of the small shelf on the volcano side, and Col. Hawkins explained that we finally got permission to use a finca belonging to Mr. Alejos of Guatemala for training purposes. However, firing practice was done in the mountains.

35. Noting that tanks appeared on the chart, Mr. Kennedy asked if tanks did get ashore and if they were camouflaged or disguised. Col. Hawkins said that tanks were put ashore and Gen. Gray added that these were the same type of tanks given to other countries. Col. Hawkins stated that we trained the tank crews at Ft. Knox and we had no trouble whatsoever. The Cubans knew where they were being trained and Col. Hawkins said that was a good example of how our own soil is better suited for training from security and other standpoints.

36. In arriving at the Trinidad plan, Col. Hawkins said that he studied the entire island carefully. He then decided that the Trinidad area with the nearby Escambray mountains was the place. Gen. Taylor asked if he had the benefit of photography in reaching his decision and Col. Hawkins said he had no photography until one flight was flown in November with not too satisfactory results. He then proceeded to describe the Trinidad area--the town of some 18,000 population, the nearby port to the south, named Casilda--with its docks--many good beaches for our purposes--good guerrilla country nearby with hills of 2,500-4,000 feet in which from 600-1,000 guerrillas were reported to be active who had been able to maintain themselves for six months, but were eventually eliminated. Although these were small groups with little equipment and poor supplies, it nevertheless took Castro six months to eliminate them. Therefore in considering the Trinidad plan it was felt that the force could if necessary move to the mountains and could exist in such terrain indefinitely. There were no approaches from the North that Castro could use, only other main road was from Santa Clara--this had a bridge over a river and a railroad bridge--and we were planning to knock out these two bridges. Other approach was from

Cienfuegos--with bridges. The area was suitable for isolation. Also there was reason to believe that the Trinidad population was friendly. They had been supporting the guerrillas in the hills. We expected to pick up recruits from the Trinidad civilian population and we planned to bring in arms packs for 4,000 men and rapidly expand our forces. Another advantage if the force succeeded in maintaining itself and eventually breaking out was the possibility that we could have severed Cuba in the middle, creating great problems for Castro.

37. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the date of the plan. Col. Hawkins said it was written in January and the JCS was briefed on the plan on 31 January. He remarked that the JCS, in an independent study, had also selected the Trinidad site as the most suitable for this type of operation. Gen. Taylor asked how did the JCS get into this matter and Gen. Gray replied that the JCS had already been asked to come up with a likely spot and that they had in mind a small invasion force.

38. Col. Hawkins then reviewed the strike plan as follows:

D-Day--landing

Prior D-Day--destruction air force

D-minus 1--attack aircraft on ground--also tank parks, artillery, etc.

H minus 6--feinting operation off the West Coast of Pinar del Rio--destroy bridges

H Hour--Assault force lands on beaches--seizes high ground--another company moves inland and establishes self on forward slopes--another company on a separate beach--clear Casilda--airborne troops drop in heights over Trinidad.

39. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the known presence of Castro forces in the area. Col. Hawkins said we could never pin down the exact location of his forces. There were some 40,000 militia in the general area--with about 5,000 militia encircling the Escambray mountains. These were not making an aggressive effort to join battle with the guerrillas but would catch them as they came out for food. We evaluated the militia fighting qualities on what they did in the Escambrays and this was very low. He then went on describing the plan by saying that after seizure of the objectives we would enlist and arm civilians, we would use the hospital and other buildings for the force--we would coordinate with local civilian leaders and make contact with local guerrillas. We would use the local airport for resupply--but the airport could not take a B-26. In the event Trinidad could not be held, the plan was for the force to withdraw to the Escambrays where they would be supplied by air drops. This, Col. Hawkins said, was the beauty of the Trinidad Plan--it provided an alternative and safe area to move into if the original phase failed to achieve its objectives. Gen. Cabell commented that the concept called for a dawn landing. Col. Hawkins said the air strike called for attack on three air fields and the Managua military base, which had tanks and equipment which would have easily been destroyed by use of napalm but we were not authorized to use napalm in the operation. Gen. Taylor asked who said napalm could not be employed and Col. Hawkins replied that it was a decision of the National Government. Col. Hawkins listed in detail all the targets which we had selected for air attack--which included in addition to obvious military targets--the Havana power plant, microwave stations, refineries, etc.--and said all these things we wanted to do. Gen. Taylor asked if the air requirement varied with the change of plans and Col. Hawkins replied no.

40. Gen. Taylor asked aside from terrain what else was favorable and Col. Hawkins repeated his references to friendly population, nearby guerrillas, beaches as good as those of Zapata. He said the presence of enemy forces was a disadvantage of this plan as compared with the Zapata Plan. We did not think there was anyone at Zapata. Gen. Gray said that as far as could be determined there was only a police battalion at Trinidad. Admiral Burke commented that the size of the air field at Trinidad was another disadvantage--the field at Zapata being larger. Col. Hawkins reiterated that the principal advantage was being able to fall back into the mountains. At Zapata we presupposed an uprising but the beachhead did not last long enough. At Trinidad we might have had favorable

civilian reaction--one agent told us he had 2,500 men wanting arms.

41. Mr. Kennedy asked if we had any communication from the island after D-Day indicating a desire on the part of the people to rise, and Col. Hawkins said yes there were requests for arms but air drops without the use of American pilots had never been successful. Gen. Taylor asked if there was an annex to the plan for supplying arms to anyone who did rise. Mr. Bissell stated that we had airplanes and supplies and were ready to respond to agent calls. We could have responded--there were 19 requests--most of them before D-Day. Mr. Kennedy asked if there were any after D-Day and Col. Hawkins said yes, but we couldn't service them since our aircraft were committed to try to deliver supplies to the strike force which had lost its supply ship.

42. Gen. Gray recalled that the Agency had prepared a summary of agent radio communications received--and messages from the beaches--on D plus 2 and asked that a copy of that summary,/15/ which he found quite impressive, be furnished for the record.

/15/Not found.

43. Mr. Bissell said that we had anticipated domination of the air and therefore could have made daylight deliveries of arms in response to the many calls we had received. As it turned out we did not have the means with which to respond.

44. Mr. Esterline then informed the group that we had on hand one of the American pilots who survived the morning raid, and since he was planning to leave the city tonight, asked if the committee would like to hear his story this afternoon. Gen. Taylor said he would like to hear him after we finish the actual scenario and this should be sometime after lunch. The hour of 4 p.m. was set.

45. Gen. Taylor asked what happened to the Trinidad Plan. Col. Hawkins replied that it was always opposed by the State Department--also the President wanted something that was less like an invasion. Mr. Bissell read from the record of the 15 March meeting which reported that Trinidad was not acceptable since it appeared like a WWII assault operation. Gen. Taylor asked if the plan was rejected on 15 March and Mr. Bissell replied no, on 11 March. Admiral Burke commented that on 3 February the JCS had generally this same plan. Mr. Bissell said that the JCS first evaluated this plan early in February and Admiral Burke said that the JCS had made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the plan.

46. Mr. Bissell stated that we considered a variety of alternatives--one suggestion was that we seize a remote area and build an airfield from which to operate. Col. Hawkins then described the ground rules which had been established for the next plan:

1. It must call for a quiet, night landing operation--nothing that might be viewed as spectacular.
2. It must include seizure of an airfield that would accommodate up to B-26 planes in order that air strikes which were to commence at dawn could be attributed to that field.

Col. Hawkins said we looked all over for an airfield in Oriente province but could find none that could handle a B-26. We built up the concept for an operation at Preston but the field would not support B-26's. We reconsidered the Isle of Pines--but rejected it because there were from 7,500-15,000 troops there and there were no suitable beaches for night landings. We thought of another plan for Trinidad involving landing troops who would go directly into the mountains--but there was no airfield. Finally, through photography, we found what we thought was a usable field--this was in the Zapata area--and this is what led us to this area. The plan was hastily put together. We got started about 15 March--after the 11 March meeting. An error in photographic interpretation had occurred. We believed there were 4,900 usable feet of runway in northern Zapata. One of the disadvantages was the 18 mile bay which meant we would have trouble getting people up there in daylight hours. We found a 4,100 foot field at Playa Giron. We would never have adopted the Zapata Plan if we had known that

he had coordinated forces that would close in and fight as they did. The air field requirement was what led us into Zapata.

47. Col. Hawkins then described the moving of the troops from Guatemala to Nicaragua which was accomplished on three successive nights without incident. We were employing four merchant ships and two LCI's. They fanned out upon leaving Puerto Cabezas and later rendezvoused at approximately 40 miles off the coast. Col. Hawkins paid tribute to *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* for his performance in handling the fleet. The ships formed convoy and proceeded to a point 5,000 yards off the beach.

Afternoon Session--24 April 1961.

(Note: This account of the afternoon session is not complete inasmuch as the recording secretary was not present during the first portion of the session, having missed approximately 45 minutes of the meeting. However, the notes prepared by Col. Ingelido, who was present during the entire afternoon session, should cover this missing period.)/16/

/16/Colonel Michael J. Ingelido, Deputy Secretary, JCS, also functioned during the deliberations of the Cuba Study Group as General Taylor's assistant. Colonel Ingelido was present at the afternoon session of the Study Group's deliberations on April 24, which he noted began at 1:50 p.m. Ingelido's notes on the meeting are more extensive than those prepared by *[text not declassified]* printed here. According to Ingelido's notes, at the outset of the afternoon session CIA officials gave a resume of the landing operations planned for the Red, Blue, and Green Beaches during the Zapata operation. They also discussed the critical element of the air support planned for the operation, including the possible use of napalm to neutralize enemy forces in the area. General Gray outlined DOD and JCS participation in the planning, which led to a general discussion of the information provided to the President, and the actions approved by the President. (Memorandum for the record by Ingelido; Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Cuba, Taylor Report)

48. (Gen. Gray was in the midst of discussing the JCS evaluation of the Trinidad Plan when note taking was resumed.) He said the scheme of maneuver was basically sound. There was a need for civil officer type people to coordinate with the population, etc., and this was done. The original idea was that the guerrillas would join up with the strike force. The JCS thought it best to maintain a corridor and establish a link--he pointed out that one road runs from Santa Clara to the area--and a secure route for moving up into the hills. Without interference from the air, we estimated the Cuban Army could move men and materiel to the scene by D plus 2. At time of assessment there was one regiment of Cuban Army near Santa Clara. We also were told the Cuban Army was not concentrated but spread out. We figured it would take them a day to concentrate and another day to move the 100 miles to the scene.

49. Gen. Gray indicated that the publicity which developed during the final weeks of the project, much of it centering around the Revolutionary Council and its alleged plans, gave Castro notice that something was in the wind and time to mobilize his forces. Mr. Esterline explained that we were given the requirement of establishing a broad based revolutionary council. He said Cubans cannot keep quiet and before you knew it we had a Roman Circus on our hands--leaks to press, etc., both in Miami and New York. Gen. Taylor asked if the Revolutionary Council was aware of the operation. Col. King stated that the first word they had that the operation was going was on the evening of Friday, 14 April. Col. King and Mr. Barnes had gone to New York City to brief Dr. Miro--had met with the group--had dinner--and at midnight Col. King told Dr. Miro that at dawn on the following day some action would take place. Col. King cautioned Dr. Miro that there always seems to be a leak and that in the interests of the sons of some of the members of the Council, including Miro, and other relatives--Col. King told Dr. Miro to keep this information very much to himself. Dr. Miro said he would not even tell Dr. Varona, another member of the Council, and added that he would keep all members of the Council together the entire night.

50. Gen. Taylor said that what was inferred was that all this hoopla made execution of the plan more difficult and



Gen. Gray said yes--that this permitted Castro to prepare--but if the target had been the Trinidad area he would not have been ready until the afternoon of D-Day. Mr. Barnes said that there was a great deal in the press--Tad Szulc and others--guessing as to dates--and all this developed during the last week--and this could not have been anticipated. Mr. Esterline commented that one or two of Mr. Reston's articles in the New York Times two or three days before the date were not at all helpful. He said that despite this we were able to move people from Guatemala to Nicaragua and the first anyone knew about the invasion was when they hit the beaches.

51. Gen. Gray said that another miscalculation was that the Cuban Army was not coordinated and thus we expected the strike force would be able to resist attack. In this respect Trinidad would have been difficult terrain for launching of attacks. While the Cuban Army could eventually have reduced the beachhead, it was Gen. Gray's opinion that the beach could have been held for seven days. In considering the Trinidad Plan it was not considered that U.S. overt intervention would be necessary since the force could get to the hills. The ships were loaded with supplies on D minus 21, but it was always clearly understood that the President could always call off the plan. The ultimate success of the plan depended on political factors--uprisings, possible OAS action, etc.

52. Gen. Taylor asked what provisions, if any, had been made for follow up support. Gen. Gray said that CIA was training additional personnel. He said Mr. Berle had sounded out certain South American countries but got no promise of military support. The plan called for the arming of local volunteers who were expected to join up with the force. Mr. Esterline said we had approximately 300 additional untrained troops--about 167 in Guatemala and the balance in Miami. Gen. Cabell pointed out that the original concept called for a 750 man force but that we actually committed in advance all our 1400 men rather than hold out for follow up. Gen. Gray said the key to the plan was popular uprisings all over the Island--which would pin down the militia in other areas. The militia in this area had proved to be friendly to the guerrillas and for this reason Castro had to bring others in from elsewhere.

53. Gen. Taylor asked Gen. Gray concerning the 30-70 evaluation they had given to the plan. Gen. Gray said this referred to the Trinidad Plan--that the percentages were roughly 30-70 and never ran more than 40-60. He then said that about this time Mr. Berle was appointed coordinator of Latin American affairs and Ambassador Willauer faded out of the picture. He said he had had meetings with the Berle group. Gen. Taylor asked if Mr. Berle got into the military aspects of the plan and Gen. Gray said not to any important degree--that he was mostly concerned with the political aspects. Col. King said that Mr. Berle was given one briefing on the Trinidad Plan.

54. Gen. Gray then stated that on 23 February a JCS evaluation team went to Guatemala to assess the troops and summarized their conclusions as follows: Based on general review of the military portion of the project and evaluation of the combat efficiency of the forces, such forces could attain the initiative--but the ultimate success of the operation would depend on the extent the strike forces served as a catalyst. Gen. Taylor said this new evaluation of the plan expected them to get ashore all right but success depended on their serving as a catalyst to a general uprising. Gen. Gray answered affirmatively. Gen. Gray stated that Col. Tarwater thought the air force was very well prepared but made certain suggestions for improvement.

55. Evaluation of the Zapata Plan. Gen. Gray said that the JCS first saw the Zapata Plan on 15 March and gave it a favorable evaluation as an alternate plan. This, he said, was done hurriedly. The JCS was briefed on the plan on 13 March; prepared its evaluation on the 14th of March, pre-sented it on the 15th March and submitted it to the President on the 16th of March.

56. Mr. Bissell said three other alternatives were considered:

1. The Isle of Pines
2. The Preston Area

3. Alternative Trinidad Plan--(landing at night, into the hills and at daylight attack backwards to the beachhead).

With respect to No. 3, Col. Hawkins said the plan really was for the force to move into the hills--and not attack backwards--and was a modification of the original Trinidad Plan.

57. Gen. Gray said that of the alternatives mentioned it was considered that the Zapata Plan was the most feasible but not as feasible as the original Trinidad Plan. Zapata depended on control of the air and the ability to secure the exits to make difficult the movement of enemy forces into the area. The plan called for the mining of all approaches but this was not executed. The evaluations were the essential part of the JCS contribution--however, we attended most meetings. Gen. Taylor asked if the evaluation which Gen. Gray had summarized was approved by the JCS and Gen. Gray responded affirmatively. Of the three alternatives the Zapata Plan was the best.

58. Mr. Kennedy said wouldn't you say that the JCS had approved this plan? Admiral Burke responded by saying that the paper does not say so--but in effect the JCS approved this plan--felt it had a reasonable chance of success. Admiral Burke added that the original plan had the area they would have selected--Trinidad. Gen. Gray stated that at no time did the JCS say that the Zapata Plan should not be carried out. Mr. Bissell said that the 16 March meeting summed it up as follows:

Trinidad Plan would provide more decisive results at greater initial risk

Zapata Plan provides less decisive results--and slower results--with less initial risk

Mr. Bissell commented that we felt and hoped the Zapata Plan would be less risky but recognized its limitations--less chance of a build up from friendly population.

59. Gen. Taylor said there appeared to be two points: At no point did the JCS recommend doing it--it merely commented on three alternatives--but where we made our mistake--we should have said--but did not--that this plan was not feasible. We had an opportunity to do more and we were responsible for approving it. Mr. Dulles stated that all the plans were exposed at high level. Admiral Burke commented that one difficulty was that Gen. Lemnitzer was there by himself--then corrected himself to say that Gen. Gray was with Gen. Lemnitzer at the high level meetings.

60. Gen. Gray stated that as we became associated we became more interested in trying to make it go. Mr. Kennedy asked if this wasn't the key to the whole thing--this wanting it to go? Mr. Dulles said we had these alternatives--we could carry out the plan or we could demobilize the strike force. Gen. Gray said that if we had ever written a National Concept--we would have had to rewrite it continually. Admiral Burke said that there naturally was confusion during the change of administration. We should have formalized this thing much earlier and in greater detail. The trouble was that only a few people of the Admiral's staff knew about it.

61. Gen. Taylor asked if the possibility of uprisings was discussed among all of you and Mr. Dulles answered yes. Mr. Dulles said the first plan was the shock plan--and in this plan we hadn't counted on immediate uprisings--this was longer range. He said there were objections on the political side to the shock effects--and we couldn't count on it succeeding.

62. Mr. Kennedy asked what the objective was in landing 600-1000 men on the shore. Mr. Dulles said to obtain a beachhead which could be built up. Mr. Kennedy then asked how a beachhead could be held against 300,000 troops--or against even 30,000 or 25,000. Mr. Dulles said the enemy would not have been able to concentrate all his troops on one spot. Mr. Kennedy then said that he thought that uprisings were an essential part of the JCS evaluation. Gen. Gray said that it did not anticipate immediate uprisings--but uprisings on a slower basis. Mr. Kennedy then directed a question to Admiral Burke asking if it was the Admiral's understanding that 1400 men could land--and without benefit of uprisings--could maintain their position for several weeks. Admiral Burke said

they thought they might be able to hold their position but if they could not, that they would then become guerrillas. Gen. Gray said that we thought the Cuban air force would be knocked out. He said the men demonstrated they could fight effectively at night. Mr. Bissell added that we expected a landing in Pinar del Rio on D plus 7. Col. Hawkins added that we had reports of men wanting to join but reiterated that the real key was control of the air.

63. Gen. Taylor then asked where is the concept? Gen. Gray said it is in the plan. The objective did not change. Here is the mission: To invade island of Cuba--with amphibious force--hold beachhead--provide catalyst for uprising--move in as guerrillas if beachhead not sustained. Gen. Taylor (checking language of mission) read: "--alternative 3 has all the prerequisites necessary and would be able to sustain itself for several weeks but inaccessibility of population would affect support of Cuban population . . ." Gen. Cabell remarked that we meant joining up forces and not necessarily civilian uprisings. Gen. Taylor stated it still becomes a choice between 3--but with Trinidad preferred.

64. Mr. Bissell stated that the language about sustaining for several weeks indicates a change of thinking--a slower development with less prospect of initial success. If the area could have been held for two weeks there was a good probability of ultimate success--for with no air opposition we could have knocked out his microwave and forced him to voice--we could have learned his plans--we could have reinforced the brigade with another 500 men--the logistic problem would not have been difficult--but we did not knock out his air. Gen. Cabell stated that maritime re-supply would have been a factor--with no air opposition--and would have had an effect on the outcome.

65. Gen. Gray stated that following the decision on 16 March that the Zapata Plan should be pursued, the Inter-Departmental Group on 22 March developed and finalized an agreed list of tasks./17/ For example, the State Department would take care of recognition, etc. This paper served the useful purpose of coordinating our planning.

/17/See Document 71.

66. On 28 March the JCS approved letters of instructions to CINCLANT and CONANT and we implemented the plan to improve the Miami defenses. We tested the plan and had planes, etc., to move in to protect the Miami area. Naval support was carried out by the carrier *Essex* and 7 destroyers. Destroyers escorted the invading ships--close at night but at a distance during the day. Gen. Taylor asked if they were authorized to engage. They were authorized to engage if attacked but under these circumstances the whole force was to have been diverted--since we were protecting shipping and not assisting an invasion. The rules of engagement changed several times as the operation proceeded. Our job was mostly one of support during two phases:

Covert support--D-Day to D minus 3

Logistic support--during build up phase

67. CIA was in a position to double and quadruple the force. We planned logistic supply as part of this build up. If things went well they might have built up in the Cienfuegos area in D plus 30. We provided arms packs for 30,000 men in addition to CIA planning for 5,000 packs. Packs for 15,000 men were actually loaded on ships and headed for the area. Also recoilless rifles, mortars, jeeps, trucks, etc. We were also providing for the overt phase under several conditions. For example, if the U.S. recognized this force (one of the Council members, Capt. Artime, went in with the brigade), State was planning on recognizing the government but no State or diplomatic representative would have been sent in until Havana was taken. We also considered possibility of supporting the force in the event a third country recognized them before we did. In addition we had one Marine hospital to move to Vieques.

68. Gen. Taylor asked about the evacuation plan and Gen. Taylor [Gray?] said it was planned to employ the

LCI's and planes from the air strip. Gen. Gray said a separate war room was set up in the JCS--the regular war room was cut out. Only a limited number were cut in--this list included Adm. Dennison. Col. Mallard of the Agency was on the *Essex*. It was a cumbersome type of organization but it worked. There was good commo. There was good liaison. Decisions were implemented quickly.

69. Admiral Burke stated that the trouble was the delays--commo from there to Washington and back was fairly good--but there were always delays--sometimes of several hours--what was needed was a commander on the spot to make decisions. Another thing--although the commo was good from CEF (?) to Washington--there was not enough between the Naval forces and the ships--took a couple of days to find out that two ships were one and the same--that different names were being used for the same ship.

70. Gen. Gray said that there should have been an Inter-Departmental group working on the concept and keeping the President informed in writing. This would have eliminated the fact that up to the last date there was not a meeting of minds. It was not clear whether there was going to be an air strike or not. Mr. Barnes said it could not have been achieved the way it went along--after the Trinidad Plan was scrapped we were forced to come up with new concepts and new approaches to meet objections which were being raised.

71. Admiral Burke said that politically it could not have been done. We made our mistake in not drawing up what we thought the concept was and presenting it to the State Department and CIA. We did not grab it hard enough--partly because we were holding it so tight--therefore Gen. Gray's group couldn't get advice from the people who could have given it--because they weren't cut in. If he had been working under an agreed concept it could have been done better.

72. Mr. Bissell said that what he had read from the April 12 paper came near to this. Many of the suggested acts that came up involved political policy decisions of great import and these had been made in advance. Example, question whether Navy jets in the air would give protection to B-26's giving close ground support. Decision was made that support should be given--this required high level policy and was a reversal of policy re engagement of U.S. forces. We could have had a concept of use of U.S. forces. Gen. Taylor said: You talk of concepts but the concepts didn't change. Admiral Burke stated we would have task for example to cover by Naval air--this came very late so that by the time we were supposed to execute this we were at some distance from the area. Gen. Gray said that if we had had an agreed national plan we would have had to face up to the decisions which we got piecemeal--re rules of engagement. It should have been in an overall plan.

73. Gen. Taylor asked how can we do better--about the political restraints--how can we do this. Gen. Gray replied: by putting the political factors into the plan at the beginning. Admiral Burke commented that the President must have been confused by the many different people who were advising him. Gen. Gray said that once we got State in on agreed plans, Mr. Braddock came up with the answers. We should get State into the plan at the outset.

74. Gen. Taylor remarked that after the rejection of the Trinidad Plan we were racing against the clock. Gen. Gray said that he had wanted to war game the plan and that that is what should have been done. Gen. Taylor then asked what were the factors that necessitated speed. Gen. Gray said the rainy season was approaching and this would affect not only ground fighting but flying conditions. There was the problem of the jets which Castro was supposed to be receiving soon. Info that some jet trainees had returned from Czechoslovakia. Col. Hawkins said there were other factors: We were holding 1400 men in impossible conditions. The President of Guatemala was pushing us. Also American newsmen were after the story and some of the troops and airmen were threatening to desert.

75. Interrogation of [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]. At this juncture [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], a member of the Alabama National Air Guard and a contract flyer who participated in the project, was received by the committee. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said that he had drawn up a small resume and that if the committee was agreeable he would half-read and half-comment on that resume.

(Presumably the resume will become a part of the record.) Consequently only the questioning will be recorded here.

76. Col. Hawkins asked [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] what happened to the original plan for D-Day. He replied that he was exposed to the targets. He thought the people were familiar with the original plan. It changed 180 degrees. We were to use maximum effort against air fields, microwave stations, (forcing use of radio voice)--we hoped this chaos--plus propaganda would do the job. Col. Hawkins asked what were the orders. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied that they were ordered to use two aircraft on each target except that only one would be used on air base near Guantanamo. Request was granted late for use of other aircraft. We were pushed for briefing of crews--we didn't have time for target study--the whole situation was cramped. After D-Day it was obvious that not all enemy aircraft were destroyed--we thought we knew how many he had but he was turning them around quickly--our turn around time was 7 hours round trip with 30 minutes over the target.

77. Mr. Kennedy asked if these pilots were Americans or Cubans and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied they were both Americans and Cubans. They got along well together and both were motivated by patriotic reasons.

78. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said that the first attack (D minus 2) only served to make Castro mad and gave him time to re-group his forces. Some of the flyers saw Navy protection--others did not. At Puerto Cabezas there was uncertainty as to whether they were enemy or friendly. Admiral Burke stated that on D-1 and D plus 1 the Navy fliers were over and that on D plus 2 authority was given for one hour of coverage. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] was asked if MIGs were involved. He said that as much as he would like to he can't say that MIGs were involved. He said he did not believe they were. He said he debriefed B-26 and other pilots and they saw none. The reports of Navy intervention may have helped in air battles but as far as Cuban personnel were concerned they took it for granted that they had Navy cover.

79. Mr. Kennedy asked if the pilots expected they would have help or assistance. Were they ever told they would not have assistance? [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied that they were not told that they would not have assistance and he did not think they expected military assistance. Mr. Bissell said that on D plus 2 they were briefed to expect Navy cover and protection and beginning at that time they may have expected assistance. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said the news was a great morale booster to people in the Puerto Cabezas area and when it did not materialize morale was affected adversely. Cuban crews aborted and without this assurance of assistance American pilots would not have participated.

80. Gen. Taylor asked what targets they found on the beach. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied that on D plus 1 they caught a large column of trucks. An American pilot "bounced" those trucks and from 15 to 20 Russian tanks--three B-26's made passes at the trucks and hurt them badly. This was Tuesday afternoon about 1800 hours local time. Col. Hawkins remarked that [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] indicated they suffered 1800 casualties. Mr. Kennedy asked if [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] was able to tell where the fighting was taking place. He was unable to give a conclusive answer but thought the forces had moved up from Blue and Red Beaches but never very far out. He remarked that the enemy had lots of anti-aircraft fire. Mr. Kennedy asked if they had this on D-Day. Col. Hawkins said that they did not but that they moved it in very fast. Gen. Taylor asked where were they reporting flack and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied: from all over--and with excellent marksmanship. Gen. Taylor asked how the air-ground commo worked and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said the commo gear went down with the ship that was sunk and that there was no commo.

81. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Cuban pilots did well. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said they constantly found excuses for not flying. Gen. Taylor asked what percentage failed and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied that only 35% were "ready to go" and you could count the number of "tigers" on one hand. Col. Beerli took exception to this saying that on D minus 2 we had eight aircraft up and that these

made more than one pass over the target. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] observed that at that time the sight of victory was present--but when they got thinking that they were losing it was different. He said that on the morning of D minus [plus?] 2 he had to beg them to go. He observed that they were good until things started going wrong.

82. Mr. Kennedy asked where was the fighting going on at D plus 1 and D plus 2. Admiral Burke said that on D plus 2 Navy recon could find no infantry--they were all apparently in the bush. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said he had no information as to where the fighting was.

83. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Castro forces had come down the road on D plus 1 and Gen. Taylor remarked that he did not see how they could have gotten down there that fast even if they knew where the landing was coming. Col Hawkins said there were tanks in the Red Beach area on D-Day. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] expressed the personal opinion that there was not much fighting done. Gen. Taylor asked if there was any prearranged plan for use of smoke to identify our own people on the ground and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said that the air force was concerned exclusively with taking care of the "heavy stuff" and not attacking troops. Mr. Kennedy asked how long the party lasted on Red Beach and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] thought it wasn't more than a matter of hours.

84. Mr. Dulles raised the question of the confusion in orders of going after the airfields on D plus 1. Mr. Bissell said that at some point on D-Day we received permission to strike the airfields that night--and then there was some talk of a strike at dusk--but ultimately it was authorized for that night but bad visibility and other factors prevented them carrying it out. Col. Beerli asked [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] if there was a lack of aircraft and [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] replied that they were limited to the number of shells on any given target--we were limited to number of aircraft we could use. When we called it off we thought we were losing the war intentionally. This thought was based on the restrictions which had been placed on us.

85. The meeting terminated at approximately 1700 hours.

[*name not declassified*]

## **175. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 25, 1961.

//Source: National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 12, Cuba, Memoranda of Meetings. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. The drafter is not listed, but it was probably Colonel Ingelido. The meeting took place at the Central Intelligence Agency at 10 a.m. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, were Cabell, Gray, Barnes, Moorhouse, Esterline, Beerli, Hawkins, King, Ingelido, Commander Mitchell, and Lieutenant Colonel Tarwater. (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report)

Question: What limitations were placed on CIA with regard to using U.S. military personnel.

Answer: There was no legal limit on the numbers or types of personnel that could be assigned, the only limiting consideration being the problem of disclosure.

Suggestion: It would be helpful if the President was given a memo setting forth the evidences of the direct involvement of Communist personnel in the operation.

Response: CIA agreed to prepare such a memorandum for the President with information copies for the Paramilitary Study Group.

Request: It was requested that a paper and/or map covering a period several months prior to the invasion be prepared indicating all Cubans prepared to revolt.

Response: CIA indicated that a map had been prepared indicating the agents with whom they were in contact and that this would be provided to General Taylor.

Question: Had an attempt been made to have anyone enter the objective area for reconnaissance prior to the operation.

Answer: No. For security reasons and because photographs had given no evidence of any significant activity in the area.

Question: What were the sources of intelligence prior to the operation.

Answer: SpecInt, agent reports and photographs. Photographs were received at least several times a week.

Request: That some of these photographs be made available to the Study Group.

Response: CIA agreed to make these photographs available.

Statement: The point was made that not only U.S. troops were restricted in the action they could take, but we prevented foreigners that we had trained from using their weapons to their maximum capability.

Statement: One of the greatest problems encountered in developing this force was the difficulty in getting the Cubans to sublimate their petty differences for the common good.

Statement: One fact that misled our estimate of the opposition we would meet was that prior to the Zapata Operation there has never been a pitched battle between Cubans.

Request: That all professional military people involved in the operation and in training the force be identified.

Response: CIA indicated this would be provided.

Question: At some point would it be desirable to have the conclusions of all key people involved in the operation.

Answer: Yes.

Request: General Taylor requested a re-briefing on the Air Plan and further information on the reported air ammunition shortage.

Response: CIA indicated this would be provided.

Request: General Taylor requested the reconstitution of the intelligence that influenced the decisions, this to be presented in such form as to indicate the decisions influenced.

At this point Colonel Hawkins briefed on the actual operation. He prefaced his remarks by pointing out that the information on which his report was based was limited and incomplete.

When the 15 April air strikes were originally considered it was suggested that they be conducted for two days without restriction. However, due to political considerations it was decided to conduct limited strikes on D-2 and limited strikes on dawn of D-Day. It was decided to use two B-26 aircraft against each of three airfields on

which all Cuban tactical aircraft were based, San Antonio de los Banos, Campo Libertad, and Santiago de Cuba.

Reconnaissance flights on 8, 11 and 13 April indicated the Cubans had 36 combat aircraft although many of these were not operable. Consequently it was decided to increase the aircraft in the air strikes from six to eight with one additional aircraft assigned as a spare.

The D-2 air strikes were planned to destroy Castro's combat aircraft on the ground. It now appears that these air strikes destroyed all of Castro's tactical aircraft except for two Sea Furies, two B-26s, and three to four T-33s.

Opinions were expressed generally favoring the view that if the D-Day air strikes had been conducted as originally planned all of Castro's tactical aircraft would have been destroyed or at least eliminated to the extent that the invasion force could have survived.

It was pointed out that all but eight or nine operable aircraft had been destroyed and that four of these were eliminated on D-Day by the invasion force.

The question was raised as to why the T-33s had not been destroyed. Several possible answers were given, including the restriction against the use of napalm, self-imposed by CIA, and the possibility that the aircraft on one runway had not been attacked.

Question: Were you surprised at the effectiveness of the T-33s.

Answer: Yes.

Question: What led to the decision to conduct air strikes on D-2.

Answer: The strikes were timed to coincide with Nino Diaz landing in the Oriente and it was desired to tie the air strikes in with the defections.

Statement: We knew before the landing that Castro retained operational tactical aircraft.

Question: Why were limitations placed on the air strikes.

Answer: In order to reduce the appearance of a major military operation which would indicate U.S. involvement.

Statement: It is a mistake to focus primary attention on one particular decision. We were operating under the very clear instructions to make this operation appear as one the Cubans could conduct without gross U.S. assistance.

Statement: It was not one decision or one thing that caused failure, but many things.

Statement: In covert operations of this kind political considerations always outweigh the military, with a consequent erosion of the military capability to the point that the operation becomes militarily infeasible.

Statement: This raises one of the vital considerations before this Group, the conflict between the desire for political acceptability and military effectiveness.

Statement: The point was made that political considerations must be given their due weight, but if this results in making the operation militarily infeasible the President should be advised that the plan is no longer feasible. He cannot be expected to remember all the details of a plan nor the significance of one seemingly minor change in a military operation.



Statement: The President had frequent consultations with military representatives.

Statement: The DOD was not consulted in the decision to call off the air strikes.

Statement: It is dangerous to conduct meetings where military advice is required when only one officer from one service is present. This was the case during six or eight meetings.

Question: Were the D-Day air strikes previously approved.

Answer: The paper setting forth the air strikes was passed around at the April 12th meeting./1/ This paper made clear that there would be air strikes, but not an all-out effort. However, this document was only passed around at the meeting, read and considered by some, and collected after the meeting. It is doubtful if the President read it or understood the details.

/1/See Document 92.

Question: What led to the cancellation of the air strikes.

Answer: At 1300 Sunday it was understood that the plan, including the air strikes for dawn of D-Day, had been approved. At about 7:00 P.M. CIA representatives were called to Mr. Rusk's office. He was concerned over the apparent defection of two rather than one B-26 and an additional cargo plane because he felt these additional defections had caused him to mislead Mr. Stevenson. At 10:30 P.M. the CIA tactical commander was advised that the air strikes had been called off. He most strongly urged that this decision be reconsidered and reversed. In debating the air strikes question and in discussing the action to be taken to strengthen Mr. Stevenson's position, the President was contacted. In discussing the air strike question the President said he wasn't aware that there were going to be any air strikes on the morning of D-Day. At 2315 D-1 Mr. Rusk announced that there would be no dawn air strikes. At this time the invasion ships were within 5,000 yards of their landing beaches and it was physically impossible to call off the strikes.

Question: Was a strong position on this issue taken with Mr. Rusk.

Answer: Probably not strong enough. It was indicated that the worst would be that the invaders would not have their B-26 support and if the ships were on their way out the force would be denied its resupply capability.

Question: At the 12 April meeting were the air strikes an issue.

Answer: No, the plan appeared to have jelled.

Statement: There were only verbal instructions. These were not written, signed directives and the only papers that were available were fuzzy. The issues were never clearly resolved.

Statement: I understood there was to be one final briefing involving all the participants and setting forth the entire plan. This was never done. Had this briefing been held the ultimate decisions might have been different.

Statement: After cancellation of the air strikes an attempt was made to minimize the probable damage. At 0400 D-Day a CIA representative contacted the State Department to see if the Navy's protective CAP could be extended from the 20-mile limit to 15 or preferably a three-mile limit. The State Department objected and the President, in attempting to prevent U.S. attribution, confirmed that the Navy's protective CAP limit would not be changed. He did approve, however, EW support. Prior to this Presidential determination an alerting order had been sent to CINCLANT and he had turned his force around to be in a position to provide CAP and EW support if so ordered.

By the time it became apparent we would not receive air CAP we sent out a message to put the troops ashore and move the ships out to sea.

The brigade troops commenced landing at Blue Beach at 0100.

0300--The *Caribe* had completed unloading.

0330--The troops unloading from the *Alantico* were under fire.

0430--Troops landed at Blue Beach.

0600--First LCU ashore.

0630--Enemy air attacks against shipping and Blue Beach commenced.

0640--Friendly aircraft arrived.

1730--Three LCUs had discharged vehicles and tanks.

0825--Castro T-33 shot down by *Blagar*.

0930--*Rio Escondido* hit and sunk. Crew members rescued and put aboard *Blagar*.

[0930]--Brigade reported airstrip ready for use.

1000--Continuous enemy air attacks against withdrawing ships.

1130--Brigade reported only four hours ammunition left.

During the Blue Beach landings the *Houston* proceeded up the Bay led by the *Barbara J*. They sent a reconnaissance team ashore and it was immediately attacked from the west flank. Two hundred seventy men did land in the vicinity of Red Beach. However, going ashore they saw lights from what appeared to be a construction project which they had not been previously aware of, and when they got ashore they ran into an enemy force estimated to have 800 troops and 12 tanks.

As the *Houston* was proceeding out of the Bay it was hit by a bomb and the ship went aground with approximately 130 personnel aboard.

As regards the airborne landing little detailed information is available. However, all the aircraft returned safely reporting that the troops had jumped over their intended landing places. Furthermore, reports indicate some of the airborne personnel were occupying their assigned positions.

During the course of D-Day the decision was made to conduct night air attacks against San Antonio de los Banos and Campo Libertad in an attempt to destroy Castro's air capability. The value of these attacks was negligible.

Also during the night of 17-18 April three air drops were made at the landing beaches. One landed in the drop zone, one in the sea, and one drifted inland.

On D+1 at about 0730 the 2d Battalion reported it could not maintain its position without air support for more than 30 minutes.

0824--The Brigade Commander reported that Blue Beach was under attack by 12 tanks and four jet aircraft. The need for ammunition and supplies was repeated.

1010--Red Beach wiped out.

1200--Blue Beach under attack by MIG-15s and T-33s, out of tank ammunition, and almost out of small arms ammunition.

1600--*Essex* reported long line of tanks and trucks approaching Blue Beach from East.

Enemy air attacks and shortage of ammunition continued to be reported for the rest of the day. Ammunition and food were air-dropped on the airstrip. On the afternoon of D+1 three friendly B-26s intercepted a column of enemy tanks and trucks, causing 1,800 casualties. At this point it was emphasized that the over-all plan had been based on control of the air and this action was cited as evidence of what the B-26s would have been able to accomplish if the air plan had succeeded.

1800--1st Battalion reported under heavy artillery attack.

2000--The Brigade Commander was advised that he would be evacuated after dark. He replied saying, "I will not be evacuated. We will fight to the end here if we have to."

During the night of 18-19 April Navy CAP was again requested and permission was granted for one hour air CAP between 0630 and 0730. These aircraft were issued instructions to defend the invasion force from enemy air attack, but not to attack ground targets.

When it came time for the friendly forces to launch their air strikes the Cuban air crews were either exhausted or demoralized by the lack of air cover, consequently American crews were dispatched. One American crew was shot down during the period of Navy air cover and another was shot down when air cover was not provided.

At 0600 on the 19th of April enemy air strikes commenced. From 0710 to 1430 the enemy was closing in and the Brigade Commander was sending frantic appeals for air cover. Finally at 1430 he sent his final message saying, "Am destroying all equipment and communications. Tanks are in sight. I have nothing left to fight with. Am taking to woods. I cannot wait for you."

Question: What sort of anti-tank equipment did the force have?

Answer: A number of 3.5-inch bazookas; five tanks; two 75 mm recoilless rifles; and an undetermined number of anti-tank mines.

Statement: In considering the possible reasons for the shooting down of the B-26 during the period of Navy air CAP it was suggested that the rules of engagement may have unduly restricted the Navy.

Question: What specific intelligence got to the President?

Answer: NIEs, intelligence annexes and briefings.

Statement: It would be desirable to examine the ground rules and determine the price we paid to try and keep within political limitations.

Statement: It appears this operation was simply too big to remain covert.

Colonel Beerli, head of Air Operations for the CIA, briefed on air aspects of the operation. His position for this

operation was coordinated with Colonel Hawkins. Lieutenant Colonel Gaines was his chief deputy for this operation. Lieutenant Colonel Gaines had a staff of 14 people working on this operation in Washington. Except for the security, administration and cover people the personnel assigned were members of the Air Force. The actual training site in Guatemala was run primarily by Major Campbell with a force of 20 people.

The point was made that one of the greatest procedural difficulties resulted from the physical separation of the air staff from the rest of the planners under Colonel Hawkins.

Colonel Beerli stated that he had 316 personnel at Puerto Cabezas, of whom 159 were Americans. The Cuban crews were recruited in Miami from 92 personnel that were screened. From these personnel they recruited and/or developed 17 B-26 crews and five C-46 crews. As far as the concept of air operations was concerned the concept varied very little from the beginning. The primary effort was being directed toward eliminating the enemy air force and to provide close support. On the 13th of April the photos indicated that Castro's combat aircraft were located on three airfields. On D-2 eight aircraft were committed against these fields with the results previously mentioned. It was pointed out that the B-26s had been the primary concern and the capability of the T-33s hadn't been appreciated as it wasn't believed that these aircraft were armed.

By late afternoon of D-1 photos indicated that instead of dispersing his aircraft Castro had concentrated them at San Antonio de los Banos.

After the cancellation of the dawn air strikes on D-Day the pilots were briefed to provide close support for the invasion force with at least two aircraft over the beach at all times. Thirteen missions were launched on D-Day in providing close support to the invasion force and in protecting against hostile vessels.

That night six B-26 aircraft were launched against Cuban airfields. However, two aircraft aborted on take-off and the others were not able to identify their targets due to haze.

On D+1 six aircraft were scheduled in support of the beachhead. On the night of D+1 two aircraft got off and struck San Antonio de los Banos. On Wednesday morning two B-26s were committed again and two more were lost.

In summary there were 13 strikes on D-Day, four on D-Day night, six on D+1, and seven on D+2, for a total of 39 air strikes. Seven aircraft were lost in these operations. Furthermore, six, C-54s made air resupply drops and one C-46 landed on the beachhead airstrip on the evening of D-Day.

Statement: It is believed that the Cuban pilots did as well as could be expected and they would have done better in an aura of victory.

Following this the Group were read a paper by Colonel Hawkins in which he set forth his personal opinion as to some of the deficiencies which became apparent during the operation./2/ Among these deficiencies were:

/2/See Document 173.

The lack of clear-cut policy directives signed. He does not believe that verbal instructions are sufficient.

The slowness of government machinery in making policy decisions.

Overcentralization of control. This prompted some discussion, resulting in the statement that the CIA doesn't have the capability to organize and train paramilitary forces. At this point a message was read from Colonel Hawkins just prior to the invasion in which he indicated that the invasion force was better armed and equipped than some U.S. Infantry units and that Lieutenant Colonel Gaines believed the air unit was as well qualified as the best U.S. Air Force squadron./3/

*/3/See Document 98.*

Lack of adequate organization and staff. The paramilitary responsibility should go to the DOD.

Training conditions were unsatisfactory. The desirability of using bases on Saipan or in the United States was considered with no conclusions reached.

The meeting adjourned.



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
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**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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**176. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 26, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. The drafter is not listed, but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the fourth in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and took place at the Pentagon for a brief discussion of Indochina and subsequently at the Central Intelligence Agency for the discussion of Cuba. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, were Cabell, Gray, Bissell, Mitchell, Tarwater, and General McGarr for the discussion of Indochina.

[Here follows a brief discussion of the problems posed by the Communist insurgency in Indochina.]

Question: How did the President get his intelligence on this operation./1/

/1/Although not identified in the source text, Bissell probably answered most of the questions relating to intelligence and the CIA's role, while Gray probably provided the information relating to the briefing of the JCS.

Answer: He received a daily intelligence bulletin which included information on Cuba and intelligence was discussed at all the task force meetings. However, he never received any special intelligence briefings, as such, on this problem.

At this point it was decided that it would be helpful to run through the intelligence information contained in the 11 March paper/2/ on the proposed operation against Cuba. This intelligence in essence indicated that despite growing discontent within Cuba time was against us. Castro was increasing his police state controls and his military effectiveness to the extent that unless some outside support, some shock action, was taken within six months, it would probably be militarily infeasible to overthrow Castro with a force composed of Cuban exiles.

/2/Document 58.

Statement: It should be made very clear that the idea that time was running out weighed very heavily in the decision making.

Question: You mentioned the requirement for shock and yet the invasion plan that was finally implemented was purposely limited.

Answer: But the purpose of this, sir, was not to limit the shock on the Cubans, but rather to limit the shock on the rest of the world, making it appear that the invasion was something that the Cubans could do by themselves.

At this point in the meeting the intelligence available to the planners and the tactical commander was discussed. With regard to Castro's air force it was stated that the location of all Castro aircraft was known, even to the

extent of knowing which aircraft were operational and which were not. They were surprised, however, by the capabilities of the pilots which Castro committed against the invasion force. In retrospect it was believed that these aircraft were probably flown by 50 Cuban pilots that had been trained in Czechoslovakia and returned to Cuba a few days before the invasion.

With regard to Castro's navy, it was believed that the capability of this force was low and that they would not be inclined to fight. This estimate held good, for only three small vessels were committed, two of which were sunk, while their larger naval units remained at their stations.

The weakest tactical intelligence was on the location of the ground troops. A reason for this was because the militia was not well organized in the sense that no two units were organized exactly the same nor with the same number of personnel. Intelligence was aware, however, of the location of Castro's armored units and his military headquarters. In this connection it had been pointed out that Castro had a force of 6,000 troops armed with tanks and artillery which could arrive at the beachhead within 10 hours. It's believed the tanks used against the invaders were part of this force. If the troops fighting the invasion force were militia, then the estimate of the militia's willingness to fight was incorrect. However, if this force was not militia, but rather the force mentioned above spearheaded by foreigners, then the estimates were not wrong.

The possibility that this force was spearheaded by Czechoslovakians was indicated by the report that one of the tanks knocked out had three persons aboard that were not Cuban. Further, another report said that some of the command chatter was in a foreign tongue. With regard to the absence of uprising throughout Cuba during the period of the invasions, it should be pointed out that reports from agents of the numbers of people that were likely to support the invasion had been reduced from 20-30,000 down to 2,500 to 3,000 active guerrillas. It was also stated in the intelligence estimates that there would not be any major uprisings until the Cubans could see visible evidence of the invasion force. Consequently, no major uprisings were anticipated until the invasion force had been able to take towns in the Matanzas Province.

Statement: You are now describing much more than a successful lodgment.

Response: Yes, but we felt that the force had to move out to make the lodgment visible.

Question: Inasmuch as this was a key element in the JCS decision, was it ever made clear to them this degree of success was necessary in the ultimate success of the operation.

Answer: I believe the impression was given that the lodgment should last for at least a week. This would have been a significant factor in influencing potential dissidents.

Statement: It was also hoped that the landings in the Oriente and uprisings in the Pinar del Rio would help create the catalyst necessary to trigger uprisings throughout Cuba.

Statement: One of the factors that made us think that the resistance potential within Cuba was substantial was the fact that we had a backlog of 19 requests from our agents for supplies, arms and ammunition for 8,000 people. These people were crying for supplies. Had we been able to provide this equipment these people would have had something to rise with.

At this point General Taylor requested a brief tabulation of how many reports had been received indicating that people were ready to rise against Castro, and also indicating the number of people that were ready to rise.

Statement: Special Intelligence also gave indication of government concern with dissident activities. These evidences were further substantiated by debriefings of people coming out of Cuba.

Question: At any time did you give an estimate of the resistance potential within Cuba.

Answer: I don't believe any numerical estimate was given.

Question: You did expect enough uprisings throughout the country, however, to start the army of liberation.

Answer: Yes.

Question: At no point, however, was any formal estimate of this possibility given.

Answer: I have a paper of 3 March/3/ in which it was estimated that between 2,500 and 3,000 were actively engaged against Castro, that 20,000 were potential supporters of the invasion force, and that 25% of the population was opposed to the Castro regime.

/3/Not found.

Question: Did you ever actually define the degree of success necessary to provoke adequate uprising to permit ultimate success.

Answer: To establish a beachhead and hold it for some time, approximately a week, together with activities by our air units carrying out their scheduled missions.

Question: Do you believe that the impression prevailed that there would be spontaneous uprisings.

Answer: I myself didn't believe there would be major uprisings within 24 to 48 hours.

Question: Do you recall what the JCS said on this issue.

Answer: They said the invasion force had a reasonable chance of establishing a lodgment and that ultimate success would depend on uprisings within Cuba.

At this point the JCS Evaluation of the alternate objective area proposals was read./4/ Following this the question was raised as to whether JCS had ever acted on the Zapata Plan. The answer was given that the JCS had been advised of the change by General Gray.

/4/Reference is to JCSM-166-61, March 15, Document 62.

Question: Where in the JCS Evaluation of the Zapata Plan does it say that there will be air strikes.

Answer: It doesn't.

Statement: At this stage of the game there was no plan--only concepts. There was no time to develop a plan as such.

Statement: At this point General Gray stated that as he remembered, and as his notes indicate, the Joint Chiefs understood that the Zapata Plan included only D-Day strikes and no pre-D-Day strikes.

Question: How much time did the JCS give to this problem.

Answer: About one hour. It should be pointed out, however, that at the time the JCS considered the alternatives, the Trinidad Plan had not been ruled out and so in the evaluation of the alternatives it was stated that Zapata was the best of alternatives, however, the Trinidad Plan still had the best hope of success.



Question: When were the JCS or their representatives first briefed on the original plan.

Answer: On 3 February.

Question: Was a careful study of this plan made at this time.

Answer: Yes

Question: The basic Trinidad Plan did not change prior to March 11 when alternative proposals had been requested.

Answer: This is essentially correct.

Question: Was Mr. Rusk briefed on the Cuba Plan prior to 10 March.

Answer: I believe he was briefed on some elements of the plan, but not on the military details.

Statement: State Department representatives, however, had continued to oppose the plan.

Statement: In attempting to overcome State Department objections, CIA prior to March 11 had agreed to give up the pre-D-Day air strikes.

Statement: The 11 March meeting resulted in two new parameters for the operation. First, a less spectacular landing and, second, possession of an airfield to which the B-26 aircraft could be attributed.

Statement: These decisions led to the hurried search for alternative operational concepts that would meet the new parameters.

Statement: JCS representatives were briefed on these concepts on the 14th of March.

Question: What factors led to the decision to split the force in the Zapata Plan.

Answer: Further investigation had revealed that the airfield at Red Beach was inadequate for our purposes. It also revealed there was an airfield south of Red Beach that was adequate to our needs. Consequently the decision to split the force was made in order to protect the airfield and to protect the defiles into the landing area. Furthermore, we were concerned about the fact that the ships that went to Red Beach had an 18-mile run and might not get out.

Statement: At the 15 March meeting the President indicated that he did not like the dawn landings and directed that this aspect be reconsidered. On the 16th of March the President approved the revised Zapata Plan for progressive implementation, but he retained the ability to cancel.

Question: At the 16 March meeting was the JCS preference for the original Trinidad Plan over the Zapata Plan presented.

Answer: I don't think so.

Question: Do you think it was in the President's mind that these men could disappear as a guerrilla force if necessary.

Answer: Yes.

Statement: The Zapata area has traditionally been an area for guerrilla operations.

Response: When we went to the State Department we discussed the seriousness of calling off the air strikes. However, I did not say that we would cancel the operation because at this time we did not have the ability to call it off.

Statement: I can't believe that if the President had understood how important the air strikes were that he would have called them off.

Response: All members of the Group concurred.

Statement: If the President's decision had been made earlier I would have flown out to Glen Ora and discussed the matter with him. However, when the decision was finally made it was too late to do this.

At this point Mr. Bissell gave some of his personal views as to some of the wrong judgments made. First, the underestimation of Castro's capability in certain specific respects, mainly his organization ability, speed of movement and will to fight. We also underestimated his air capability. Example, contrary to our opinion, the T-33s were armed and flown with skill, loyalty and determination. In retrospect, some of the reasons for this underestimation may have been the use by Castro of bloc technicians and, if this is so, it is believed that one of their greatest contributions may have been in the staff work. Our second major mistake was our failure to develop an adequate air capability. We should have had at least 50% more B-26 pilots. We should have been able to foresee the need for these pilots. We should have allowed for some attrition, and the two aircraft cover over the beach was understated. Another major mistake was the restriction on the employment of our air capability between D-2 and D-Day. As to the administrative and organizational shortcomings, it is believed that these contributed much to the final failure. Another error was involved in the inevitable conflict between the requirements for military effectiveness and those of disclaimability. In the late stages of this operation I believe unnecessary concessions were made in favor of disclaimability which were unrealistic. Inasmuch as so much of the operation was already common knowledge, our chances of success would have been much greater if we had been allowed to use U.S. soldiers of fortune and to make air strikes from U.S. bases. In any future operations a cold-blooded appraisal should be made of the degree to which it is necessary to make concessions in favor of disclaimability as opposed to military effectiveness.

At this point Mr. Dulles interjected that he was in basic agreement, but he would like to add two additional items. First, he felt that he should have asked the Navy their opinion of what was necessary to assure that the men would get safely ashore with their material during a night landing on an unfamiliar coast. This opinion should have been rendered without concern for political considerations. Another factor was that the President was faced with hurried and difficult decisions. We had made it very clear to him that to call off the operation would have resulted in a very unpleasant situation.

Statement: The odds against any operation of this kind are almost insurmountable until the Government faces up to making sharp decisions promptly.

Question: Did the Government give the CIA an almost impossible job?

Answer: I don't believe so. I think we were closer to success than you realize.

Statement: Despite the disaster the U.S. must retain the capability for unofficial military actions. Whenever the U.S. engages in this sort of operation we will again be faced with the same dilemma of disclaimability versus military effectiveness. In this connection, I think we should consider changing our overt foreign policy posture for we have a tendency to make our operations extremely difficult by oversanctimonious announcements.

Statement: In the future we must carry out any operations of this type in such manner that the President, who has

shown the highest courage, will not have to assume the responsibility.

### **177. Editorial Note**

The rescue operations conducted by the Navy after the failure of the Bay of Pigs operation were discontinued on April 26, 1961. (CTG 81.8 telegram 262004 to CINCLANTFLT, April 26; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials) On April 23 Admiral Clark had rescued an additional 24 members of the Cuban Expeditionary Force from the Bay of Pigs area. (CINCLANTFLT telegram 240438Z to COM-SECONDFLT, April 23; *ibid.*) Admiral Dennison instructed Vice Admiral Ricketts, Commander of the Second Fleet, to support Clark's "humanitarian mission" if it became necessary to protect the U.S. forces involved, and to do so "with our banners flying." (*Ibid.*) No conflict with Cuban forces ensued, however, and the search for survivors thereafter proved futile. Ricketts summed up the frustration of the United States Naval forces, which stood off the coast of Cuba during the Bay of Pigs operation, in a cable to Burke and Dennison on April 23: "Beyond my horizon, but not far distant, lie the beaches on which died recently many who had great faith in us. Within my horizon steams the naval power that could have justified that faith. I view it with both pride and anguish." (COMSECONDFLT telegram 232129Z to CNO and CINC-LANTFLT, April 23; *ibid.*)

### **178. Memorandum From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara**

JCSM-278-61

Washington, April 26, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Top Secret.

SUBJECT

Cuba (U)

1. Reference is made to your memorandum to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, dated 20 April 1961, subject as above./1/ This memorandum with Appendices is responsive to questions posed by you in reference memorandum.

/1/Document 159.

2. Appendix A contains an analysis of courses of action. Appendix D contains a brief outline plan based upon CINCLANT Operation Plan 312-61/2/ which will provide for the overthrow of the Castro government by the application of US military force, the course of action considered best suited to accomplishment of the objective.

/2/Not found.

3. This plan, with appropriate additional instructions to CINC-LANT as to timing and manner of execution, is responsive to the requirement for a military plan to accomplish the desired objective. The plan is well conceived, has been reviewed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and will insure quick overthrow of the Castro government.

4. There is a need for a well conceived political program to insure rapid turnover of control of government to designated Cuban authorities and permit the rapid withdrawal of US forces. It is recommended that the Secretary of State be requested to develop guidance in support of this operation.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Earle G. Wheeler/3/

/3/Wheeler signed for Burke above Burke's typed signature.

## Appendix A

### ANALYSIS OF COURSES OF ACTION

1. The objective as stated by the Secretary of Defense is to overthrow the Castro regime by the application of military force.
2. The analysis which follows has taken into consideration the world reaction to the abortive invasion of Cuba. Most nations apparently believe that the United States was wrong to give any support to this operation, particularly since there was no resultant uprising by the Cuban people. In the United Nations the prestige of the United States has deteriorated, and there are indications that the Latin American nations have lost some confidence in the United States. Within Cuba the incident has probably had the effect of strengthening the control held by the Castro government, instilling confidence and loyalty in the militia and other forces, and demoralizing the dissident elements which remain.
3. Any military effort undertaken by the United States against Cuba will engender strong criticism by most of the world. If a military action or series of actions take appreciable time to accomplish the overthrow of the Castro government, this time can be used to the advantage of the Sino-Soviet Bloc and Castro in strengthening his defenses. More important, world Communism can use this period of time to advantage in building up a massive, world-wide, anti-US propaganda effort against the United States course of action, including introduction of a resolution to the UN. If the United States were to embark on such a course, and then, through the pressure of world opinion be forced to abandon its action, the result would be a severe blow to the prestige, the objectives, and the national interests of the United States. Achieving world-wide surprise in an undertaking like this is extremely important. It seems apparent, therefore, that any military operation undertaken to accomplish the above objective should be swift, sharp, and overwhelming and should present the remainder of the world with a *fait accompli*.
4. The following alternative programs have been considered:
  - a. Naval and Air Blockade. A blockade could be instituted immediately and could be effective. It would stop the influx of Bloc military equipment and personnel, and would do much to halt the export of Communism from Cuba to Latin America. The Cuban economy, in particular the oil industry, is especially vulnerable to blockade, and it is believed that a blockade, by itself, could reduce the Cuban economy to chaos./4/ However, a blockade would force great hardships on the Cuban people regardless of political belief, and it is likely that their plight would generate strong resentment in all of Latin America. Since a blockade must be time-consuming, world resistance could be skillfully built up by the Bloc, as pointed out previously, and the blockade might have to be abandoned. Since use of blockade would not, by itself, assure the objective it is not recommended as the only course of action. However, blockade should be utilized to complement a military invasion and, if such an invasion is to be delayed for an appreciable period of time, a limited blockade against military supplies and equipment should be instituted to prevent build-up of Cuban military strength.

/4/McNamara added a marginal handwritten note at this point which reads: "how soon would it force [illegible word] capitulation?"

- b. Overt Support of Cuban Dissident Forces. This course of action would strengthen the dissident elements both materially and psychologically. The recent defeat of the invading dissident elements has undoubtedly had a demoralizing effect on them, and has probably weakened them in numbers and organization. Reorganizing these groups, and attracting additional numbers in face of current repressive measures taken by Castro will be

extremely difficult. Even if sufficient numbers could be organized, their training would take much time, and it seems evident that their quality could never come up to US standards. These factors all seem to indicate that this course of action by itself would give little assurance of accomplishing the objective, and it is therefore not recommended. While support to dissident elements should not be chosen as the main course of action, it should not be abandoned. These elements can be of great assistance in intelligence collection, serve as focal points for uprisings, and assist in military operations and continual harassment of the Castro regime. Some form of support in Cuba is necessary to give encouragement to resistance movements in Cuba and other countries and to impress them with the fact that the United States will not abandon them. The success of a military operation against Cuba, however, should not be made dependent upon the actions of any dissident elements.

c. Military Intervention by the Organization of American States. In world opinion, the US has replaced its previous policy of unilateral US action to prevent extra-continental interference in the affairs of this hemisphere, fundamental to the Monroe Doctrine, with a policy of collective action through the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Rio Pact. While instability in Latin America is due fundamentally to the lack of social and economic progress, instability has been increased and intervention by the Sino-Soviets in the affairs of this hemisphere has occurred partly because of the unwillingness of the United States to act unilaterally in the face of its treaty restrictions and the unwillingness of the OAS to act. The unwillingness of the OAS nations to act against Cuba may be attributed to a long-standing fear of intervention by any country (particularly the United States) in their own internal affairs, as well as fear of reaction within their individual countries. Actually, the organization itself is weak. It is a system of 21 sovereign nations, each of which has equal vote. Any decision by the OAS must be a compromise that is acceptable to two-thirds of the member states. OAS military actions would be unlikely unless a majority of the states were convinced that they were faced with a clearly discernible external threat. Communist tactics, however, are subtle and cleverly screened. Although there is a growing awareness among the Latin American nations that the totalitarian Castro government is becoming a threat to their security, they do not yet consider it a clear and present danger. For these reasons OAS military action against Cuba is unlikely for the present.

d. Overt US Actions Supported by Latin American Volunteers. Participation by volunteers from Latin America in direct US military action against Cuba would soften the impression that the United States would be taking unilateral action contrary to the spirit of the UN and the OAS. In order to be convincing, it would have to be evident that there was a large number of volunteers coming from a variety of Latin American nations. The assembly and organization of these volunteers would be time-consuming, and all security of the operation would be lost. The success of this course of action seems unlikely and it is not recommended in any form.

#### e. Unilateral US Action

(1) Unilateral military action by the United States offers the advantages that there need be no compromise in pursuing US objectives, and that a reasonable degree of surprise can be achieved. Disadvantages are that strong criticism will be voiced by many nations of all political beliefs, and that the Latin American nations may become particularly distrustful of the United States.

(2) If the United States could overthrow the Castro government through a swift and decisive action, it is believed that all nations would, even while criticizing, accept a *fait accompli*, especially since they recognize the inherent danger to the basic security of a nation posed by a hostile regime located in close proximity. There is also a good possibility that a decisive action taken by the United States against Communism would renew the confidence of many in the Free World whose faith in our leadership has been faltering.

(3) An overt US action, if taken, must be assured of success. Physical capture and control of the Cuban government and key facilities is the only means of insuring that the objective of overthrowing the Castro government is achieved. CINCLANT Operation Plan 312-61 (Cuba), which has previously been reviewed and approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, provides the means of achieving this objective. Implementation of the plan should be in such a manner as to achieve surprise, both world-wide and tactical, and to accomplish the objective

in the shortest time possible.

(4) Concurrent supporting actions should be taken as required, to assist in the accomplishment of the objective and to insure the establishment in Cuba of a situation satisfactory to the United States following the overthrow of the Castro government. Appropriate agencies of the Federal government should participate in this planning. One action that is recommended is the creation of an incident which will provide justification for the overthrow of the Castro government by the United States. Such an incident must be carefully planned and handled, to insure that it is plausible and that it occurs prior to any indication that the United States has decided to take military action against Cuba. Premature exposure of the fact that the incident was created by the United States could cause a shift in sentiment by the Cuban people against the United States.

#### 5. More deliberate action

a. Another alternative to be examined is that of following a more deliberate course, characterized by extensive preparations both military and political. The military forces to be used in the operation could be brought to peak effectiveness at the time desired, and logistic arrangements could be thorough and complete. If the military posture in Cuba continued to improve, requiring additional assault forces to invade Cuba, these forces could be obtained through a selective increase of forces as shown in Annex C to Appendix F.<sup>/5/</sup> The time of assault could be chosen during a period when world tensions are low, minimizing the risk of having to conduct military operations in more than one place. The chances of achieving tactical surprise might be enhanced by planning the invasion for a time which coincided with routine training exercises.

<sup>/5/</sup>Neither printed.

b. With sufficient time available a "Freedom Brigade" composed of Cuban Volunteers inducted into the US Army could form the basis for a flexible organization which could contribute to guerrilla and unconventional operations, the spearhead of any overt military action and post combat reconstruction. Such a force would also have a psychological effect on Cuba and could be used to absorb Cuban manpower in the US and Caribbean area. The unit, as US leadership is replaced by indigenous leadership, could be discharged to be utilized as a purely national force.

c. Politically the United States could make a concerted effort to establish world support and acceptance of the necessity for taking action against the Castro government. Advantage could be taken of favorable political situations as they develop. Military action could be planned for a time when international bodies such as the UN and the Organization of American States are not in session, and when nations are preoccupied with other problems. Particular effort could be made to get OAS to propose or support action in Cuba.

d. While a more deliberate course of action offers some advantages, past history seems to indicate that time is on the side of Castro. An invasion should not be conducted during the hurricane season, which lasts from August through November. The Castro regime could use this time to strengthen itself militarily and internally to the point that it would require a large-scale effort to overthrow him. Since this course of action would probably require large military effort, and shows little assurance of achieving the implicit political objectives, it is not recommended.

6. From a military point of view, it is recommended that the course of action proposed in paragraph 4 e above, in conjunction with the courses of action discussed in paragraphs 4 a and 4 b, be adopted if it is decided to accomplish the stated objective.

[Here follow Appendix B, "An Appraisal of the Strength of the Cuban Military Forces", and Appendix C, "An Appraisal of the Probable Behaviour of Cuban Civilian Population During the Period of Military Action".]

## Appendix D

## OUTLINE OPLAN

### Task Organization (See Annex A Attached)

#### 1. Situation

##### a. Current Intelligence

b. Enemy forces are organized Cuban military forces, Cuban militia, para-military groups and mobs, and possibly, pro-Castro "volunteers" from Latin America communist elements.

##### c. Friendly Forces:

(1) US Department of State is responsible for evacuation of non-combatants, establishment of "Status of Forces" agreements, provisional local law enforcement agencies, base rights and overflight rights as required; and will provide for logistic support to indigenous personnel after the first five days of the operation.

(2) MSTS and MATS will provide augmenting transportation as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(3) Central Intelligence Agency will support the operation.

(4) Rio Pact forces and indigenous forces may offer assistance.

#### 2. Mission

Commander in Chief Atlantic will, when directed, conduct military operations in Cuba in order to accomplish the following: Defend the Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay; restore and maintain order; support or reestablish the authority of a Cuban Government friendly to the United States, and support the national policy of the United States.

#### 3. Execution

a. In the event that military operations are directed, any or all of the following courses of action may be undertaken by CINCLANT:

(1) Reinforce and actively defend the Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay.

(2) Interdict Cuban lines of communication.

(3) Neutralize Cuban offensive capability by overt attack against military installations.

(4) Conduct Naval and air blockade of Cuba.

(5) Conduct assault operations to accomplish the mission.

##### b. Concept of Operations

(1) Western Cuba. When directed, operations in Western Cuba will be conducted by Army Airborne, Naval Amphibious, and Air Force and Naval Air Forces with the objective of seizing the Havana port and airfield complex, communications and government facilities in order to establish a base for further operations. Thereafter, operations will be expanded as required in order to accomplish the over-all mission.

(2) Eastern Cuba. Naval and Marine Forces under command of COMNAVBASE GTMO, will conduct operations to (a) defend the Naval Base at Guantanamo, (b) protect and/or evacuate United States and other designated nationals, (c) maintain a base for further operations.

(3) It is essential that operations be conducted with rapidity and decisiveness by a concurrent amphibious and airborne assault in Western Cuba. This will require that the amphibious elements be mounted and sail prior to deployment of airborne elements to the objective area. The combined airborne-amphibious assault and link-up of forces will ensure early availability of medium tanks and artillery in support of the airborne forces. The army seaborne echelon must be loaded out and sail so as to be available to commence off-loading on D-day.

(4) Amphibious forces in Western Cuba will be relieved and withdrawn as soon as practicable for further operations in the Eastern Cuban area./6/

/6/McNamara added a handwritten marginal note at this point that reads: "Should not Eastern and Western plans be carried out simultaneously?"

(5) By 60-90 days after the initial landing of combat forces it is expected that conditions will permit the utilization of other forces as occupation troops.

(6) The "objective areas" are initially the Western Cuba area for Army-Naval-Air Force operations and the Guantanamo area for Naval operations. Other objectives such as the Isle of Pines, specific cities, industrial plants or transportation facilities will be designated, depend-ent upon conditions prevailing at the time.

### c. Phasing

#### (1) Phase I

(a) Activation of operating headquarters.

(b) Reinforcement and defense of Naval Base at Guantanamo.

#### (2) Phase II

(a) Naval Task Force deploys to objective areas.

(b) Army Task Force deploys combat and service units to staging bases, prepared for airborne assault operations; deploys to objective area on order./7/

/7/At the bottom of this page of the Outline Plan McNamara noted: "Too much boiler plate and not enough detailed planning".

(c) Air Force Task Force deploys tactical elements to advanced operating airfields as required and air lifts elements of the Army Task Force to staging bases.

#### (3) Phase III

Commander Joint Task Force conducts concurrent airborne and amphibious assault operations in the Havana area and supports defensive operations in the Guantanamo area.

#### (4) Phase IV



(a) Commander Joint Task Force conducts amphibious assault and other operations in the Eastern Cuban area to seize Santiago and other objectives as required.

(b) Offensive land operations will be subsequently conducted to link up Army Forces, Western Cuba and Marine Forces, Eastern Cuba, if required.

4. Administration and Logistics are normal for Joint Operations and will be based on the anticipation of sustained operations for a period of 60-90 days.

5. Command and Signal matters are normal for Joint Operations. Commander Amphibious Force, US Atlantic Fleet will be alternate Joint Task Force Commander to Commander Second Fleet. Communications will be in accordance with current CINCLANTFLT procedures.

## **Annex A to Appendix D**

### TASK ORGANIZATION

1. Atlantic Command--CINCLANT

a. US Atlantic Fleet--CINCLANTFLT

b. Joint Task Force--COMSECONDFLT

(1) Naval Task Force--COMSECONDFLT

(a) Striking and covering forces which comprise combatant air and naval elements plus underway replenishment group.

(b) Amphibious Task Force which comprises amphibious shipping, one command ship, eight destroyers and a landing force (II Marine Expeditionary Force) made up of:

Headquarters, II MEF

2nd Marine Division (-)

2nd Marine Air Wing (-)

Force troops, Atlantic

(2) Army Task Force/8/

/8/In the margin at this point McNamara posed the question: "Is this enough?" At the bottom of the page he asked for the total number of men involved in the Army Task Force.

(a) XVIII Airborne Corps Headquarters

(b) 82nd Airborne Division

(c) 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment

(d) 4th/68 Tank Battalion

- (e) 2nd Infantry Brigade
- (f) 56th Artillery Group
- (g) Special forces and civil affairs teams
- (3) Air Force Task Force
  - (a) One Command Headquarters
  - (b) Two Troop Carrier Wings
  - (c) Four Tactical Fighter Squadrons
  - (d) One Tactical Control Element
  - (e) One half Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron
- c. CIA Force Atlantic (when activated)
- d. Special Operations Task Force Atlantic (when activated)
- e. On Call Forces

Additional US forces as designated and directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, if required. It is anticipated that "On Call" forces will be the 4th Infantry or 101st Airborne Division, one Armored Combat Command, two additional Tactical Fighter Squadrons and uncommitted forces of the Atlantic Fleet. State of readiness to be determined by JCS.

f. Augmentation of Air and Surface Lift

MATS and MSTs provide air and surface lift as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**Annex B to Appendix D**

OPTIMUM TIMING

1. The Castro regime is currently occupied in rounding up those dissident elements which have been exposed or which are in any way under suspicion. Time affords the regime the opportunity of crushing most opposition, imposing tighter control, strengthening its military posture, and propagandizing the public. If time passes without an indication that outside help will be provided to the Cuban resistance movement, the will to resist will be progressively weakened. Time allows world communism to marshal opposition to any move taken by the United States to overthrow Castro.

2. The hurricane season in the Caribbean normally begins in August. A military operation in that area should not be started later than July./9/

/9/A note by McNamara at this point reads: "between 7/15 + 12/1?"

3. National Guard and Reserve Army divisions are brought to active duty for annual training commencing in June. If the Communist Bloc creates incidents in other areas these divisions could remain on active duty and other forces such as the 1st and 2nd US Army divisions released for action in other areas.

4. Subsequent to the overthrow of the Castro government a regime which is satisfactory to US objectives must be established in Cuba. In view of the current disorganization within the Cuban resistance movement, the time required to insure that such a government is prepared to take firm control is unknown. Since the political actions which will follow military operations will probably determine the long-range success or failure of the entire operation, this factor assumes great importance.

5. With no previous warning it will take a period of 18 days from the time preparatory actions are started until the first assault landings can be made in Cuba. Prior warning, permitting preliminary preparation, could reduce this time to ten days without giving advance notice to the rest of the world. Every effort should be made to conceal the purpose of the operation once troop embarkation has commenced.

6. If it is decided to overthrow the Castro government, the operation should be initiated as soon as possible.

### **Annex C to Appendix D**

#### ESTIMATE OF TIME TO ACCOMPLISH OBJECTIVES

D-day and A-hour are the day and time of the coordinated airborne and Marine assault on Western Cuba in the Havana area. Specific military actions, in phases, as included in current planning are shown below:

##### Phase I

Day: D-18/10/

/10/McNamara noted at this point: "could be cut to D-10 with prior warning".

Events: Decision to implement or prepare to implement plan for US intervention in Cuba.

--Alert CINCLANT, CIA, Department of State and other Unified and Specified Commanders.

--CINCLANT notifies his component commanders, forces alerted. Joint Task Force Headquarters activated.

--Implementing forces prepare for deployment.

--Amphibious shipping proceeds to embarkation ports.

--Reinforcement of Guantanamo.

--Evacuation of dependents from Guantanamo.

--Marshalling of supporting MSTs sea lift.

--Commander Special Operations Task Force Atlantic reports to Commander Joint Task Force.

##### Phase II

Events:

--Form and deploy Naval Task Force.

--Deploy Army forces to staging bases and loading out ports. Load and deploy on order.

--Deploy Air Force tactical elements to advanced airfields and prepare for air operations.

### Phase III

Day: D-5

Events:

--Decision to accomplish plan for US intervention in Cuba, if not previously determined.

--Departure of Army ground forces via sea lift.

--Departure of Marine forces in amphibious shipping.

--Diversion, as may be planned by CINC-LANT concerning weather, and cover activities.

Day: D-day

Events:

--Coordinated airborne and Marine assault Western Cuba with supporting air strikes, air reconnaissance and blockade as required./11/

/11/At this point McNamara posed the following question in the margin: "Should not force be expanded to permit simultaneous strikes West and East Cuba?"

Day: D+2 to D+4

Events:

--Isolation of Havana.

Day: D+6 to D+8

Events:

--Control of Havana.

### Phase IV

Day: D+17 to D+19

Events:

--Control of Santiago De Cuba.

Day: D+24 to D+34

Events:

--East-West Linkup of US forces.

Day:

D+30 to D+54

Events:

--Cessation of Organized Resistance.

Day: D+60 to D+90

Events:

--Withdrawal of combat forces.

## **Annex D to Appendix D**

### ESTIMATE OF CASUALTIES

1. No reliable estimate of either friendly or enemy losses can be stated at this time. Such losses will be directly related to the intensity of Cuban resistance and inversely related to the speed and effectiveness of the assault by US forces.

2. Assuming that Army forces are committed in both the number and manner envisioned in the current operations plan, Army planners have estimated that ground forces would sustain approximately sixteen (16%) percent casualties.<sup>/12/</sup> This estimate includes casualties of all types and is based upon a thirty (30) day operation with four (4) days of heavy fighting, the intensity of combat tapering off after that time.

<sup>/12/</sup>McNamara added a marginal note at this point asking for a specific number of projected casualties.

3. In view of the influence of political, psychological, and other similar considerations, the effect of which is unknown at this time, any estimate of Cuban casualties would be so hypothetical as to have little practical value. No estimate of Cuban casualties, therefore, is provided.

[Here follow Appendix E, "Contingencies That the US Should Be Prepared To Face in the Event of Operations in Cuba" and Appendix F, "Residual US Forces".]

## **179. Memorandum From the President's Assistant Special Counsel (Goodwin) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)**

Washington, April 26, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, 1/61-4/61. Secret. The memorandum is a draft and is not initialed; it was not uncommon, however, for such papers to go forward in draft form.

Here are few scattered thoughts on the "Cuba" problem.

Cuba is a threat to the security of the United States in two basic ways:

1. As a direct military menace in the Caribbean, a menace which will be intensified as communist arms shipments continue. However, even this increased danger will be minimal. Our treaty obligations commit us to the defense

of any American nation which is attacked directly. Any military moves by Castro could be met immediately by our forces. Similarly we could intervene in case of Castro military aid to guerilla operations in the Americas.

2. As an exporter of revolution: There is no doubt that Cuba is being used as a base for export of the communist-fidelista revolution. This is done through the actual supply of funds and technical assistance to insurgent elements, through widespread and reasonably effective prop-aganda apparatus including a news service and radio network and through the use of Cuba as an example of the alliance between fidelismo and necessary social reform--identification with the welfare of the people.

This threat is significant--especially in the Caribbean area. However, even here, in the last six months there has been a significant decline in Cuban effectiveness. This has come because of the growing isolation of communist-fidelista elements from the Democratic left as Castro's pro-Soviet bent has become more apparent; and as Castro has become increasingly erratic in his personal behavior. There are signs, in fact, that the communists are looking for another, more stable, hero--perhaps Cardenas of Mexico.

3. While this means a declining influence of fidelismo over popular movements; it does not necessarily lessen the importance of Cuban-Soviet-Chinese material and technical aid to revolutionary movements. It is important to remember that even if Castro were wiped out tomorrow we would not have solved the problem of communist influence in the Americas. In fact, most of the greatest danger spots (e.g. Northeast Brazil, Colombia back-country, communist dominated student movements, etc.) do not owe either their existence or strength to Castro, but to local and independent leadership. This danger has been steadily growing, and would continue to grow if our only anti-communist move were to knock out Castro. These movements will benefit from material assistance, even if they do not look to Cuba for leadership.

Suggested Course of Action:

Action Aimed at Cuba Directly

1. Before acting directly against Castro, in any fashion, we need a complete reassessment of the vulnerability of his regime--the degree of popular support, the probably declining position of the Cuban economy and its impact on the Cuban people, the efficiency of his police state, the possibilities of underground organization, etc. Without such an assessment it is impossible to realistically determine what alternative courses of action are open to us.
2. To meet the military threat we can work out defense agreements with Central American nations along the lines suggested by Professor Berle.
3. We should approach the government of Chile to call an Inter-American arms limitation conference. This conference should deal with methods of stopping external arms shipments in the context of the over-all limitations which are desperately needed in Latin America. We should decide, before this meeting, whether the risks in an OAS blockade of arms shipments to Cuba are outweighed by the dangers involved in halting and searching international shipping.
4. Immediately consult with heads of major nations in Latin America to see how far they are willing to go in terms of collective action. This should be done via a personal emissary. Although we should have a reasonably clear idea of what we want to do, this should be a genuine consultation among allies. All the myriad proposals for OAS action, etc., depend on the reaction of other Latin nations--a reaction as yet undetermined.
5. Underlying all these proposals is the feeling that we should not move quickly in direct action against Cuba. I do not believe that there is any course of direct action which we can wisely take on the basis of current knowledge and conditions.

Attempts to stop direct export of Castroism

1. We should provide Caribbean nations with the technical help (e.g. radar to spot incoming planes) and navy patrol assistance to meet the dangers of arms shipments from Cuba to insurgent elements in those nations.

2. There are two or three real danger spots (e.g. Dominican Republic and Haiti) where we should now be developing democratic alternatives to the present regime--organizing replacement governments. If we do not do this then the inevitable changes in governments may be followed by Castro-type regimes. When Democratic alternatives are organized we should consider means of precipitating the fall of Trujillo and Duvalier and possibly Somoza. In this way we can exert maximum control over the type of replacement government-- the timing and initiative should be ours.

3. Help provide counter-propaganda assistance to Latin governments--e.g. radio transmitters. The more we can work through Democratic-liberal forces in Latin America, rather than through USIA alone, the more effective will be our propaganda.

#### General counter-communist operations

Our long-range strategy in the Americas should have two basic elements:

First, the organization of a strong political counter-force. We have a ready instrument in the newly organized League of Democratic Parties. We should assist these parties--financially and technically--to develop progressive political movements (in some cases revolutionary movements, especially in the less progressive countries) through helping them in techniques of organization down to the village level, ideological warfare, etc. U.S. government help should be covert.

Second, the Alianza para el progreso. This program with its emphasis on social and economic advance is the real hope of preventing a communist takeover. The Alianza is proceeding about as rapidly as possible given present organization of effort, and the magnitude of available funds. Both of these elements are unsatisfactory.

A. Funds: Present plans provide for the allocation of 250-350 million dollars worth of economic assistance to Latin America in fiscal 1962. This is out of a total of 2.4. billion. (This sum does not include the social development fund.) One hundred million of this will go to Brazil to get them over their current financial crisis. I am not clear that any substantial re-allocation could be made given the enormous needs in Asia (especially in India and Pakistan)--although I believe there can be some increase. However, these funds are probably not sufficient to make a real and effective start in economic development.

B. Organization: If communist takeover comes in Latin America it probably will not come through guerilla warfare, but through the capture of indigenous revolutionary movements. We cannot meet such a threat effectively--well-organized as it is--when our overseas operations are as diffuse and uncoordinated as they are today. The aid program, the political bureaus of State, the USIA, educational exchange, CIA activities all go, to too great an extent, their own way under separate heads and often in pursuit of separate goals. I believe that diffusion of effort results in great waste of resources and intelligence. We must organize our non-military overseas operation to reflect our basic objective in Latin America--the strengthening of democratic Western-oriented nations and governments so that they have the capacity to resist communist and neutralist attack in all its forms. Those who are charged with the responsibility for achieving this objective must have control over the instruments which our government provides. Just as we have seen the need for some centralization of command in fighting hot wars--it is needed for effectively waging a cold war. This does not necessarily mean a "Chief of Hemisphere Operations"; but at the very least it means that, within each key country there must be a central operational capacity and authority with direct lines to the levels of action in Washington.

#### **180. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency**

Washington, April 26, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret. This paper was transmitted from the CIA on April 26 to Lieutenant Colonel B.W. Tarwater.

### NARRATIVE OF AIR ACTIVITY

1. On 8 April 1961 a briefing was conducted for the Deputy Director (Plans), Acting Chief, WH-4, and Acting Chief, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] which outlined the proposed plan of air operations for Project [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] and Sub-Project [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. Targets were as cited in [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] Air Operations Plan 200-1/1/ with the exception that Targets 1, 2, and 3 were to be struck on D-3 as a portion of Project [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. Project [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] involved Target 1, San Antonio de Los Banos, two aircraft; Target 2, Campo Libertad, two aircraft; Target 3, Santiago de Cuba, two aircraft.

/1/Not found.

2. On 9 April the briefing team departed Washington for [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. The purpose of this trip was to brief the combat elements of the proposed plan of activities. After two days target study at [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] a recommendation was submitted to Headquarters which recommended assignment of three aircraft each to Targets 1 and 2. This change was effected.

3. On 15 April Project [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] was implemented with strikes occurring at dawn. A 24 hour delay received 13 April changed air strikes from D-3 to D-2. Results of that strike were believed to have been destruction of 70 to 80 percent of GOC's combat air capability. Damages sustained by attacking aircraft were as follows: one aircraft and crew destroyed by anti aircraft fire eventually crashing into the sea approximately 30 miles north of the Cuban coast attempting to reach Boca Chica Naval Air Station. One aircraft landed at Grand Cayman short of fuel. One aircraft landed at Boca Chica Naval Air Station, no battle damage had been incurred. The reason for landing at the Boca Chica Naval Air Station was due to this aircraft attempting to escort a crippled B-26 to Boca Chica which later crashed into the sea. The aircraft which landed at Boca Chica and Grand Cayman were eventually returned to the launch base.

4. On D-1 eleven targets were assigned the B-26 strike force designed to destroy the remainder of GOC operational air capability. Between the hours of 2100 local and 0100 local during the night 16-17 April the target assignment was changed prohibiting air strike of any airfields the morning of D-day. All aircraft were committed to sustain air support over the beachhead area.

5. On D day 5 C-46's and one C-54 successfully dropped the airborne battalion at the appointed DZ's within the objective area. These aircraft returned to the launch base. B-26 aircraft were rotated over the beachhead throughout the day. The B-26 aircraft reported the sinking of one gun boat, the destruction of one Sea Fury and one B-26, numerous strikes on ground targets and one C-46 aircraft by evasive attack caused an attacking Sea Fury aircraft to crash into the sea. Four B-26 were lost late on D day to enemy T-33 aircraft. One aircraft landed at Grand Cayman with one engine shot out. One aircraft landed at Boca Chica due to pilot fatigue. It should be pointed out that all Cuban air crews had at this point been up 36 to 48 hours without sleep. Thirteen (13) actual combat sorties were flown on D day. All sorties were in support of the amphibious landing on the beachhead. At this point it became clear that enemy air activity utilizing T-33 aircraft could destroy the more obsolete B-26 type aircraft with relative ease and a decision was made to attempt to destroy the remaining GOC aircraft at night on the ground through successful bombing raids. Six aircraft were scheduled to strike the main base of operations in two waves of three each during the night of 17-18 April. The aircraft aborted on take off. Heavy haze and low clouds prevented three aircraft from finding target and one aircraft attacked San Antonio de Los Banos.



6. On D plus 1 it became necessary to utilize American civilian pilots to protect the beachhead area due to the fact the Cubans were either too tired or refused to fly. Six sorties were flown during the afternoon of D plus 1. Reported damage by GOC sources indicated 1800 casualties and destruction of seven tanks.
7. On the morning of D plus 2 American pilots again were pressed into service for protection of the beachhead area for two reasons (1) the reluctance of the Cuban pilots to fly more combat sorties without air to air cover and (2) the Americans were attempting to build morale and develop a will to win. Two American crews were shot down with no survivors in the morning of D plus 2. Both aircraft were lost to T-33 aircraft. All sorties flown on the morning of D plus 2 were scheduled during the one hour period Navy air cover was supposed to have been provided the beachhead area.
8. In the afternoon of D plus 2 a radio message was received from the ground Brigade Commander stating that he was destroying his equipment and "heading for the hills". Upon receipt of this message all air activities in support of the beachhead area were terminated.



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**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **181. Paper Prepared for the National Security Council by the Central Intelligence Agency**

Washington, April 26, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Intelligence Material, 1961. No classification marking. Prepared in conjunction with the Joint Staff of the JCS. The CIA also prepared a paper for the NSC on April 27 entitled "Bloc Economic Support for the Castro Regime." (Ibid.)

#### **SUBJECT**

##### **Bloc Military Aid to the Castro Regime**

The Soviet bloc has supplied large quantities of arms and military equipment to Cuba since major shipments began last September. The value of these arms is estimated at between \$50 and \$100 million. Thus far bloc military deliveries have consisted almost entirely of land armaments, including medium and heavy tanks, self-propelled assault guns, field and antiaircraft artillery, large numbers of military vehicles, and ample quantities of infantry weapons and ammunition.

Although there are occasional rumors, apparently emanating from Cuban refugees, that naval equipment has been supplied, these rumors cannot be confirmed.

Bloc aircraft delivered to Cuba include helicopters and light piston-engine Czech basic trainers. There are some unconfirmed reports of crates of the size which would hold MIG fighters, but there is no corroborating evidence that these aircraft have been delivered to Cuba. It is highly unlikely that MIGs are presently operational with the Cuban Air Force. Cuban pilots are training in the bloc.

##### **Bloc Military Negotiations With Cuba**

The Sino-Soviet bloc maintained a cautious attitude toward the Cuban regime for more than a year after Castro's takeover in January 1959. Although intermittent Cuban military contacts were made with the bloc during 1959 and early 1960, these apparently did not result in firm military aid commitments from the bloc until about May 1960. In this period sizable quantities of small arms were procured in Western Europe, primarily in Belgium.

Soviet First Deputy Premier Mikoyan's visit to Cuba in February 1960 signaled the beginning of a series of trade and aid agreements between Cuba and all countries of the Sino-Soviet bloc. As political and economic ties were established, it became clear that Moscow intended to back up its propaganda support for Cuba with a major campaign of material assistance. Following the collapse of the summit and the cancellation of President Eisenhower's trip to the USSR, however, the bloc undertook active military negotiations with the Cuban

government which culminated in arms agreements with both the USSR and Czechoslovakia.

By the end of July 1960 Czech small arms and ammunition were in Cuba. Shortly thereafter, the first large group of Cuban military personnel was sent to Czechoslovakia to receive military training.

In September the first large bloc arms delivery was made. Since then military equipment has been regularly supplied to Cuba. In addition, large numbers of military usable vehicles and military-related items have been delivered.

#### Bloc Military Technicians

A large number of Czech and Soviet technicians currently are working in military capacities for the Cuban government. These technicians are assisting the Cubans in assembling equipment and installing such weapons as anti-aircraft batteries. They also are employed as instructors in military courses and as advisers to individual military units. Bloc instructors probably have been participating in flight training being conducted in Cuba on Czech piston trainers.

[Here follow Annex A, a chart illustrating "Bloc Land Armaments and Military Equipment Displayed in Cuba", and Annex B, a chart illustrating "Bloc Aircraft Supplied to Cuba."]

### **182. Paper Prepared for the National Security Council by the Director of the Department of State Operations Center (Achilles)**

Washington, April 27, 1961.

//Source: Department of State, S/S-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Top Secret. According to a note on the source text, the final draft of this paper was prepared by Theodore C. Achilles, but the initial drafts were prepared in ARA in response to a request from Rusk on April 24. (Excerpt from a record of Secretary's staff meeting, April 24; *ibid.*) The drafts were circulated within the Department for comment by senior concerned officials before the final draft was prepared. (Memorandum from Legal Adviser Chayes to Rusk, April 26; *ibid.*) A number of other papers were prepared for the April 27 NSC meeting. As a follow-up to the April 22 NSC meeting the Department of State prepared memoranda entitled "Information on Helpful and Unhelpful Governments" and "Strengthening Freedom in the Americas." It also drafted recommendations proposing invocation of the Trading With the Enemy Act and an assessment of the proposed Caribbean Security Agency. (All *ibid.*, S/S-NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, NSC 5402-Memoranda) The Department of Defense prepared a paper on the training of Cuban soldiers. (*Ibid.*)

#### PLAN FOR CUBA

##### Problem:

To remove the threat to the United States and to the hemisphere posed by the Soviet-dominated Castro regime in a manner which will advance rather than injure our other hemispheric and world-wide interests.

Among possible future courses of action toward Cuba, two strategic alternatives stand out. We can adopt a short term strategy of eliminating the Castro regime in the relatively near future, or a long term strategy of isolation and containment which might ultimately lead to change of regime, but would in any case make the present one relatively impotent beyond its own borders.

This paper does not elect between the strategies. It recommends that we undertake painstaking intelligence estimates and other studies before making an irrevocable choice. Such choice need not be made in the immediate future, since it is possible for the time being to prepare for the implementation of either strategy. An ultimate

choice in favor of the long term strategy could, however, be prejudiced by the style and precipitateness with which we might implement certain of the paper's recommendations.

#### Discussion:

The complete defeat of the volunteer Cuban liberation force which had been encouraged by the United States and covertly assisted with training, equipment, and transportation strengthened Castro internally, weakened the morale of anti-Castro forces in Cuba and elsewhere and gravely damaged United States prestige. Part of the lost ground has been recovered by a declaration of President Kennedy on April 20 to the effect that if it should ever appear that the inter-American doctrine of non-interference merely concealed or excused a policy of non-action, and if the nations of the Hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration, the United States Government would not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations, which are the security of our nation. The world is now waiting to see what the United States will do.

Action to correct the intolerable Cuban situation--which for practical purposes means the overthrow of the Castro regime--must be taken if communist penetration of the hemisphere and the disastrous drain on United States prestige in the world are to be stemmed. Yet the situation is not so bad but that ill-considered, poorly-timed action would not make it infinitely worse. It could disrupt the OAS. It could turn most of Latin America against us. It could weaken our position in other areas. It could trigger a World War.

#### Recommendations Concerning Courses of Action:

Whatever decisive measures may in due course be decided upon to bring about the downfall of the Castro regime it is clear that three courses should forthwith be pursued vigorously:

- 1) Implementation of the Alliance for Progress.
- 2) Development of a realistic, sound and honest moral posture based upon the President's April 20 statement, which must be able to withstand before world opinion and in the U.N., the distortions of an all-out Communist propaganda offensive and provide the justification for progressively more drastic actions against Castro.
- 3) Develop the fullest and most accurate intelligence possible on the attitude of the Cuban people towards Castro. Such intelligence is essential before deciding upon possible courses of decisive action. If a majority is opposed to Castro, we must find the best means of helping the majority to overthrow him. If a majority support Castro and what he stands for, the problem will be far more difficult and military action would be undesirable as leading to a prolonged occupation of a hostile population with serious consequences elsewhere. If that is the case, slower methods such as quarantine and efforts to change the views of the maximum number of Cubans would be indicated.

Individual consultation with the other American Governments has been in progress since April 23 to ascertain their views towards the best means of removing the menace to hemispheric peace and security caused by the intrusion of extra-continental power into Cuba. The consultation is designed to ascertain whether the other Governments recognize the nature of this menace, whether they recognize the distinction between "intervention" in the internal affairs of another state and defense against a widening area of domination by extra-hemispheric powers, and their attitude toward OAS action or possible narrower collective or unilateral action. Effective action through the OAS if it can be secured would obviously be desirable. Many American Governments, however, while privately expressing the hope that the U.S. will act unilaterally, quickly and decisively to overthrow Castro, continue reluctant to stand up publicly and be counted and would in varying measure publicly criticize such U.S. action. Nevertheless, OAS consideration would be desirable provided that we have a clear view of the results desired and reasonable expectations that we would have the votes to obtain them.

If the recommended approach to the OAS yields nothing in the way of tangible support for us on the Cuba

problem, we will still be able to consider moving unilaterally against Castro in support of the Cuban rebels, if that is what we want to do. Other recommended actions insure that the intervening time will not be lost.

#### Courses of Action:

##### I. U.S. should unilaterally, without awaiting outcome of other actions:

1. Push ahead energetically with the Alliance for Progress, including, as soon as funds are available, implementation of readied housing and other projects giving visible proof that it is being implemented.
2. Establish a strong moral posture commanding the respect of unbiased opinion everywhere based on steady development of the themes in the President's April 20 statement and including the following elements:
  - a. U.S. love of and willingness to fight for "freedom."
  - b. Recognition that the U.S. faces a world-wide relentless struggle against an expansionist Sino-Soviet bloc, including its use of non-military aggression.
  - c. U.S. has long since abandoned "intervention" in the internal affairs of its neighbors and cannot tolerate the intervention of extra-continental powers such as has occurred in Cuba.
  - d. U.S. objective is to see the Cuban people freed from alien domination and free to choose their own government and forms of economic and social development.
3. Maintain active overt and covert psychological campaign designed to weaken Castro in Cuba and outside.
  - a. Make an official public statement--to which other American Governments could subscribe--setting forth our liberal aspirations for a post-Castro Cuba in the political, economic and social fields.
  - b. Formulate and announce concrete measures which the U.S. contemplates to assist the Cuban people and economy after Cuba is again free.
  - c. See that campaign is fully and continuously coordinated between State, USIA, CIA and DOD.
4.
  - a. Apply the Trading with the Enemy Act to Cuba.
  - b. Consider gradual reduction, through amendment of existing regulations, of the export of foods and medicines to Cuba.
5. Continue to give open encouragement to the Cuban liberation movement both in Cuba and outside.
6. Continue to assist Cuban liberation efforts by covertly:
  - a. Training Cuban freedom fighters, especially for guerrilla service in Cuba. (They are the indispensable component for any plan to oust Castro.)
  - b. Arming Cuban freedom fighters inside Cuba.
  - c. Supporting Cuban underground capabilities for intensified sabotage of Cuban economy.
  - d. Encouraging defections.

7. Develop study in depth of vulnerabilities of Castro regime and possible courses of action to exploit them, and of strengths and means of countering them.

8. Develop fullest possible intelligence on:

a. Degree of support Castro enjoys among Cuban people and why.

b. Castro's military strength.

9. Intensify measures to provide assistance to any Latin American country requesting help in defending itself against armed attack or subversion by Castroism. Implement existing programs and accelerate surveys of requirements of governments where this is a particular problem.

10. Establish system of surveillance in Caribbean to identify and frustrate armed assistance to subversive movements in other countries.

11. Deport known non-U.S. Castro agents from U.S.

12. Develop and hold in readiness military plans for forcible overthrow of Castro by:

a. Overt U.S. action, whether alone or assisted by Latin American countries.

b. Covert support of Cuban action sufficient to accomplish objectives.

13. Should any Latin American country offer to mediate differences between U.S. and Cuba, accept offer but only subject to Cuba's severance of relations with Sino-Soviet bloc and agreement to hold OAS-supervised elections.

II. Redefine and reinterpret what constitutes aggression and what constitutes legal governments. We should elaborate a new doctrine in close association with certain Latin Americans and other friendly powers, which would spell out the concepts embodied in the President's speech of April 20. Such an interpretation of our obligations under the UN and OAS Charters is needed to enable us to justify publicly the actions which might be necessary to deal with Communist takeovers from within a country. In this connection, we should consider recognizing and mobilizing support for a Cuban Government in exile as an alternative to Castro.

III. 1. With all deliberate speed carry on consultations with each Latin American Government regarding a possible Meeting of Foreign Ministers, either under the Rio Treaty or the OAS Charter, to consider a resolution calling on Cuba to:

a. Allow free exercise of normal civil rights and prepare for elections under OAS supervision.

b. Give effect to its OAS commitments with respect to communism.

2. If result of consultation is reasonably promising, request Meeting of Foreign Ministers.

3. Seek in Meeting of Foreign Ministers as wide agreement as possible on a line of specific sanctions, as follows, designed to quarantine Cuba in the Hemisphere, if Cuba refuses to heed call mentioned in 1 above:

a. Breaking of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

b. Expel or exclude Castro regime from OAS.

c. Economic sanctions.

d. Support for armed effort to liberate Cuba if Meeting is willing to [go?] this far.

4. Propose collective OAS quarantine against Dominican Republic similar to that against Cuba on grounds of interventionist activities and manifest suppression of human rights.

IV. If support of collective OAS action under III is insufficient to isolate Cuba in Hemisphere, seek to get informal agreement among as many Latin American countries as possible on course of sanctions mentioned in III-3-a, c, and d.

V. Upon completion of III and IV but not before, unless future developments so require, take decision as to whether danger to U.S. security is sufficiently great to resort to force to overthrow Castro in spite of our international commitments, and if so, whether action should be overt or covert. Then carry out action at earliest possible date.

VI. All planning and operations under this plan should be examined in the light of the repercussions their implementation would have in the U.N.

VII. Keep NATO, or principal NATO allies, informed of major U.S. decisions and actions under I to IV above, and at appropriate time seek their cooperation in the application of economic measures against the Castro regime.

### **183. Editorial Note**

Cuba was discussed under the heading "U.S. Policy Toward Cuba" at the 479th meeting of the National Security Council on April 27, 1961. According to the Record of NSC Actions, approved by the President on April 29, the following decisions were adopted as NSC Action No. 2413:

"a. Noted the President's view that a decision with respect to trading with Cuba should be deferred pending developments in Cuba during the next week.

"b. Noted the President's request that the Attorney General should prepare recommendations regarding control of Cubans entering or residing in the United States.

"c. Noted the President's request that Assistant Secretary of Defense Nitze, in consultation with appropriate agencies, should complete the Defense study of the military training of Cubans and coordinate it with further proposals from the Department of State with respect to the broader aspects of the Cuban problem." (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, National Security Council Meetings, No. 479)

According to the Record of Actions, the following people, in addition to the President were among the participants in the meeting: Robert Kennedy, Dulles, Bissell, Burke, Gilpatric, Stahr, Connally, Zuckert, Nitze, Murrow, U. Alexis Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, Sorensen, Goodwin, and Taylor. (Ibid.)

### **184. Notes on the 479th Meeting of the National Security Council**

Washington, April 27, 1961.

//Source: Yale University, Bowles Papers, Box 392, Folder 154. Personal. Prepared by Bowles who mistakenly dated this NSC meeting as having taken place on April 24.

[Here follow 6 pages of Bowles' notes; see Documents 158 and 166.]

The climate is getting considerably better, and the emotional attitudes are falling back into line. If anyone had not attended the previous meetings, he would have thought the NSC meeting this morning had its share of fire and fury. However, it was in far lower key.

Ted Sorensen called me aside to say that he was glad I had said what I did, and Dick Goodwin called me to say I had shown great courage in the last few meetings and he was grateful for it.

At this stage plans continue for all kinds of harassment to punish Castro for the humiliation he has brought to our door. However, the general feeling is that all this should be handled carefully, that there should not be too much publicity, that attitudes of others should be taken into account.

There was a reference of making up a black list of those nations which had voted against us, such as Mexico and Brazil and of finding some means to punish them. I did not take this too seriously.

It was interesting to see a cablegram/1/ prepared as a result of the meeting, which misrepresented the entire mood of the meeting. The cablegram was prepared for our ambassadors in Latin America and would have dragged reluctant Latin American governments into a show of power and force against Castro, cutting off diplomatic relations, shutting off trade, and so forth.

/1/Bowles may have confused the results of the April 22 and the April 27 NSC meetings at this point. The "cablegram" under reference could be Document 171.

I was rather startled when I saw the cable, particularly since it had already been initialed by Dean Rusk. However, I called Dean at home at 8:00 and told him I thought the cable totally misrepresented the meeting. He agreed that this was so, and I proceeded to have a first and last page written which showed the view of the President, asking the ambassadors to show great discretion, not to get any publicity, and that no government should be pushed or pulled into positions it was not prepared to take, and that the ambassadors should use their own judgments, avoiding reckless statements which would create the impression of the United States being a wobbly, uncertain, and vindictive power.

## **185. Memorandum on the Substance of Discussion at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting**

Washington, April 28, 1961, 11 a.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.00/4-2861. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the Pentagon. The source text is marked: "State draft--not cleared with Department of Defense".

[Here follow a list of participants and discussion of Laos.]

### **II. Cuba**

Mr. Achilles reported that there had been established a task force on Cuba to pull together the current intelligence information on that country in order to enable the President to reach an ultimate decision.

General LeMay remarked that we had pretty good estimates on the basis of our recent experience and that he was certain that the longer we wait the worse the situation becomes.

Mr. Johnson observed that there were two aspects to the problem: (1) To what degree and when does Cuba become a military threat to the US; (2) Castroism as a subversive and political threat to the Latin American



countries. On the second aspect the process for dealing with the problem has been initiated and been in train for several months. We have received internal security assessments from the Latin American countries and, at the present moment, there is an interagency team visiting most of the countries in the Caribbean area to consult with US officials on the spot on the nature of the problem and the types of assistance needed by the local governments.

General LeMay stated that he did not believe that Cuba per se would ever become a military threat to the US. If the Russians moved in, however, it would be a completely different story. The big problem, as he saw it, was the fact that all of Latin America might go Communist if Castro is not curbed. He felt we should not just sit back and let that process proceed unimpaired.

General Shoup asked what we were going to do if Soviet military weapon systems were moved into Cuba. As he saw it our security required that Cuba be devoid of missiles and aircraft which had the capability of being used against the US.

General LeMay commented that the present situation in Cuba gives the Communists a leg up on getting control of the rest of Latin America a lot quicker. Mr. Achilles noted that our problem with respect to Cuba would be a lot simpler if Soviet missiles were actually present there. Our problem is that Cuba is being used as a subversive base to enable the Communists to get control of the Latin American area. Cuba as a military threat is a threat in terms of its ability to train guerrillas to be used in the other countries rather than as an invasion threat against these countries.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Department had established an Operations Center which would be under Mr. Achilles. It was designed to be a focal point of information and action on what we are doing as well as an intelligence center on what the Communists and others are doing. He hoped that the JCS would help us in getting this activity established and moving and expected that State people would undoubtedly be in touch with theirs.

[Here follows discussion of Algeria.]

## **186. Paper Prepared in the Office of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency**

Washington, April 28, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Nitze Files, Cuba Papers, 1961. Secret. This draft of SNIE 85-61 was apparently circulated for comment at least to the Department of Defense. There is nothing on the source text to indicate reaction to the draft or any subsequent revision of the estimate. SNIE 85-61, as finally approved and circulated, has not been found.

### **SUBJECT**

SNIE 85-61: Outlook for the Castro Regime

#### **The Problem**

To assess the internal strengths and weaknesses of the Castro regime in Cuba and to estimate its prospects for survival, over the next six months and over the longer term, assuming that the US continues to encourage opposition to Castro but takes no overt military action against him.

#### **Working Outline**

##### **I. Basic Strengths and Weaknesses of the Regime**

A. On the eve of the abortive opposition landings in Cuba the Castro regime had changed greatly from that which took power some two years earlier with plaudits of all but small proportion of Cuban population. In its transformation from a liberating movement appealing to all classes to a radical revolutionary regime it had lost many of its initial assets and acquired various liabilities. At the same time it had developed new and important sources of strength.

#### B. Liabilities

1. Progressive alienation of most of those with stake in society, including much of organized labor and students as well as middle and upper classes. Alienation of some of peasantry. Internal and external opposition stirrings.
2. Economic problems and disruptions.
3. Dissipation of initial support in 26th July movement and in military.

#### C. Strengths

1. Continuing importance of Castro as symbol of authority and prophet of reform--appeal of Castro and program to rural and urban poor.
2. Growing strength, experience and self-confidence of Communist and other activists manning the apparatus--increasing going concern value.
3. Increasingly effective controls over all phases of economic and social life and progressive elimination of dissidents.
4. Development of militia as security arm specifically tied to regime--impact of equipment and training.
5. Impact of Bloc economic, military and moral support, both in meeting specific problems and shortages and in bolstering confidence and prestige of regime.
6. Continuing usefulness of US as scapegoat.

### II. Repercussions of Defeat of Opposition Landings--Short Term Prospects

A. Assessment of internal advantages gained, with caveats about continuation of grumbling and opposition, reaction to mass arrests, probable misgivings in militia.

1. Likelihood of stepped up military and security preparations.

#### B. Outlook over next six months

### III. Longer Term Prospects

A. Over next 1-5 years regime likely to face serious problems in consolidating its position:

1. Regime will probably continue to face at least latent hostility of large proportion of population and has still to reconstitute broad, organized following among peasants and urban poor. Possibility of flareup.
2. Problems of adjustment and deferred maintenance likely to plague economy, increasing sources of discontent.
3. Regime still overly dependent on Castro as individual, though growth of Communist apparatus is likely to

reduce this.

4. In time coherence, dedication, freedom from corruption and other distractions among those manning the state apparatus may decline--and at least some possibility of dissension at the top remains.

5. Probable decline in usefulness of US as scapegoat.

B. On other hand, Castro regime has important opportunities:

1. In time, economic and social reform program likely to tie well-being of increasing numbers to the state, thus reducing incentives to buck the system.

2. The longer Castro goes on, the more likely the regime is likely to be accepted by Cuban people and rest of hemisphere as a going concern--grumbling (as in Yugoslavia) will not seriously threaten the regime. Impact of indoctrination.

3. Little likelihood of serious slackening in Bloc support.

4. Internal acceptance of exile groups likely to decline.

C. The extent to which latent and active opposition will continue to pose serious problems for the regime will probably depend primarily on:

1. The extent to which the regime does in fact provide a tolerable livelihood for the Cuban people.

2. The extent to which hopes of successful (if eventual) overthrow are kept alive:

a. Ability of opposition elements to maintain at least symbolic opposition in the mountains.

b. Impact of apparent acceptance of regime by its neighbors--whether or not Cuba remains isolated or is accepted by Latin neighbors.

### **187. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, April 28, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated, but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the fifth in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and took place at the Pentagon. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included Admiral Dennison, Captain Ferguson, Commander McCauley, King, Mitchell, and Tarwater.

[Here follows testimony from some of the participants in the Bay of Pigs invasion.]

Admiral Dennison

Statement: My first knowledge that something might happen with regard to Cuba goes back to April 1960, when we helped construct facilities on Swan Island. The next indication I had was when the commander of my amphibious force advised me that he had the task of sanitizing some landing craft, as well as transporting these craft in an LSD to Puerto Rico. At this point, I consulted with General Lemnitzer and asked him if the JCS was aware of these activities. General Lemnitzer told me that he knew something of the activities. At that time he called General Cabell and requested that I be informed of the operation. Consequently, a CIA representative

came down and briefed me on a portion of the plan. He explained that the planning for the operation was compartmentalized and that no one group knew all about the operation.

Statement: On the 9th of February I had the privilege of talking with the President. I asked him if I would be engaged in any possible bail-out operations. He responded definitely no, that if anything went wrong the force would fade into the hinterland. The JCS Directive of 7 April/1/ set forth the nature of the naval operation that would be required and directed the mission be executed in such manner that the United States could plausibly deny that we had any part in the operation. On 1 April 1961 I issued my own operation order which set up, among other things, the rules of engagement for surface ships and for the air patrol. (Tab B)/2/ On 1 April I received JSM-365-61./3/ which gave me my basic orders and also indicated that the CIA was responsible for the planning and implementation of the operation with the DOD in a support role.

/1/Document 85.

/2/Tab B was not found attached.

/3/Not printed, but see Document 76.

Statement: As of this date, I have never seen a copy of the Cuban Invasion Plan./4/ As things turned out, it would have been most helpful if I had. For example, when we observed the Perka we thought it was a ship that had been taken over by the refugees. We had no knowledge of the men aboard the Perka. Furthermore, when we were called upon to start the rescue operation, we didn't know how many men were in there, what particular beaches they'd be landing on, where they were likely to be, or any information of this sort. I understand that the reason we probably were not informed of the details of the plan was because it was felt that we had no need for it. But as I say, as it turned out, we certainly did have. On the 5th of April I received a dispatch from the JCS/5/ which postponed D-Day from 10 April by at least 48 and probably 98 hours. (Tab B) In the dispatch which informed me of the new D-Day of 17 April, I was also informed of a change in the concept of the support that I was to provide./6/ Essentially, this change consisted of the fact that instead of convoying the invasion fleet my forces would be called on to provide area coverage.

/4/Not found.

/5/JCS telegram 993422 to CINCLANT, April 5. (Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

/6/Reference is to CM-179-61, April 7, Document 85.

Statement: We had a very difficult time communicating with the Cuban invasion force ships. We didn't know the communications circuits of the ships, nor did we have other adequate means of communication. If the invasion force had been attacked, we'd have had a very difficult time communicationwise. At the same time that I received the change in the concept of the support I was to provide, I also received the first major changes in the rules of engagement./7/ (Tab B)

/7/Reference is to CM-179-61, April 7, Document 85.

Question: Who made the decision to change the rules of engagement?

After some discussion of this question, it was decided that the JCS memo of record on the change on the rules of engagement<sup>7</sup> should be secured.

Statement: We were also informed that it was desired that the chance of aborting the mission be minimized. I was informed that the Cuban invasion force was prepared to take risks to prevent the possibility of aborting the mission by overly anxious intervention.

Statement: I wanted then, and I still want, more comprehensive, current intelligence on Cuba, particularly photographs. I am particularly concerned about Guantanamo. What Castro's reaction may be in this connection is a great concern to me.

Statement: I am opposed to the use of DOD personnel in a covert operation. I believe that when U.S. forces go into an operation, they should go in under the cover of their U.S. uniform.

Statement: In view of the extent to which we became involved in the Cuban operation, I believe that it should have been conducted by me, through a special task force. I believe that in an operation of this sort the control has to be centralized, and the control should be military. Even in this covert operation, at some stage it should have been handled by the regular military staff rather than a group restricted in size by security considerations.

It was agreed that Admiral Dennison would forward to the Study Group a copy of his record of the operation./8/

/8/A copy of the chronology of the Bumpy Road Operation maintained by CINCLANT, which was provided to the Cuba Study Group, is in the Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials.

### **188. Memorandum From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Director of the Joint Staff (Wheeler)**

Washington, April 29, 1961.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret.

SUBJ

Landing in Cuba on short notice

1. Yesterday the Secretary of Defense was interested in what we could do in Cuba on five days notice. We were giving him a horseback estimate which is not the best way to do it.
2. Have the Joint Staff and/or CINCLANT come up with an outline plan on what we could get into Cuba five days after the President says go, with an indication of what additional forces we could get if we had three more days. This plan should also indicate how fast we could build up our strength after D-Day.

Arleigh Burke/1/

/1/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

### **189. Editorial Note**

In a speech at a May Day rally in Havana on May 1, 1961, Cuban Premier Fidel Castro stated that there had been a socialist revolution in Cuba and that Cuba was a socialist country. (The New York Times, May 2, 1961) On May 2 Department of State press spokesman Lincoln White interpreted Castro's speech to mean that Cuba had openly become a member of the "Sino-Soviet bloc." He noted that Castro's use of the term socialist was consistent with usage throughout the Communist bloc, where socialism was viewed as a stage in the evolution toward Communism. In fact, White stated, Castro's speech made it appear that "Castro considers Cuba further along the communist road than some other countries in the bloc." (*American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1961*, pages 306-307)

Secretary of State Rusk confirmed this interpretation in his replies to questions at a press conference at the

Department of State on May 4. Rusk noted that Cuba had become, in Castro's own words, "a declared member of the Sino-Soviet bloc." Rusk described the development as a "setback" for the Western Hemisphere. He stated, "the thing to do now is to draw a deep breath and look over the situation very carefully and consider a wide range of problems involved and possible actions which ought to be taken; and, most of all, to stay on the main road of hemispheric development and hemispheric solidarity." (Department of State *Bulletin*, May 22, 1961, page 762)

### **190. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

Washington, May 1, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Top Secret; Sensitive.

SUBJ

Cuban Contingency Plans

On Saturday, 29 April, Admiral Burke and I reviewed with the President Contingency Plan 1/1/ for the invasion of Cuba by U.S. troops. As you will recall, the Plan was designed to minimize U.S. and Cuban casualties, minimize the time required for subjugation of Cuba, and maximize the assurance of a successful operation. The Plan provided for the use of approximately 60,000 troops, excluding naval and air units, and required 25 days between the date of decision and D-Day. It was estimated that complete control of the island could be obtained within 8 days, although it was recognized that guerrilla forces would continue to operate beyond the 8th day in the Escambray Mountains and Oriente Province. The land, sea, and air forces required for the invasion were to be secured from existing forces--no additions to existing forces, with the possible exception of a few merchant ships, would be required prior to D-Day.

/1/Not found. This was an apparent revision of the Outline Plan sent by the Joint Chiefs to McNamara in JCSM-278-61, Document 178.

The President concurred in the general outline of the Plan.

Please assign to the Joint Staff and CINCLANT the responsibility for preparing the detailed instructions necessary to implement the Plan. These instructions should be designed to minimize the lead time required, and maximize security during the period between the decision and the invasion.

I want to repeat again that work on these plans should not be interpreted as an indication that U.S. military action against Cuba is probable.

Robert S. McNamara/2/

/2/Printed from a copy that indicates that McNamara signed the original.

### **191. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Ball) and the Director of the Operations Center (Achilles)**

Washington, May 1, 1961, 5:45 p.m.

//Source: Kennedy Library, Ball Papers, Subject Series, Cuba, 1/24/61-12/30/62. No classification marking. Transcribed in Ball's office.

Referring to paper on Cuba,/1/ Ball asked what the status was. Achilles said the second draft/2/ has been written. Ball asked if it had been sent out of the Department. Achilles replied that it had gone to Defense. Ball said he is going to a meeting tomorrow which [is] of such critical importance that he would like to have another draft and asked Achilles if he could meet with him to get together to agree on some modifications here. Achilles said the paper was originally drafted in ARA and that he redrafted it. He talked to the Secretary yesterday afternoon but the Secretary has not seen it. Achilles said he told the Secretary it would take a lot of pulling and hauling in all directions. Ball thought the paper was too one-sided. Achilles asked which direction Ball thought it was slanted. Ball replied that it was slanted toward intervention. Achilles said he thought it was slanted the other way. Ball said not the way he read it. Achilles said he tried to meet in the middle and state both positions fairly. Defense definitely thinks it is slanted against intervention. Ball said he didn't want to be in a position of attacking a paper State has sent over. Achilles said he would be glad to meet any time with Ball. Ball agreed on 6 p.m./3/

/1/Reference is to the paper originally submitted to the NSC on April 27 as the "Plan for Cuba," Document 182. It was in the process of being revised on May 1 by an interagency Task Force headed by Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Nitze.

/2/Not found.

/3/On May 2 Ball discussed the draft Cuba policy paper with Bowles. Ball expressed the concern that the policy review was moving too quickly and was likely to produce a half-digested product. Bowles agreed and wondered whether it might be possible to postpone the NSC discussion of Cuba policy scheduled for May 5. Ball noted that the administration was confronting a major policy decision on Cuba, and Bowles observed that it could not afford any more mistakes. Ball stated, however, that it would not be easy to delay the policy review because Nitze had been given a deadline to produce the paper and he was working hard to blend the contributions he had received from State and Defense. Ball concluded that the end product would not be bad. (Memorandum of telephone conversation, May 2; Kennedy Library, Ball Papers, Subject Series, Cuba, 1/24/61-12/30/62)

## **192. Memorandum From Senator Mike Mansfield to President Kennedy**

Washington, May 1, 1961.

//Source: Johnson Library, Vice Presidential Security File, NSC III. No classification marking. Senator Mansfield of Montana was the Majority Leader of the Senate.

### **SUBJECT**

#### **The Cuban Aftermath**

The consequences of the recent incident in Cuba give us some guidelines as to how to proceed in the weeks and months ahead. The principal consequences would appear to be the following:

- (1) Responsible world opinion was, to say the least, somewhat shocked by this episode.
- (2) Significant Latin American opinion was hard-put to express a reaction which would not alienate us by criticizing us but, at the same time, would not put the Latin Americans in the position of endorsing our course in this incident. For this restraint on their part, the promise of the Alianza para Progreso deserves full credit. Without that promise, Mexico, Brazil and others might have been vehement in their criticism.
- (3) The most articulate support at home for our role in the course leading to the episode and the episode itself was Republican and the clamor for further action is largely Republican and, significantly, not the Senate Minority Leader or Governor Rockefeller.

(4) The incident showed Castro solidly entrenched and this was not anticipated. Oddly enough, Castro reacted with comparative mildness to the incident and this was not generally anticipated either. This would suggest that our sensitivity to this personality and to the Cuban people is not what it ought to be. The post-incident reaction of Castro, moreover, suggests that he might have been shocked, at least partially, into a realization of how provocative he had become. The mixed and mild Latin American reaction may have brought home to him the fact that he had alienated some mighty good people in this hemisphere. Finally, he may have been brought to realize how heavily dependent he has become on a far-away country and on a system which has become less and less Cuban and more and more alien.

It should hardly be necessary to add that the above analysis is highly speculative. Nevertheless, it is not an inadmissible hypothesis. The point is that we have not gauged Cuban affairs effectively in the past and we do not now really know the implications of the unexpected Castro reaction. It is highly in our interests to explore this reaction rather than merely to dismiss it curtly.

(5) The Cuban exiles' reaction to the incident is one of bitterness and, as might be expected from our well-intentioned but ineffective involvement we are blamed for their frustrations. It will be a long time, if at all, before this same group is likely to prove effective in any movement to unseat the Cuban government, with or without U.S. financial help and with or without strengthening by U.S. guerrilla-type forces.

## Responses

Historically, revolutions have been successful in Cuba when a relatively small group of Cubans acting largely with their own blood and fortunes choose that decisive moment when the mass of the Cuban people have had a surfeit of an existing regime. That moment is likely to come for the Castro regime if it continues in its present ways. The small group that will tip the balance will find its own methods. If the circumstances are right, the group will succeed without U.S. help of any significance as, in fact, Castro succeeded and, before him, the revolutionists against Machado.

The problem for us is to face up to the fact that we have made a mistake. If we react in frustrated anger we are likely to intensify the mistake. It will not be easy to face the fact; political pressures at home to the contrary will be applied. Nevertheless, it is the courageous thing to do and the sensible thing to do. For if we yield to the temptation to give vent to our anger at our own failure, we will, ironically, strengthen Castro's position with his own people, jeopardize our relations with much of Latin America and do further damage to our position throughout the world.

This does not mean that the use of force on our part is ruled out in all circumstances. Here are specific situations in which its use would probably be acceptable to Latin America and world opinion:

(1) Guantanamo--Force as a response to a Cuban effort of force to take over this base is essential even though the base may have little military value and, in other circumstances, its relinquishment through negotiation might be indicated.

(2) Force to prevent the establishment of Soviet missile or any other kind of base for Russian forces in Cuba, provided we are seriously re-evaluating our own base-policies on the rim of the Soviet Union.

(3) Force in support of other Latin American nations subject to a military invasion by Cuba.

The key to the effective use of force in these situations, however, is its restraint. It has got to be clear that the force is adjusted in quantity to the specific acceptable objectives involved in each situation and that we are not using the situations merely as an excuse for a general intervention in Cuba. To those who would suggest directly or indirectly that they be so used, these questions might well be put: What if we do intervene directly and succeed in overthrowing Castro? What have we really achieved beyond, perhaps, a certain measure of



self-satisfaction that at least we can stop the Communists in Cuba? If the timing of the intervention is bad, we will have a long drawn-out guerrilla war with substantial casualties and great costs. When it is over we will have to install some kind of government in Havana and prop it up with a costly aid program for a long time to come. We will probably have to reinstate the sugar quota. We will have, in short, a devastated Cuba, no closer to freedom and stability than it has been in the past and, brought to that point at enormous cost to ourselves and to the Cuban people.

If we eschew the temptation to strike back in frustrated anger, then the course of policy which suggests itself is this:

(1) A gradual disengagement of the U.S. government from anti-Castro revolutionary groups; let them proceed on their own if they wish, without blessing or financial support from the United States.

(2) A taciturn resistance to the political blandishments or provocations from those at home who would urge that we act directly in Cuba.

(3) A cessation of violent verbal attacks on Castro by officials of the government, at least pending an evaluation by Latin American friends of his somewhat unusual reaction to the incident of the invasion. And in this connection, a little less vehemence in our refusal to countenance his suggestions for talks about our difficulties is clearly indicated.

(4) If possible, let the lead on condemning the Castro government in inter-American meetings come from friendly Latin American countries rather than from ourselves. Similarly, let the lead on proposals for a boycott or other acts short of war come from them. We should go along with these attempts to pressure Cuba but we should do so with a minimum of ostentation and we should not lose patience if the pressures cannot be built on a hemispheric basis at this time.

(5) For the present, abstain from and stall on but do not condemn in advance, efforts of significant Latin American countries to bring about a partial reconciliation between Cuba and the United States if they feel these efforts are worth making.

(6) Push hard and fast with the follow-through on the Alianza para Progreso. Reorganize the relevant Departments and Agencies in the Executive Branch for this purpose. Assign outstanding men from the White House staff and elsewhere to direct the effort. This is the key to our relations with all of Latin America in the next decade, and unless it is turned, Castroism is likely to spread elsewhere in Latin America whether or not Castro remains in power in Cuba. The best prospect of preventing this spread is to render the soil of the balance of Latin America sterile to the growth of this off-spring of mass discontent. The Alianza para Progreso is a sound concept for bringing about the sterilization. The problem now is to act on its premises rapidly and sure-footedly. If it works, there is a good possibility that Castro will either wither on the vine and [or?] be eventually overthrown by the Cubans themselves. Faced with that prospect it is not inconceivable that he may try to lead Cuba back into the House of the Hemisphere or yield to someone who can./1/

/1/A similar memorandum was addressed to Secretary Rusk by Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island on May 5. Like Mansfield, Pell warned against the dangers of direct U.S. military intervention in Cuba, and suggested that when the time was ripe, the Cuban people would depose Castro themselves. He also stressed the importance of the Alliance for Progress initiative. (Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/5-561)

### **193. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 1, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret;

Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the seventh in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and took place at the Pentagon. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included McGeorge Bundy, Admiral Clark, Captain Crutchfield, Captain Kenscher, Commander McGriffin, Mitchell, and Tarwater.

[Here follows discussion of organizational matters involving a request by Taylor for additional information.]

Admiral Clark

Admiral Clark, the Commander of the Navy Task Group in the operation, was the first person to appear before the Group. In his introductory remarks he made the point that all the orders he had received were good dispatches and clear and that they were all carried out fully; that his evacuation efforts, however, were difficult because he couldn't fire back and because the waters in the Bay were restricted.

Question: With regard to the one-hour period when you were flying CAP for the CEF air unit there is some indication that there may have been a misunderstanding on the time. Please describe what happened.

Answer: Yes. We were ordered to fly cover for the CEF bombers from 0630 to 0730 Romeo/1/ on the morning of the 19th of April. However, I decided to play this one safe and ordered my people to be on station one-half hour early in the event that the CEF aircraft made the trip quicker than they had anticipated. However, they came over our ship one hour early and consequently we launched our aircraft immediately. We arrived over the beach area forty minutes before 0630 Romeo. However, by that time the CEF aircraft had already made their strikes and left.

/1/Romeo is a reference to local time.

At this point Mr. King was requested to check with the CEF air forces and determine what caused the time discrepancy.

Question: Would you describe what you saw on the reconnaissance flights on D+1 and D+2?

Commander McGriffin: On D+1 at approximately 1530 there was lots of traffic moving down the east side of the Bay. There were a number of tanks, trucks and there were six or eight burned-out busses. The tanks were not burned out apparently, however, because while they were stopped on the first flight at 1530, we checked again at 1730 and by that time they had moved. On D+2 we saw some burned-out friendly tanks. The enemy had established a roadblock in an area north of the beachhead. A large number of trucks and forces were converging on the area from all directions. About 1200 on D+2 we saw the CEF all bunched up at the little resort on the beach.

Question: You got the impression that there was a rapid and intensive reaction by Castro?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Admiral Clark, do you have any recommendations that you'd like to make with regard to the Cuba operation or any future operations of this sort?

Answer: I believe it went better than we had a right to expect. Possibly once the rules of engagement have been established, it would be desirable to give the commander on the spot a freer hand.

Question: What do you think were the reasons for failure?

Answer: One obvious reason was that surprise was not achieved.

Response: All the evidence we have had to date indicates that tactical surprise was achieved.

Answer: Well, the opposition formed awfully fast. I think Castro's people saw the CEF force from a lighthouse and they also could have seen them from the air. Another possible reason for failure was that the beach was not as advertised. It was supposed to be a sandy beach, whereas it was coral. Furthermore, the opposition was not as advertised.

Question: Could they have been seen by the lighthouse?

Answer: Yes, sir, they could have seen us very clearly from the lighthouse.

Mr. Dulles: We have no evidence of any reports originating from this lighthouse. I'll have to talk to Mr. Lynch.

Statement: With regard to the evacuation of the CEF force, on the last day we couldn't have evacuated the force unless we were prepared to fight our way in. If we'd been allowed to use counterforce we could have taken them all out. On D+3 we started our destroyers cruising along the beaches a couple of miles from shore at night and five miles from shore during the days so that the survivors could see us and would come out. A group of refugees of the invasion force did make their way to the keys west of Cochinos Bay and we picked them up. However, we picked up no one on the east side of the Bay. Without using counterforce it was impossible to move in to pick up survivors during the daylight because we were straddled by artillery fire at three miles offshore.

Question: With regard to the possibility of the invasion forces having been sighted from the air, did any aircraft fly over or did you pick up any airliners?

Answer: Yes. Furthermore, since the convoy formed in the daylight, it could have been seen from the air.

Statement: Well, let's ask Colonel King to check with the people that planned the naval portion of the operation and determine whether or not this lighthouse had been considered as a factor in the operation, and whether or not the force was supposed to come within sight of the lighthouse.

Lieutenant Colonel Egan

At this point Admiral Clark and the officers of his command left and Lieutenant Colonel Egan appeared before the Group. Colonel Egan stated that he was the operations officer for the project.

Statement: Prior to September the Cubans were being trained as guerrilla teams. I went down on an inspection trip, during which the Guatemalan revolution broke out. We were concerned about the possibility of losing our bases. President Ydigoras requested that we make an airborne landing, which we did. I was in command of the outfit. Washington gave us permission to do this, but I operated under the Mission Chief in Guatemala.

Mr. Dulles: We can give you the facts on this.

Colonel Egan: Following the Guatemalan revolt I was sent down to organize the brigade. On the 20th of November 1960 we had about 420 members in the Cuban force. During this period we were trying to build up our brigade and by the 8th of December we initiated a seven-week training program with approximately 575 to 600 troops.

Question: Who were the trainers?

Answer: At this time I had five American trainers and Cuban officer personnel to assist in the training. However, it must be remembered that we weren't dealing with raw recruits.

Question: How did you determine the background and potential leadership capabilities of the various persons in the brigade?

Answer: We had background files on each man. However, the actual selection for leadership positions depended on the performance of the men in the field.

Question: Did you have political problems?

Answer: At first, yes. However, as it became obvious that no one received any special privileges and that all ranks were only temporary, and that if a man selected for a position of leadership couldn't handle the position he went back to the ranks, when these factors became evident the political problem subsided.

Question: Tell us something of Pepe./2/

/2/Jose Perez San Roman, commander of the CEF brigade.

Answer: He came from a long line of military officers. His father was a General in the Cuban Army. Pepe was a Captain in the Cuban Army. He had trained at Fort Benning, Georgia. He could work with anyone. He was earnest, proud, self-sacrificing and a natural born leader.

Question: Did you say you had ample leadership and training?

Answer: Adequate leadership and training, yes, but not experience. Twenty per cent of our troops, however, were former soldiers.

Question: Did you have any reservations as to the readiness of this force?

Answer: No. I felt that each week they delayed would bring a retrogression in the force.

Question: Was there ever any discussion of U.S. participation or direct assistance in this operation, militarily speaking?

Answer: Yes, there were rumors, but we carefully pointed out that diplomatic and logistical support would be given, and the lines of communication would be kept open. Beyond this, however, no support could be expected from the United States.

Question: Did they feel betrayed when the United States aircraft didn't come in?

Answer: Yes. It was obvious that the enemy was using jets and the United States jets were visible to them and, of course, they couldn't understand why they didn't come to their assistance.

Question: Then it was a natural reaction rather than their having been told that the United States would enter on their behalf?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Did you think that the United States aircraft would come in and support the force?

Answer: I hoped so, but I didn't believe so.

Question: Were instructions given as to what to do if the operation failed?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What?

Answer: There were several contingencies: (1) If we passed the code word they were not to make the landing. (2) If the landing malfunctioned due to heavy surf or enemy opposition they were to disperse according to plan. They were to be evacuated by boat, and as a last resort they were to disperse and continue guerrilla operations in the swamp.

Question: Were any specific areas in the swamp assigned for guerrilla operations?

Answer: No, sir.

Question: Then when they fell back to Blue Beach they were doing what they were supposed to do so that they could be evacuated?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Could a man penetrate and live in the swamp?

Answer: Yes, a man could penetrate, but a unit couldn't, and there was enough small game, fish and fresh water in the swamp that men could survive.

Question: If you had to evacuate the men by sea how would you have moved them out?

Answer: By the same boats that brought them in. We had 36 18 1/2-foot aluminum ships. As I recall, I thought he mentioned that the men were searching for and using indigenous boats.

Question: Do we have any evidence that Pepe ever gave the command for the force to become guerrillas?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you believe that some of the men of the force could have come through the swamp?

Answer: Yes.

Colonel Egan: The pilots of the aircraft carrying the airborne troops said that the troops at DZ-1 were attacked by approximately 800 militia.

Question: Do you believe that the landing was a surprise?

Answer: Yes, sir, because the time it took Castro to get tanks and artillery to the beachhead area were the exact times that we thought it would take to move this equipment from known positions.

Question: Did you like the terrain for this operation in the Zapata area?

Answer: On the basis of the restrictions, yes. This would have worked. These boys were good. The only thing they lacked was ammunition.

Statement: Four out of five drops were successful. We don't know what happened to one drop over Red Beach.

Question: How many instructors did you end up with?

Answer: Forty-four.

Statement: I didn't have one AWOL for three weeks before the landing, and no one failed to go with the force, nor failed to jump with the airborne unit.

Question: Who screened the people assigned to this force?

Mr. Dulles: First the Cubans and then our Counterintelligence people.

Colonel Egan: We had four double agents.

Question: Do you think that agents got word back to Castro as to what you were doing?

Answer: Yes. Retalhuleu had 120 card-carrying Communists, including the Mayor. However, in an attempt to maintain security, I stopped all out-going mail three weeks before the operation, and all incoming mail was stopped for seven days prior to the operation. Of course, these troops had a number of secret channels.

Question: Was your camp adequate?

Answer: It could have been better, but it was adequate.

Question: Why wasn't it possible to rehearse the amphibious landing?

Answer: We did have a partial rehearsal, but we couldn't bring the vessels to the Pacific side where our camp was for this would have meant bringing them through the Panama Canal.

Question: I want to go back to the guerrillas. Who might have eluded capture?

Answer: A number of men from most of the positions. All these men were given compass and map reading and other guerrilla training.

Statement: To sum up the guerrilla situation then, there was no particular training directed toward it, as such, primarily because you had pretty good guerrillas to start with.

Colonel Egan: Yes, sir.

Statement: Also, for morale reasons you had not briefed the entire force on the possibilities of having to take to the swamps as guerrillas. However, the day before the force left you did brief the commanders on guerrilla operations and the fact that you felt that the primary means of evacuation was seaborne and airborne evacuation, and only if all other things failed would the force attempt to operate as guerrillas.

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: What would have been the consequences if, just before this invasion was launched, the men had been directed to conduct guerrilla type operations?

Answer: They probably would have revolted.

Question: But I understood that they initially wanted to go in as guerrillas?

Answer: Yes, but we showed them the advantages of mass firepower, and I believe that they were convinced that the shock action against Castro's forces in meeting this firepower would cause the militia to break and run, and spark mass defections.

Question: Then while the Cuban exiles originally wanted to conduct guerrilla operations they had been convinced that this was a rather unremunerative approach to the problem?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Where are the refugees being debriefed?

Answer: At Miami, Puerto Cabezas, Norfolk and Vieques.

Statement: While we don't want to get into the matter in too much detail here, it seems that for historical reasons it would be a good thing if CIA would prepare an after action report on the over-all operation.

Answer: Yes, we are doing that.

Question: What would have happened if the operation had been called off after the first part of April?

Colonel Egan: It would have depended upon the posture they were in at the time. If it had been called off after they were actually on the way they would have taken over and kept going. I was informed that if the operation was called off they would take over. They said that as a friend we want you to direct all your people not to resist if this comes about, because we don't want anybody to get hurt. Consequently I had all our people turn in their side arms. I would say that after the 1st of April it was a go operation.

Statement: With regard to the merchant ships that went into the beachhead area, let's determine just what orders were given to the ships and by whom. Also, let's look into Lynch's story about the fact that they were going to take ammunition into the beachhead area in an LCI, but by the time the operation could be undertaken it would have been daylight before they arrived, so the mission was cancelled.

[Here follows testimony by McGeorge Bundy, which was deleted at Bundy's request as not adequately representing his point of view on several points. Bundy replaced this portion of the memorandum for the record with a May 4 letter to Taylor, Document 201.]

#### **194. Report Prepared by a Combined Working Group From the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State and the Office of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency**

Washington, May 2, 1961.

//Source: Department of State, S/P-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Secret. A note on the source text indicates that an initial draft of the report was prepared on May 1.

### FACTS, ESTIMATES, AND PROJECTIONS

#### Summary

##### I. The Present Situation in Cuba

##### A. The Armed Forces

The armed forces of the Castro regime number some 250,000, of whom some 200,000 are militia. The regular

forces--army, navy, air, and national police--have been shaken by purges of officers and men who previously supported Castro against Batista but later became disillusioned by events in Cuba. Castro distrusts the armed forces and has built up the militia, thereby reducing his dependence on the military.

Bloc arms deliveries and intensive training have increased the military capabilities of the army, but its tactical training is still deficient. The militia is composed of people who generally serve only part-time, subject to call in an emergency, but some full-time militia units are now being formed and trained. The latter are, in effect, units of a second, more politically-reliable army. The air force and navy suffer from a lack of professionally trained and technically qualified personnel.

## B. Control Mechanisms

In little over two years the Castro regime has established a complex of interlocking mechanisms enabling it to control virtually every phase of life in Cuba. This has been accomplished by imposing leadership loyal to the regime on every local and national organization of any importance, by regimenting the economy, by creating an elaborate internal security apparatus, and by seizing all major newspapers and radio and TV stations.

## C. Attitudes of Key Individuals

Every key national figure in Cuban society, with the notable exception of the Catholic hierarchy, is by now either a dedicated supporter of communism and the Castro regime or a non-Communist so deeply committed to the regime as to be unlikely to turn against it.

## D. Class and Regional Attitudes

The upper class has been destroyed as an effective political or economic force in Cuba. The middle class, which has suffered most from deteriorating economic conditions and the increasingly tight controls imposed by the government, provides the principal organized opposition to the Castro regime.

Attitudes of the lower class toward the regime are dependent upon the degree to which Castro has fulfilled his promises, the degree of hope remaining for the future realization of as yet unfulfilled promises, and the extent of psychological identification with the Revolution. It is that part of the newly self-conscious lower class which has already received positive benefits from the Revolution, or still hopes for future improvement in conditions, that now provides the real mass support for the Castro regime. This group of perhaps 25 percent to 30 percent of the total population probably constitutes the poorest segment of the large Cuban lower class.

By no means all of the Cuban lower class can be considered to favor the Castro regime. The failure of the government to carry out many of its earlier promises has led to increasing disappointment and dissatisfaction. This does not mean, however, that there has been an equal increase in willingness to act against the regime.

## E. Economy

The Cuban economy continues to deteriorate both in terms of physical output and in living levels. Output in the industrial sector has been adversely affected by parts and raw material shortages, although sugar production may match or exceed last year's level and the regime is making strenuous efforts to expand agricultural production. Cuba's trade has been redirected largely to the Soviet Bloc, whose economic support is vital for the Castro regime.

## II. Probable Trends Within Cuba, Assuming No Major US Intervention

### A. Political Prospects



Six Months. The position of the Castro regime has been strengthened by the recent invasion victory. It is probable that there will be no major change in internal political conditions during the next six months. Anti-Castro activity within Cuba will be muted as a result of the defeat of the invasion force. Castro may take advantage of his recent victory to organize a full-scale campaign against anti-Castro forces, or he may use the coming period of relative calm as a means of establishing a reputation for forbearance in the face of armed provocation. Indications are that he will probably follow the latter course. He will, in the immediate future, take advantage of his increased strength within Cuba to seize the Church's educational system, and banish two-thirds of the clergy (the non-Cuban proportion).

One Year. The psychological impact of the recent Castro victory will have worn off and living conditions will not have improved perceptibly. Organized anti-Castro opposition will probably have stepped up its sabotage activities, but morale may be weakened (depending upon the extent of US support) by the apparent hopelessness of the battle against the regime.

Castro will have strengthened his position within the military and extended his control over the Cuban people. Police state methods will have become more effective. The Cuban Communist Party (PSP) will play a more open role in the government, but will not attempt to attain the open exercise of total power.

Five Years. All effective opposition to the regime will probably have been eliminated. Popular attitudes will also have changed. As economic conditions improve, the population will more easily reconcile itself to repugnant political controls. In addition, an extended period in which to indoctrinate the populace will almost certainly result in a significant increase in emotional and psychological identification with the regime.

Governmental controls will have become pervasive and effective. Increased efficiency of control agencies plus an extension of these controls into all aspects of Cuban life will make dissidence almost totally ineffective irrespective of any possible rise in popular antipathy for the regime beyond that foreseen.

## B. Probable Trends in the Armed Forces

With continuing material and technical assistance from the Bloc and with further military training and political indoctrination, under Bloc tutelage, the combat effectiveness of the Cuban armed forces will substantially increase. The Bloc will probably provide some MIG-17's when Cuban pilots training in Czechoslovakia return home. However, the buildup of a sizable jet air force in Cuba will probably be a slow process as compared with the improvement of the army. Nonnuclear air defense missiles may be supplied to Cuba, but the Bloc will not supply offensive type missiles nor nuclear weapons. The solution of the navy's immediate problem depends on the pace at which politically reliable personnel can be technically trained with Bloc assistance. That will take time, and it appears that nothing much is being done about it now.

## C. Economic Prospects

Six Months. The economy will deteriorate further, although not sufficiently to jeopardize the regime's stability. The end of the sugar season will mean a general decline in economic activity. Problems in selling sugar in the world market, other than the Bloc, may cause further foreign exchange problems, although the Bloc will move to supply essential requirements.

One Year. Another sugar season and anticipated expansion of industrial plants with Bloc assistance will bolster the economy, although Cuba will still be heavily dependent upon its foreign sugar sales, as yet unpredictable.

Some of the major supply and technical problems will have been overcome, and aggregate production may be on the upswing. Consumer austerity will still be in force, although consumption levels of the lower classes especially the rural population may increase slightly.

Five Years. Cuba's natural resources and Bloc economic assistance form the basis to permit Cuba to accomplish much of its five-year plan. This would mean greater economic independence, through increased self-sufficiency, less dependence on sugar, near-full employment, and gradual economic growth.

### III. Cuban Vulnerabilities

#### A. Economic

Economic vulnerabilities of the Castro regime include its foreign exchange position, spare parts and raw materials shortages, lack of sufficient technical and managerial personnel, declining per capita income, and consumer shortages and the growing black market. Imposition of the Trading with the Enemy Act against Cuba (which would inter alia reduce Cuba's foreign exchange earnings from the US and would extend the US export embargo to all products) and a campaign of limited sabotage against Cuba's industries and utilities would aggravate these problems, though not sufficiently, by themselves, to jeopardize the regime's stability. The Bloc would act to assist Cuba by providing minimum essentials and possibly supplying some foreign exchange. A program of extensive sabotage or a complete blockade would cause serious economic breakdowns, especially in the urban and industrial sectors. In the case of extensive sabotage the Bloc again could be expected to provide the minimum essentials to maintain the Cuban economy. The possibilities of a direct Soviet-US confrontation in the event of a blockade, and the impact of such action on our international position, are not considered in this paper.

#### B. Political

If Fidel Castro were to be eliminated from the scene the regime might collapse for lack of this central rallying point. On the other hand, the bureaucracy may now be so firmly entrenched that it could operate without him.

Popular resentment against the totalitarian controls imposed by the regime has steadily increased. This resentment is open to exploitation through a psychological warfare campaign or a program of reprisals against members of the control apparatus, e.g., informers.

The hold of the regime depends in large part on control of mass communications media. Sabotage of these facilities would deprive the regime of this advantage; sabotage of other communications would impair the effectiveness of police controls.

### IV. Relations of Castro With Latin America

#### A. Nature and Extent of the Threat Posed by Castro

The threat posed by the Castro regime in Latin America stems from its inherent appeal to the forces of social unrest and anti-Americanism at a time when most of the area is in the throes of a fundamental transformation. Castro and the Communists have made assiduous efforts to capitalize on this situation. Cuba has become the center of a propaganda and subversion campaign of unprecedented proportions in Latin America. Both Castro and the Communists see the Cuban revolution not as an end in itself but as the prototype of a transformation which will eventually sweep over all of Latin America. Given the chaotic stage of Latin American politics pro-Castro elements have a significant capability for stirring up demonstrations and disorders in a number of countries, and in a few an outside chance of gaining power in the next few years.

#### B. Present Attitudes Toward Castro

In the aftermath of the recent invasion of Cuba, Latin American attitudes toward Castroism have become more fluid. Ruling groups are temporarily more fearful of the Soviet thrust in the hemisphere and less fearful of popular reaction in support of Castro.

The OAS is now less hostile to US intervention in Cuba than before the invasion, but a majority of its members is still not prepared to intervene in Cuba.

#### C. Probable Developments in the Absence of US Intervention

The danger is not so much that subversive apparatus centered in Havana will be able to export the revolution directly as that increasing misery and discontent among the mass of the Latin American people will provide opportunities for pro-Castro elements to act. The Cuban-Communist political warfare apparatus can obviously do much to further the process, however.

In the absence of direct Cuban intervention in the internal affairs of neighboring states, the present fears of Castroism among Latin American ruling groups will wane and the traditional nonintervention policies will be reasserted.

The Soviet Union is expected to counsel Castro to avoid overt actions which would provoke US counteraction or which could be interpreted by other Latin American governments as Cuban intervention in their domestic affairs.

#### D. Effect on the US Position

The continued existence of the Castro regime would fundamentally alter the terms of Latin American relations with the US. US restraint would be interpreted by Latin American ruling groups as evidence of weakness.

Aside from its direct effect on US prestige the survival of Castro would profoundly affect Latin American political life. It would set the stage for political struggle in terms long promoted by Communist prop-aganda in the hemisphere, with the issue drawn between "popular" anti-US forces and the ruling groups allied with the US.

The US would have to be prepared to underwrite huge welfare and economic development programs and to involve itself directly in their success, always under some threat of withdrawal of cooperation by the Latin American governments.

On the other hand, if Castro were eliminated, the US would be in a much stronger position to insist upon adoption of a program of moderate, evolutionary change by the ruling groups in Latin America.

The expulsion of Cuba's Soviet-controlled regime would deprive the USSR of its bridgehead in the western hemisphere and would remove the model for action by extremist groups. However, the Soviets would still have a multitude of weaknesses to exploit, and would have achieved real gains over their early 1959 position.

[Here follows the 61-page body of the report.]

### **195. Memorandum From the Secretary of the Air Force (Zuckert) to Secretary of Defense McNamara**

Washington, May 3, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Cuba 381 (Sensitive). Top Secret. A note on the source text indicates that McNamara saw the memorandum.

This is a follow-up to our discussion on Cuba yesterday morning. The Air Staff, in conjunction with the Tactical Air Command, has prepared a plan which would airdrop six Army battle groups plus necessary support (roughly two Airborne Divisions) into Cuba. This operation could start within 28 hours after receipt of the order of execution and would require 114 hours to complete. Fifty-seven squadrons of troop carrier airlift would be used,

including 16 squadrons of Reserve Forces C-119's. The use of the Reserve squadrons is consistent with their combat capability and is necessary to preclude stretching out the assault time and thereby reducing surprise and shock effect.

The plan is now in being in outline form/1/ and work is underway in developing the details. It is being coordinated with the Army.

/1/Not found.

I recommend you consider the type operation envisaged in this plan before any firm Department of Defense decision is made in this regard.

EZ



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
**Volume X**  
**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## Cuba, 1961-1962

### 196. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to President Kennedy

Washington, May 3, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Security, 1961. Confidential.

#### SUBJECT

Reactions to Cuba in Western Europe

1. I spent the period April 22-May 3 in Western Europe, first attending a conference of West European political and intellectual figures at Bologna, Italy, and then spending a few days in Paris and in London. I made a special point of trying to check reactions to the Cuban debacle--and also of setting forth (especially to key politicians and journalists) the key facts of the Cuban situation.

In Paris, I had conversations with Pierre Mendes-France; Jean Monnet; Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber (L'Express); Raymond Aron; M. Jeanneney, the Minister of Production; M. Baraduc, the chief information officer of the Quai d'Orsay; as well as with Ambassador Gavin, Ambassador Finletter, Cecil Lyon, and the American correspondents Cy Sulzberger, Joe Alsop, Don Cook and Art Buchwald.

In London, I talked with publishers or editors of the *Spectator* (Ian Gilmour and Bernard Levin); *New Statesman* (Paul Johnson and Norman Mackenzie); *Economist* (Donald Tyerman); *Observer* (David Astor, John Pringle, Edward Crankshaw and leading staff people); *Sunday Times* (Frank Giles and Nicholas Carroll); *Daily Herald* (John Beavan); *Daily Telegraph* (Michael Berry and Maurice Green); *Evening Standard* (Charles Wintour); *Sunday Telegraph* (Peregrine Worsthorne); plus a luncheon with the diplomatic correspondents of the London papers and the Manchester Guardian. Among Labour MPs, I saw Hugh Gaitskell, Denis Healey, Richard Crossman, Roy Jenkins, George Brown, Woodrow Wyatt. Among members of the government, I saw David Ormsby Gore, Ian Macleod, Reginald Maudling, Lord Hailsham, Sir Edward Boyle. I also saw Sir Frank Lee of the Treasury; Bob Boothby, Hartley Shawcross and Gladwyn Jebb, all of whom are now independent members of the House of Lords; Lord Lambton, a right-wing Tory MP; Sir Isaiah Berlin and William Deakin of Oxford; and the American correspondents Drew Middleton (*New York Times*) and Herman Nickels (*Time*). I also consulted closely, of course, with Ambassador Bruce and members of his staff.

I list these names to make clear the kind of opinions on which this report is based. I believe that in both Paris and London I saw a fairly representative cross-section of the political community. My impression of sentiment in these countries has been supplemented by my talks in Bologna with people from all over Western Europe and by the reports of American correspondents and diplomats.

I should add that I encountered everywhere what can only be described as a hunger for a rational explanation of the Cuban operation. I found this among left and right alike; among Americans as well as Europeans; among American Embassy officials (and even CIA representatives) as well as among American newspaper correspondents. The available stories had left most people baffled and incredulous. They could not believe that the U.S. Government had been quite so incompetent, irresponsible and stupid as the bare facts of the operation suggested, and they listened sympathetically and gratefully to a more balanced and complete account.

The apparent decision to keep our own diplomatic personnel in ignorance about the background of the Cuban operation seems to me especially unfortunate and unnecessary (though there may be considerations here of which I have no knowledge). The State Department appears to have sent out no instructions to American Embassies how to explain what happened in Cuba. As a consequence, our Ambassadors remain in the dark. If the Foreign Secretary of the state to which they are assigned asks them what really went on, they are forced to mouth official generalities or to confess ignorance or to rely on Scotty Reston or Time. This matter could easily have been remedied, in my judgment, if the State Department had sent out a simple instruction to our Embassies. I attach as Appendix A to this report the copy of a cable I sent to Mr. Rusk on this point from Rome./1/

/1/Appendix A, not printed, was not found attached. A copy is attached to a copy of Schlesinger's memorandum *ibid.*, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, 5/61.

2. Reactions to the debacle: short-term. The first reactions to Cuba were, of course, acute shock and disillusion. For some months nearly everybody in Western Europe, and especially perhaps the democratic left, had been making heavy emotional and political investments in the new American administration. Everything about this administration--the intelligence and vision of the President, the dynamism of his leadership, the scope and generosity of his policies, the freshness of his approach to the cold war--had excited tremendous anticipation and elation. The new American President in three months had reestablished confidence in the maturity of American judgment and the clarity of American purposes. Kennedy was considered the last best hope of the West against communism and for peace.

Now, in a single stroke, all this seemed wiped away. After Cuba, the American Government seemed as self-righteous, trigger-happy and incompetent as it had ever been in the heyday of John Foster Dulles. "Kennedy has lost his magic," one person said to me. "It will take years before we can accept the leadership of the Kennedy Administration again," said another. Friends of America warned me not to underestimate the gravity of the damage: "Make sure that our people in Washington understand how much ground we have lost" (Drew Middleton); "It was a terrible blow, and it will take a long, long time for us to recover from it" (Lord Boothby).

I should add that nearly all the reactions I encountered expressed sorrow over the decision to invade rather than over the failure of the invasion. "Why was Cuba such a threat to you? Why couldn't you live with Cuba, as the USSR lives with Turkey and Finland?" I had expected to find more people on the right who would complain over our failure to send in the Marines; but I found only one--Lord Lambton, a Tory MP who is a bitter critic of Macmillan's, a great friend of Joe Alsop's and an advocate of fighting everywhere--in Laos, Kenya, Cuba, etc. Other Tory MPs--Lord Hailsham, for example--said that in their view US intervention would have been a great error and would only have converted Cuba into another Ireland, Cyprus or Algeria. David Ormsby Gore, in making this point, added that British [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] estimates, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] were that the Cuban people were still predominantly behind Castro and that there was no likelihood at this point of mass defections or insurrections.

3. Reactions to the debacle: long-term. The severity of the original shock should not, however, be allowed to overshadow certain factors on the other side. The fact is that the new administration made an enormously good impression up to Cuba and in so doing built up a fund of good will which, though now somewhat dissipated, is by no means entirely destroyed. One evidence of this is the eagerness of people on the left--Mendes-France, Servan-Schreiber, even Dick Crossman and the New Statesman people--to hear the American side of the case.

Reactions within the British Labour Party are perhaps symptomatic. Hugh Gaitskell was rueful but philosophical. "It was a great blow," he said. "The right wing of the Labour Party has been basing a good deal of its argument on the claim that things had changed in America. Cuba has made great trouble for us. We shall now have to move toward the left for a bit in order to maintain our position within the Party." But he asked what he could do to help, suggested people to whom I should talk and even made an appointment himself for me to see the editor of the Daily Herald. Denis Healey, the "shadow" Foreign Secretary, was somewhat more bitter. "I've staked my whole political career on the ability of the Americans to act sensibly," he said. He felt badly let down by the Administration but again was perfectly ready to listen to an account of how things had actually happened. Farther to the left, Dick Crossman said, "You really have got off very lightly. If this had taken place under Eisenhower, there would have been mass meetings in Trafalgar Square, Dulles would have been burned in effigy, and the Labour Party would have damned you in the most unequivocal terms. But because enough faith still remains in Kennedy, there has been very little popular outcry, and the Labour Party resolutions have been the bare minimum. You've got away with it this time. But one more mistake like this, and you will really be through."

Conservatives were, on the whole, even more willing to find excuses for the Cuban policy. A number of people, both on the right and the left, remarked consolingly on the shortness of popular memories. Algeria, of course, was immensely helpful in driving Cuba from the front pages.

Over the longer term, in short, I think we have suffered a serious but by no means fatal loss of confidence in our intelligence and responsibility. This can be easily recouped if we seem to return to more intelligent and responsible ways in the future. However, it will all go rather quickly if we embark once more on a course which Europeans regard as ill-considered, impetuous and reckless.

4. Dangers for the future. To sum up, Cuba is forgivable as an aberration but is greatly feared as forecasting future directions of US policy. It has created, for example, a vague fear in people's minds that the Kennedy Administration is bent on a course of subversive and paramilitary warfare. This fear has been heightened by what some Europeans regard as an unfolding pattern of events since Cuba, all seeming to foreshadow policies of military or paramilitary intervention: the "our patience is not limitless" speech; the emphasis on training for guerrilla warfare; the appeal to the press not to print stories about US unconventional warfare projects; the rumors of CIA support for the Algiers generals; the Presidential offer to intervene in France; the intimations of possible US intervention in Laos; the huddles with Nixon, Hoover, MacArthur, etc., interpreted in Europe as an effort to gather national support for, at the very least, a US invasion of Cuba. A number of people seriously believe, on the basis of newspaper stories from Washington, that an American invasion of Cuba is a distinct and imminent possibility. An Observer editor said to me, "If Cuba were just an accident, all right. But everything since Cuba suggests that the Kennedy who launched that invasion was the real Kennedy--that all his talk about 'new methods' of warfare and countering guerrillas represents his real approach to the problems of the cold war--that he thinks the West will beat communism by adopting communist methods and transforming itself into a regimented paramilitary society on the model of the Soviet Union." Several people said, "It's not Cuba that worries me; it's the aftermath."

The reported Washington obsession with guerrilla warfare has roused particular concern. Press stories have given high quarters in England and France the impression that the U.S. Government suddenly regards counter-guerrilla activity as the key to victory in the cold war. The attached piece from the *Times* expresses British feeling on this matter.<sup>2/</sup> Several people elaborately pointed out to me that guerrilla warfare can not be isolated from the political battle; that no force, however trained in counter-guerrilla technique, can clean up a guerrilla situation if the countryside sticks with the guerrillas; that the decisive question therefore is how the peasants feel. I was reminded that the guerrillas have been defeated in only two places since the war--in the Philippines, because Magsaysay's reform program won back the countryside; and in Malaya, because the British were able both to mobilize the Malaysians against the Chinese and to offer independence--and that these examples show that politics, not combat methods, is the secret of success against guerrilla movements. The new tone of urgency in Washington has a somewhat shrill ring in many European ears. The Europeans to whom I talked believe that the fight against communism is still a matter for the long haul; they are much more impressed by the Alianza para el

Progreso than by the training camps for anti-guerrilla warfare; and they hope for a return to the main lines of US foreign policy as set forth in the months before Cuba. I should add that nothing would do more to reestablish confidence in the U.S. Government than a visible shake-up and subordination of CIA. As the Algerian affair showed, CIA is going to be blamed for everything, especially so long as it continues to operate under its present management. People are eager to believe that the President was misled by bad advice in the matter of Cuba, but they are also eager to be reassured that he will not continue to get the same bad advice in the future.

/2/Not found attached. It is not clear which article or editorial in the *Times of London* is under reference here.

Arthur Schlesinger, jr.

**197. Memorandum From the Assistant to the Deputy Director (Plans) for Covert Action (Barnes) to Director of Central Intelligence Dulles**

Washington, May 3, 1961.

//Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, Cuba Program, Jan 21, 1961-. Secret; Eyes Only.

**SUBJECT**

Cuban Paper

1. Attached is a copy of the paper which Dick Bissell sent over to Dick Goodwin of the White House Staff, who was acting as the central drafting point on the Cuban NSC paper being prepared by Paul Nitze's working committee. The attached paper is not to be made a part of the NSC paper nor is a military planning paper/1/ for Cuba. Presumably, both the attached and the military planning paper will be available for perusal by selected individuals.

/1/Not found.

2. You may quite properly feel that the attached is a rather brief statement but the reason for it is that Messrs. Nitze and Goodwin have had sessions both with Cuban leaders (i.e. Miro, Varona and Ray) as well as with Dick Bissell and myself so that they are pretty well informed on the possibilities. Consequently, a detailed paper did not seem necessary.

C. Tracy Barnes/2/

/2/Printed from a copy that indicates Barnes signed the original.

**Attachment**

Washington, May 2, 1961.

As indicated by the combined INR/ONE estimate,/3/ anti-Castro activity within Cuba will probably be muted at least for the next several months. Most individuals whose loyalty is in any way suspect have been arrested. A recent report from the Swiss Ambassador indicated that political prisoners now number 100,000. All internal services will continue to work on a theory of repression plus undoubtedly swift and brutal penalties. Consequently, it will be very difficult to carry on any clandestine operations and it is doubtful that such operations can have any significant impact in weakening the Castro regime.

/3/Not found.



In spite of this, evidence is still available that there is opposition to the regime among individuals still at large and that such opposition is prepared to undertake action despite the risks involved. Moreover, there are still agents distributed through most of the six provinces and communications can still be had either directly or indirectly with these individuals. At the very least these agents can and will continue to collect information and to transmit it to the Agency. In addition, certain of these individuals, plus some additional ones who might be infiltrated, could attempt to carry out some sabotage. Individual acts of sabotage are possible with relatively few men and small amounts of material. Successive acts of sabotage or extensive sabotage operations are more difficult and inevitably more costly in terms of loss of men. Nevertheless, it would be possible, starting in the near future, to attempt limited sabotage with a view to determining its feasibility and with the hope that gradually an increased program might be developed.

A capability also exists for types of maritime operations including infiltration and exfiltration of individuals, landing and caching of arms, under-water sabotage of shipping and small raider operations. Under present circumstances it would seem wrong to attempt these except on a very limited scale and in all likelihood, raider operations should not be attempted until more information regarding feasibility has been obtained.

The Agency also has a small air arm including some transport aircraft (C-54 and C-46 types) plus attack bomber aircraft (B-26). Although it is not absolutely certain, there is reason to suppose that Cuban crews also are available for operational flights. At the moment, air operations should be substantially eliminated with the possible exception of supply flights to support opposition elements unable to survive without such support. Even with respect to such operations, however, it should be remembered that the percentage of successful night drops is extremely limited so that the urgency should be great to justify the risk. B-26 strikes could, of course, be flown against chosen targets (e.g. refineries, power plants, tire plants) and, if successful, might have the effect of extensive sabotage. In view of the risks involved, however, and the poor deniability of U.S. support where aircraft are involved, it is recommended that such operations be avoided at least for the present.

Manolo Ray of the MRP has asserted an independent MRP capability to conduct infiltration, intelligence collection, sabotage and defection operations into Cuba. He recognizes a need for U.S. support but is very firm in his desire to operate as independently as possible of any official U.S. connection. His initial request is for five boats, some materiel and some money. He admits, however, that, looking ahead, additional support such as real estate, some help with training and communications will be required. He offers to share his information with the U.S. Government, seek U.S. advice and, at least for a period of time, be willing to operate with the Revolutionary Council. The Council's views are being canvassed and Ray has been asked to prepare a prospectus giving in some detail his needs for U.S. support for the immediate future and the step-up required over a period of time should his efforts prove successful.

The Ray proposal should certainly be examined and given support within reasonable limits if the relationships proposed both with the Council and with the U.S. are satisfactory.

In addition to the activities described above, propaganda activities such as radio broadcasts and publication of magazines and newspapers can be continued independently by the Agency or in support of Ray or the Revolutionary Council. Moreover, limited political action operations are possible. As to both propaganda and political action, however, the amount of effort and the type of activity undertaken will depend to a large extent on the decisions with respect to the operations described above. Consequently, these will be noted here as mere possibilities.

## **198. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency for the Cuba Study Group**

Washington, May 3, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret. Three maps entitled "Planned Disposition of Forces," "General Disposition of Forces--End of D-Day," and

"General Disposition of Forces--End of D+1" are not printed.

## SUBJECT

Sequence of Events (D-2 to D+2), and Organization and Operation of Command Post

## REFERENCE

Paragraph 4, Memorandum dated 1 May 1961, Subject: Additional Information Desired of CIA/1/

/1/Not found.

## SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

(D-2 to D+2)

General. The description of events set forth herein is based upon messages and other information received at Headquarters during the operation. Comments are inserted where amplifying information is considered necessary. Later debriefing of personnel who actually participated in the operation has provided more extensive information concerning the action, but the purpose of this paper is to record what was known at Headquarters at the time.

D-2 (15 April 1961).

### Air Strikes.

The purpose of these air strikes was to destroy the Castro air capability, located at Campo Libertad, San Antonio de los Banos, and Santiago de Cuba. In conjunction with the air strike, one B-26 with Castro Air Force markings and piloted by a Cuban was to land at Miami with the story that he was a defector from the Castro Air Force. The purpose of the defection flight was to conceal that the air strike was launched from outside Cuba, and to attempt to obtain mass defections in Castro's Air Force.

The air strike was carried out as scheduled at dawn D-2 by 8 B-26's, allocated as follows:

3--Campo Libertad

3--San Antonio de los Banos

2--Santiago de Cuba

Initial pilot reports indicated that 50% of Castro's offensive air was destroyed at Campo Libertad, 75% to 80% aircraft destruction at San Antonio at los Banos, and that the destruction at Santiago included 2 B-26's, 1 DC-8, 1 Lodestar, and 1 T-33 or Sea Fury. Subsequent photographic studies and interpretations indicated considerably less damage.

Comment: The State Department had consistently objected to any air attacks on Cuban airfields or other targets in Cuba. Conversely, the military planners on this project had realized from the outset that complete domination of the air was vital to the success of any landing attack. Therefore, methods were sought whereby destruction of enemy aircraft could be achieved in a manner acceptable to the State Department. It was within this framework that the defection operation in conjunction with B-26 attacks on Campo Libertad, San Antonio de los Banos, and Santiago was presented to the President of the United States, who approved the proposal. It was also the understanding of the military planners, at the time that the President gave his approval, that the D-2 strikes were to be followed by strikes at dawn D-day on airfields and other military targets. The fact air attacks on D-day

were planned was specifically mentioned by the Deputy Director (Plans) when he briefed the President on the contemplated operation.

#### Diversionsary Landing in Oriente.

A landing 30 miles east of Guantanamo by a group of 160 men, led by Nino Diaz, was planned for the night of 14/15 April. The landing had a twofold purpose: (1) to divert attention from the main landing, and (2) to organize guerrilla operations in Oriente Province.

The ship on which the force was embarked (Santa Ana) approached the landing point on schedule without interference. However, the landing was aborted. Reasons given for aborting were as follows:

- (1) Friendly beach reception party did not appear on beach. (Comment: The leader was never informed that there would be a reception party.)
- (2) Reconnaissance boat was lost.
- (3) Two rubber boats were lost.

When it was learned that the operation had not been conducted, instructions were issued to land the following night. The ship remained in the area, retraced its route of the day before, and made its approach without incident. However, the landing again was not conducted. Reasons given this time were as follows:

- (1) Reconnaissance boat broke down.
- (2) Too much time lost in retrieving the reconnaissance boat.
- (3) Friendly beach reception party did not appear on the beach.
- (4) Enemy activity in area was too great.

Comment: The validity of the reasons given by Diaz for not conducting the landing are questionable. Intelligence sources did not indicate that the force had been discovered by the opposition. It was finally decided at Headquarters that weak leadership on the part of Diaz was responsible for the refusal to land, and on 16 April (D-1) orders were given to this force to proceed to the Zapata area and join the main force. The Diaz group did not arrive at Zapata in time to participate in the main operation.

#### Brigade En Route to Objective Area.

The ships on which the Brigade was embarked were following widely separated courses to the objective area. According to reports received (later confirmed by debriefings of Grayston Lynch, William Robertson, George Shane, and Sven Rydberg): all ships were proceeding ahead of schedule.

Comment: This was not considered detrimental to the security of the operation at this time because of the distance which separated the ships from the objective area.

About 1000, 15 April the *Atlantico* reported an automatic weapon accident in which 1 man was killed and 2 men wounded. A U.S. Navy destroyer made pick up after dark that night. Wounded were eventually evacuated to Guantanamo Bay Naval Station.

D-1 (16 April 1961).

## Seaborne Movement of Brigade.

The assault shipping continued to move on separate courses toward the objective area. From position reports rendered by the various ships and the U.S. Navy aircraft carrier *Essex*, it was determined that all the ships, except the *Rio Escondido*, were ahead of schedule. At about 0600, 16 April the ships were ordered to reduce speed in order to arrive at the remainder of reference points in accordance with Ship Movement Schedule (contained in Tab A to Appendix 1 to Annex H to the Operation Plan).<sup>/2/</sup> Subsequent position reports indicated the ships complied with instructions.

<sup>/2/</sup>The CIA's detailed Operation Plan has not been found.

The ships made their rendezvous with each other on time at about 1730, 16 April. They proceeded in column and made rendezvous with U.S. Navy LSD (*San Marcos*) about 5000 yards from Blue Beach. LCU and LCVP aboard the LSD were transferred to Cuban crews without incident between 2300 and 2400, 16 April.

## Movement of Airborne Battalion from Base Camp in Guatemala to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.

This movement was accomplished during the night of 15/16 April without incident. The troops were moved expeditiously from aircraft to an isolated area near the airfield, where briefings of troops and aircraft crews were conducted until time for takeoff for objective area.

## Cancellation of D-day Air Strikes.

The information on the decision to cancel planned D-day air strikes against Cuban airfields and other military targets was received at the Command Post at about 2200, 17 April.

Comment: The late hour at which this information was received made it impossible to cancel the landing, though the PM staff planners recognized the implications of such a decision. The Brigade and assault shipping were advised at this time that all Castro aircraft had not been destroyed. The *Blagar* (Flagship) was ordered to expedite unloading of troops and essential cargo from the *Houston*, *Caribe*, and *Atlantico* and send them 50 miles to sea at the earliest possible time. The *Blagar* and *Barbara J* were ordered to protect the *Rio Escondido* while it was being unloaded during the day. Friendly B-26's were to fly cover over the beachhead all day. It was realized at the time by the paramilitary staff that loss of ships and military supplies on board was inevitable since it was known that Castro possessed an offensive air capability which had not been destroyed.

## D-day (17 April 1961).

### Blue Beach.

When it was discovered that resistance was to be met in the landing over this beach, the *Blagar* moved in close to shore and delivered gunfire support. Brigade troops commenced landing at 0100.

0115--Brigade Commander ashore.

0300--Unloading of troops on *Caribe* completed. Commenced unloading troops from *Atlantico*. UDT reported searching for LCU landing point.

0330--Troops from *Atlantico* landing under fire.

0420--Brigade Commander issued orders to land troops, originally scheduled for Green Beach, over Blue Beach.

0600--First LCU ashore.

0630--Enemy air attacks commence on shipping and Blue Beach.

0640--Friendly air support arrived. (There is no mention henceforth as to what this support accomplished.)

0730--Completed discharging all vehicles and tanks from LCU's.

0825--Enemy T-33 shot down by *Blagar*.

0825--All troops ashore at Blue Beach.

0930--*Rio Escondido* hit and sunk. Crew members rescued and evacuated to *Blagar*.

0930--Brigade reported Playa Giron Airstrip ready for use.

1000--Continuous enemy air attacks forces shipping to go to sea. At 1200 Headquarters issued instructions which required sailing south at best possible speed.

1000--As ships withdrew they continued to come under air attack.

1130--Brigade reported had only 4 hours ammunition left. (The Brigade Commander was probably referring only to Blue Beach, because there is nothing to indicate that he was in contact with units at Red Beach or with the airborne units.)

The *Blagar* went to sea in company with the LCU with the plan to load the LCU's and then return after dark to make delivery of supplies and ammunition. However, after loading the LCU's, there wasn't sufficient time (darkness) remaining to make the run to the Beach, unload the craft, and retire to the seaward.

In response to the Brigade Commander's request for ammunition, at 1300 Headquarters issued instructions to base in Nicaragua to make airdrops at head of Bahia de Cochinos and at Playa Giron. During the night of 17/18 April 1 C-54 drop was made at Red Beach and 3 C-54 drops at Blue Beach. Results of drops are not positively known due to the fact that DZ's were not lighted.

Red Beach.

Nothing was reported to Headquarters on D-day concerning the landing at Red Beach. On D+1, the following was reported by the *Barbara J* concerning the D-day landing.

270 men with 6-81mm mortars, 1-75 RR, 2-57mm RR, 1-.50 caliber MG, and 2-60mm mortars were landed. A report from the *Barbara J* (message dated 221004Z) indicates that these troops were engaged immediately.

The *Houston* came under air attack at about 170630, and was hit. The ship went aground sometime later (time undetermined) with about 180 men on the west side of Bahia de Cochinos--about 5 miles from the landing beach.

Airborne Landing.

No action reported to Headquarters from the field on D-day. Certain reliable sources outside the objective area indicate the landing took place about 170730R in predesignated drop zones. Debriefing of pilots later confirmed that all landings were made except for one outpost scheduled for DZ-2.

Night Air Attacks.

Orders were issued at 1615 to bomb as many airfields as possible at night with fragmentation bombs. Three B-26's were launched for San Antonio de los Banos for these attacks but failed to find target due to haze and the fact that target was blacked out.

D+1 (18 April 1961).

At about 0730 the 2d Battalion at Red Beach reported for first time in message traffic, saying that its position could not be maintained without air support for more than 30 minutes.

0824--Brigade Commander reported Blue Beach under attack by 12 tanks and 4 jet aircraft. Ammunition and supplies requested. (Soon after the above report, authority to use napalm was granted for use in the beachhead area.)

1010--Red Beach reported wiped out. It was learned later during debriefing of Lynch and Robertson that Deputy Brigade Commander had ordered a withdrawal to Blue Beach, which was executed in an orderly manner.

1200--Blue Beach reported under attack by MIG-15's and T-33's, and out of tank ammunition, and almost all out of small arms ammunition also.

1600--*Essex* reported long line of tanks and trucks approaching Blue Beach from east.

Enemy air attacks and shortage of ammunition continued to be reported the rest of the day. Three C-54 ammunition and food drops on Playa Giron were reported dropped during the night 18/19 April. One of the drops was completely successful; and the other two doubtful--one landed off the end of the runway at the airfield, and one landed in the water. No report was received as to the amount of the latter that was recovered.

Friendly air attacks using napalm were conducted late in the day, causing undetermined damage. Pilot reports indicate many fires to the west of Blue Beach.

1800--1st Battalion reported under heavy artillery attack. Position indicated at this time was considerably south of the 1st Battalion planned position north and northeast of San Blas.

1800--Brigade Commander continued to request jet air cover, including close support and ammunition.

Comment: By means of a message sent from Headquarters at 2024, the Brigade Commander was informed that a C-46 with ammunition would land at the Playa Giron airfield, and would evacuate wounded. It was also recommended to the Brigade Commander that patrols armed with bazookas search out tanks and knock them out during the night. Brigade Commander was also informed in this message that ships would be sent in on night 19 April for evacuation if he so recommended.

2200--Brigade Commander sent message "I will not be evacuated. We will fight to the end here if we have to."

During the night many discussions were held concerning the participation of U.S. Navy aircraft over the beachhead area. The final instruction provided for Navy CAP between 0630 and 0730 to defend "CEF against air attack from Castro forces." The aircraft were issued instructions not to seek air combat but defend CEF forces from air attack, and not to attack ground targets. As a result of these provisions, plans were made to use all available B-26's to support Brigade, while Navy was providing air protection. Later, it was reported that Cuban pilots flying these missions aborted prior to arrival over the beachhead, and two American crews were shot down.

D+2 (19 April 1961).

0600--Enemy air strikes commenced.

0710-1430--Enemy commenced closing in on Brigade elements in Blue Beach sector with tanks and infantry in coordination with air attacks. From the beginning of this period, the Brigade Commander sent many frantic appeals for air cover and support to destroy enemy tanks.

0170-1430--Last message--"Am destroying all equipment and communications. Tanks are in sight. I have nothing left to fight with. Am taking to woods. I cannot wait for you."

Comment: Commencing early morning of 19 April, serious consideration was given to evacuating Brigade during the night 19/20 April despite the Brigade Commander's assertion that he would not evacuate. Necessary instructions were issued to move shipping closer to the Blue Beach area so that the run to the beach, reembarkation of troops, and withdrawal to sea could be done during hours of darkness. Identification of messages sent are as follows:

Hqs. Msg. No.

4835 (OUT 7239)--190820Z

4839 (OUT 7269)--191346Z

4840 (OUT 7271)--191358Z

4844 (OUT 7280)--191434Z

4850 (OUT 7293)--191627Z/3/

/3/These messages, all dated April 19, are in the Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials.

#### ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES OF COMMAND POST

1. The Command Post functioned in a manner similar to that of a military command post (divisional level). Representatives from the sections comprising the Paramilitary Staff operated on a 24 hour basis. Sections represented were Ground Operations, Air Operations, Maritime Operations, Intelligence, Personnel and Logistics.
2. Contact liaison was maintained with the Joint Chiefs of Staff through Lt. Col. Benjamin Tarwater (JCS Staff representative) who visited the Operations Center twice daily to obtain timely briefing notes in order to prepare and present daily JCS briefings.
3. Telephone and cable contact was maintained with Headquarters CINCLANT. Communications with the Brigade and CEF ships was via CIA communication center at the operation center building (Quarters Eye).
4. Colonel Hawkins, Chief, Paramilitary Staff and Mr. Esterline, the Project Chief, were physically present at the Command Post in Quarters Eye throughout the period of operations.
5. Mr. Bissell and Colonel King were also immediately available for consultation throughout the operation and frequent conferences between these officials, Mr. Esterline and Colonel Hawkins were held.
6. Decisions within the competence of CIA were immediately reached in all cases. Decisions requiring Department of Defense participation were critically delayed due to the necessity for consideration at higher levels of government and political implications.

7. During the final day of the operation, Colonel Hawkins and other key military staff officers posted themselves in the communications center of Quarters Eye and responded to messages coming from the field instantly upon receipt.

### **199. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 3, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the ninth in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and took place at the Pentagon. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included McNamara, Wheeler, Bonesteel, Kinnard, King, Mitchell, and Tarwater. A note on the source text reads: "The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made."

[Here follows discussion of intelligence aspects of the Zapata operation.]

Secretary McNamara

At this point the Group proceeded to Secretary McNamara's office where he was asked a number of questions in an attempt to determine what the picture was as he saw it at his level of decision.

Question: What was the estimate of the probability of success of Zapata?

Secretary McNamara: This should be answered in the time context of the point of no return. Actually the chances of success changed as the days went by as the plan was modified. Initially there was a smaller force, about 800 personnel. Finally there were somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,200. This increase in the strength of the invasion force, of course, increased the chances of success. The increased logistic support also tended to increase the chances of success. On the other hand, the reduced air support, the new landing area, and the reduced sea cover all tended to reduce the chances of success. However, the over-all balance indicated a marginal probability of success. It seemed desirable to go ahead for three reasons: (1) If we didn't proceed we would have to bring the invasion force back to the United States. It seemed that the general conclusion that would result from this would be the idea that the United States was unwilling to help others fight against Communism. (2) A feeling that never again would we have a chance to overthrow Castro without utilizing Americans. (3) The failure of the CEF to succeed in their operation as a unified force would not preclude the force from breaking up and continuing guerrilla operations, in which case the operation would not be viewed by the rest of the world as a total defeat.

Statement: One side we are interested in exploring is the side pre-sented by Mr. Mann.

Secretary McNamara: Tom Mann endorsed the plan before the point of no return.

Statement: Our papers indicate that on the 18th of February Mr. Bundy reported to the President that there were two points of view, Mr. Bissell's and Mr. Mann's./1/ Was Mr. Mann the one who insisted on nonattribution?

/1/See Document 48.

Secretary McNamara: The desirability of nonattribution was a general view, almost to be met prior to approval. However, this can't be charged to Tom Mann.

Question: Was the question of guerrilla operations in the Zapata area considered?



Secretary McNamara: Yes. However, this was considered to be unlikely because the CEF was believed to be able to control the access routes into the beachhead. If control of the access routes was lost, however, it was believed it would be easier for the invaders to get through the swamps as individuals than it would be for Castro's units. Finally, it was believed that if Castro broke through the force could be evacuated by sea.

Question: Was it a major factor that this force could get to the mountains?

Secretary McNamara: Yes, it was certainly in the President's mind. It was always considered that the force could be evacuated or go through the swamp into the mountains, in which case the Press wouldn't be able to look upon the operation as a total failure.

Question: What was the feeling with regard to the possibility of popular uprisings?

Secretary McNamara: It was understood that there was a substantial possibility of uprisings, possibly on the order of four or five out of ten. This led to the belief that the whole operation was marginal. Uprisings in a police state weren't expected to occur fast enough to support the landings.

Question: What was expected to happen if the landing force effected a successful lodgment but there was no uprising?

Secretary McNamara: They would be split up into a guerrilla force and moved into the Escambrays.

Question: What was the understanding of the position of the JCS as to Zapata? Was it appreciated that they favored Trinidad over Zapata?

Secretary McNamara: The JCS had reviewed the plan in early January and while they considered it marginal they still believed it had sufficient chance of success to warrant its implementation. After all the modifications to the original plan were made they still believed the chances of success were marginal, but they still wanted to give it a try. There was one important modification that the Chiefs never knew about and one about which they all felt strongly. This was the decision to cancel some of the D-Day air strikes. This decision was made at the only meeting at which neither I nor the Chiefs participated. It was my understanding that both the CIA and the Chiefs preferred Zapata to Trinidad. For while Trinidad offered the advantage of close proximity to the Escambray or guerrilla territory, Zapata offered an air strip and was likely to be less well protected by Castro, thereby raising the chances of success for the initial landing.

Question: Was it understood that control of the air was essential to the success of the landing?

Secretary McNamara: It was understood that without control of the air the chances of success would be considerably decreased. The understanding of Castro's air force was not adequate, particularly in terms of the members and types of aircraft. Furthermore, it was assumed that a large number of his aircraft would be incapacitated. This appears to have been a major error. However, to get back to the question of control of the air, it was certainly understood that it was very important.

Secretary McNamara: It doesn't appear that we would have achieved complete control of the air even if we had made the dawn air attack.

Statement: There were some reports that we knocked out approximately two-thirds of Castro's combat aircraft.

Secretary McNamara: If we knocked out two-thirds of Castro's aircraft they had a greater capability than they were expected to have.

Question: What was the understanding as to the ability of the landing force to pass to a guerrilla status in an emergency?

Secretary McNamara: Quite clear that they could function in a guerrilla status.

Mr. Dulles: Actually this never had a chance to be tested.

Question: What degree of nonattribution was sought and why?

Secretary McNamara: The highest possible degree because the Latin-American countries had indicated they would not support this operation.

Question: Was there any doubt that, globally speaking, this operation would be attributed to the United States?

Secretary McNamara: We felt it would to a degree, but wanted to reduce this to a minimum.

Question: Were the implications of the conflict between operational requirements for success and the need for nonattribution clearly understood?

Secretary McNamara: Not really. As the plan progressed there was a definite trend to reduce the possibilities of attribution. This trend took the shape of a curve and finally the plan was compromised in order to reduce the chances of attribution.

Question: Do you believe that the CIA became advocates of the plan?

Secretary McNamara: It was not a CIA debacle. It was a Government debacle. There wasn't any person in the room that didn't approve the plan. Bissell in no sense was selling the operation. Colonel Hawkins was eloquent in advocating the plan. However, his presentations were so one-sided that he made little influence on my judgment.

Secretary McNamara: This was a marginal operation. It was recognized that if one ship was lost we were in trouble. The feeling never developed, however, that CIA was selling this operation.

Admiral Burke: I had misgivings about the plan, but none that were crucial.

Secretary McNamara: That's right, it was a gradual erosion of the plan, but not to the extent that it seemed desirable to call off the operation.

Question: You mentioned the requirement for the clarification of responsibilities here in Washington.

Secretary McNamara: CIA should not run such large operations. They simply don't have the facilities. We could have used our facilities on a nonattributable basis. It would have been better if we could have handled the operation because we could have planned it on a much larger scale. We could have assured command control. A military operation should never be conducted except under a military man.

Secretary McNamara: We should systematize the decision making process.

Question: How would you do this on a systematic basis?

Secretary McNamara: I wasn't thinking so much in terms of this as the fact that I wouldn't allow any decisions to be made or actions taken except on the basis of written documents.

Question: Do you believe the absence of written documents was a consequence of security considerations?

Secretary McNamara: Yes.

Question: Going back to the Cuban operation, accepting for the moment that the military should have run the operation, when should they have taken control?

Secretary McNamara: I am not qualified to answer that as I don't know enough about the CIA structure.

Secretary McNamara: Another alternative that might be desirable in the case of future Cubas is that the CIA, for example, would conceive the need for certain actions. CIA should then lay out their basic plan and when they reach the point where they feel that they should train and equip troops, the JCS should be brought in to make an evaluation. This should be done even before the President makes his decision. Then at the point when the operation is approved the military commander should take over so he can shape the whole operation. In the case of Cuba, for example, at the point where the Special Force instructors were requested the DOD should have come in.

Secretary McNamara: There is one point that should be emphasized, that is, that all decisions and actions should be written. This would engender responsibility.

Question: How big should a force be before becoming a DOD responsibility?

Secretary McNamara: To answer that question you need a detailed organization study. I believe that someone should make a study and come up with a recommendation.

General Wheeler

At this point the Group returned to General Taylor's office and General Wheeler appeared before the Group.

Question: As the Director of the Joint Staff, how did this operation look to you?

Answer: When we got into this in January I put General Gray to work as our representative. Now an interesting aspect was that we attempted to make an evaluation of the plan as it existed at the time we became aware of it and I had J-2 and J-3 make an independent survey to find the optimum landing beach in Cuba, and they came up with Trinidad. Then General Gray, working with a group of officers from all the J Staffs, evaluated the plan, and this evaluation was concluded with the statement that the plan had a fair chance. It was pointed out, however, that our conclusions were based only on hearsay and so we recommended that a team of officers go down to the training area and make an evaluation there. When they returned they wrote their evaluation which indicated several weaknesses, particularly in logistics. As a consequence, we sent Lieutenant Colonel Wall down to help them with their amphibious logistic problems. Thereafter, progressively as the time approached for the implementation of the plan, the plan as originally envisioned was walked away from, particularly the air support aspects. For example, the air strikes were desired on D-Day for maximum effect. The next thing that was bothersome was that we couldn't land at Trinidad as we had to find an airstrip from which the B-26s could claim to be operating. Then came the evaluation of the Zapata Plan. If I remember correctly, there were three alternatives to Trinidad that were looked at, and Zapata was the least objectionable. I can recall that when he looked at the Zapata Plan General Lemnitzer asked how the force would get out of that area in the event that the operation didn't go well. It was explained that the troops would fade into the swamps and move into the mountains. I felt that this had less than a fair chance of success.

Question: How long did you consider the Zapata Plan?

Answer: It couldn't have been for more than 48 hours.

Question: Do you think this was time enough to go into the plan adequately?

Answer: I believe that you could make a fairly good evaluation in that length of time, or even less. Zapata was only a change of the area of landing, not a change of the pattern of the landing.

Question: What about the air plan? Was it really discussed by the Chiefs?

Answer: At every meeting there were pros and cons on how important the first air strikes would be and how important it would be to the success of the operation. I feel that the sense of the Chiefs throughout the meetings was that air support was critical to the success of the operation.

Question: When the Chiefs approved the Zapata Plan, however, was it with the understanding that there would be pre-D-Day strikes or D-Day strikes?

Answer: The matter of the pre-D-Day strike came up after the Zapata Plan was more or less set as the plan to be implemented, if I remember correctly. The plan for the Zapata landing, as I recall it, still called for the D-Day strike, I think at dawn on D-Day. As I say, I could be wrong on that particular point.

Question: Do you have documents that you can refer to that will establish this time?

Answer: Yes, General Gray, I am sure, has these documents.

Statement: The Chiefs were still talking largely in terms of the original plan with the locale moved from Trinidad to Zapata.

Response: That would be more understandable except for the fact that you rejected some of the other alternatives you considered on the basis that they didn't have air strikes.

Question: Did anybody study whether or not the guerrillas could operate in the swamp area?

Answer: I understand that they can, that they have been operating in there for a hundred years.

Statement: This has been referred to, as General Wheeler says. However, I have seen no evidence it has been utilized in recent years.

Question: Did anybody study that?

Answer: In that particular area we didn't make any particular study of it, no. We were told this was a guerrilla area and I was under the impression that there were even some guerrillas operating in there at this time.

Question: But nobody in the Joint Staff looked into this matter at the time?

Answer: Our people said that this was a guerrilla area and that people could sustain themselves in there.

Question: What I am trying to determine is if a study was made.

Answer: No, no study was made, certainly no detailed study.

Statement: We inquired into this on one occasion and the people at CIA told us that a group of a hundred guerrillas was operating in this area, and there was lots of smaller game.

Statement: Of course, a second point was that while it might have been usable as a guerrilla area at one time, this

was before the time of helicopters. It would seem that some of these military experts should have been able to figure this out.

Question: In talking with Colonel Egan, did he point out that the primary evacuation would be by sea, but if this failed they would move into the swamps for their guerrilla operation?

Answer: Yes, that was discussed, sir, and it was recognized that this would be a very sticky and difficult thing to do. In the first place, it was recognized that evacuation by sea is one of the most difficult operations there is. You almost have to have support from the sea in the form of gunfire support or air cover. I thought that if these people were really pressed hard the possibility of evacuation would be much less than their going into a guerrilla operation.

Statement: It would seem that the concept of falling back to the beaches should have been ruled out because it almost ruled out the possibility of guerrilla action as a practical thing.

Question: With regard to the logistics of this thing, would you say that the Joint Staff checked the logistics carefully?

Answer: I believe that the logistic aspects were checked very carefully indeed.

Question: As D-Day approached what plans were there for liaison with the CIA.

Answer: We set up a little war room here which ran on a 24-hour basis. We had constant liaison with CIA, we had liaison officers from the services, and I had taken people from various sections of the Joint Staff. We had a special communications system where all items from CINCLANT came directly in to General Gray. He was really the disseminator of all messages from the Department of Defense and the other agencies to CINCLANT.

Question: How did you get the messages that came in over at CIA?

Answer: They were transmitted over here.

Question: How were they transmitted?

Answer: We have a teletype here in J-2.

Question: So you had the same messages here as they had in CIA?

Answer: To the best of my belief.

Question: When were you and the Joint Staff aware of the ammunition shortage?

Answer: When we got word that the ship that was at Blue Beach was sunk we learned that a large portion of their reserve ammo was aboard, and then we saw messages from the beach area in which they particularly mentioned that they were running low on tank ammunition.

Question: Once you found out there was an ammunition shortage did you try and get the ships back in there?

Answer: Yes, we did.

Statement: I get the impression that a very careful evaluation was made of the Trinidad Plan and that about all that was done in regard to the Zapata Plan was that it was looked at with the idea that everything set forth in the Trinidad Plan would go with the exception of the adjustments that had to be made at the new beach.

Response: Yes, sir.

Question: Did you have liaison officers over at CIA?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: On D+1 they were going to try and make a run into the beach with ammunition. They made an emergency request for air cover. Do you recall whether it was appreciated that this was the only way that they could get that ammunition ashore was with air cover?

Answer: Sir, I wouldn't even put it on the basis of ammunition alone. The reports from the beach indicated that the men desperately needed air cover. I definitely knew the situation was desperate at that time, there was no question about it.

Statement: Well, let's move out now and have you tell us how you think you could do this a little bit better in the future.

Answer: This is not an original thought. It results from discussions with General Gray and others, and we feel that to properly organize you need to start with a broad national plan prepared by all the agencies of the Government. It should start off in the broad terms of a concept and after the concept is agreed upon and approved by the President each agency should prepare its own part of the plan. We think that in this case CINCLANT should have set up a special operational task force and prepared the detailed plan for the operation. If this plan was prepared, of course, it would be passed up through channels to the President.

Question: How about your other aspects of the plan--the political, the psychological and so on?

Answer: Well, actually these are the special plans that were mentioned earlier with regard to the national plan.

Question: Who would be responsible for success or failure?

Answer: The man in charge of the special task force.

Statement: What we really feel is that we lack this national U.S. plan of action. We feel that there should have been a unified task force commander to really conduct the operation. We feel that you cannot efficiently attempt to conduct operations of this sort from Washington. It is too far removed. People are too immersed in other types of activities. What it results in is that responsible officials are called upon to make rather heavy decisions with very little forewarning and in some cases without perhaps as much information as they should have.

## **200. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 4, 1961.

T//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated, but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the tenth in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group. The initial stages of the discussion took place at the Pentagon; the discussion with Rusk took place at the Department of State. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included Rusk, Gray, Bonesteel, Mitchell, and Tarwater. A note on the source text reads: "The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made."

he first portion of the meeting was devoted to a consideration of some of the tentative conclusions reached at this

point. After a short while it was deemed desirable to recall General Gray for further questioning.

General Gray

Question: We are impressed by the incompleteness of the JCS appraisal of the Zapata Plan. We understand that the incompleteness of the evaluation was due, in part, to the fact that it was based on a concept rather than a completed plan. Is that a fair statement?

Answer: Yes. To a degree the incompleteness was due to that.

Question: Having at least concurred in this concept as being an adequate basis for further planning, why didn't the Joint Chiefs, at some point down the road, look at the completed plan or a plan sufficiently detailed so that they could consider some of the points that they had missed?

Answer: One reason the Zapata Plan was brief in comparison with the other one is because most of the factors were exactly the same. The second factor was the limitation of time. We were briefed in the morning and had to get out a paper on which we could brief the Chiefs the following morning. Furthermore, at this time this was not just a consideration of three possible alternatives. The original Trinidad Plan was still in the running. We determined that Zapata was the best of the three alternatives, but we still preferred the original Trinidad Plan.

Question: But you did accept Zapata as the basis for further planning?

Answer: Yes.

Question: At what point did the plan take enough shape that the JCS could have made a detailed evaluation?

Answer: The detailed plan was probably completed on 8 April because that's when Hawkins and Egan went down south. However, we didn't get that plan until the operation started.

Question: General Gray, how close were you to this plan?

Answer: I was in on all the meetings that were held at the White House with one exception.

Question: Were you talking with CIA people on this plan?

Answer: Yes. The first change we noticed was when the concept changed from being just at the head of the Bay, and moved south down the eastern side to the Blue Beach area.

Question: How did you get that information?

Answer: By liaison back and forth between officers. I briefed the JCS on that change in concept at one of their meetings. The reason for this change was because a usable airfield was down on the shoulder and that was one of the requirements that had been placed on the plan.

Question: Was the possibility of this force becoming a guerrilla unit considered?

Answer: Not formally by the Joint Chiefs, but we looked at it. It was felt that they could hold this area. However, if they didn't get popular support there was no advantage for them to sit there. For even if Castro couldn't eliminate them, other people couldn't get in to them, so they had to get out of there. It was concluded if they were going to withdraw there were three ways they could do it. One was evacuation by ship. If the decision had been made and planned for we could have withdrawn those people off the beach. The second one was that with air support they could have fought their way out. The third possibility was that part of the force would be

evacuated and then later infiltrated back in as guerrillas and the other part of the force would actually remain in that whole Zapata Peninsula area and operate as guerrillas in the expanse to the west. It was always believed they could get out by sea because the CIA's sea operations had always been very successful.

Question: Were you aware that the troops were trained and instructed that in the event they couldn't hold their lodgment they were to fall back onto the beaches for evacuation, and only if that failed would they operate as guerrilla forces?

Answer: No, we weren't. That wasn't in the plan and we were not present at the final briefing.

Question: Did you brief the Joint Chiefs on all the parts of the plan?

Answer: Yes, all except the question of the air strikes.

Question: What was your understanding of the air strikes?

Answer: There would be air strikes on D-Day. This D-2 air strike didn't come in until the last few days. The air plan consisted of nothing but D-Day strikes. Our understanding of the plan was always that the air strikes would be conducted at dawn from Puerto Cabezas.

Question: Would you look back in your notes and see when you briefed the Chiefs and essentially what was in your briefing so we'll know what they heard about the plan?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Statement: There were four official papers that the Joint Chiefs considered. The first was the original Trinidad Plan. The second was the Zapata Evaluation. Third was the evaluation of whether or not we could put a small force in the Oriente Province and they could hang on, and fourth was the evaluation of the team's trip to Guatemala.<sup>1/</sup> They were briefed on these official papers and at their regular meetings I brought them up to date on what was going on. At several of these meetings they were briefed on changes to the plan and they approved them.

<sup>1/</sup>Documents 9, 62, 57, and 56, respectively.

Question: Were these briefings for information or to get their decision?

Answer: Generally speaking, when I briefed them it was on some paper or something that they were being asked to approve.

Question: Would you say then that the Chiefs did have all the essential elements of this plan and did consider the plan adequate?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Did you feel you had the option to the guerrilla alternative?

Answer: Yes, I've always thought we had the option to make that decision before the force got pressed right down to the beach.

General Gray: As D-Day approached it seemed to me that popular support was developing and building. We did measure all the military factors we thought were necessary. However, it was very difficult to get an accurate fix on where the militia was.



Question: You and the DOD did consider the logistic problem and took action to strengthen the logistic plan. Is that a fair statement?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Statement: In other words, logistically speaking, you had planned a very heavy back up to insure a successful operation.

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Would you say that you saw this plan develop, that you had adequate contact with the CIA so that your group, at least, had full knowledge of the developments and anything that looked doubtful was taken before the Joint Chiefs?

Answer: That's right.

Question: Is it true that while the Joint Chiefs never had a presentation on the over-all Zapata Plan at one time, they were briefed on all the pieces of the plan, so they could be said to have knowledge of the entire plan?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: What concern was expressed over the fact that there were only small boats to unload the *Houston* off Red Beach?

Answer: I actually didn't know that detail.

Question: Did you know that the *Atlantico* and the *Caribe* had gone south a hundred or two hundred miles and actually escaped from control for a number of hours?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Do you recall when you discovered that?

Answer: It's in our log. As soon as we become aware of it we told CINCLANT to round them up.

Statement: Our position on all of this was that we would do anything as long as it was approved, and then CIA carried the ball on getting the approval.

General Taylor: After listening to General Gray's testimony I now feel that the Joint Chiefs had a more complete appraisal of the plan and consequently gave a more complete approval.

General Gray: I believe there should have been a final briefing on the over-all plan about April 12th. I wrote that into the tasks that were to be followed by the different agencies. I believe this would have permitted a more detailed evaluation of the plan and all the changes that had been made up to that point.

General Gray: Speaking for myself, there could have been a more detailed evaluation, but I don't think it would have changed my evaluation that the plans should have gone ahead.

[Here follows discussion with General Bonesteel of organizational changes required to deal with cold war problems.]

At this point the Study Group reconvened in Secretary Rusk's office in the State Department. Present were:

General Taylor

Secretary Rusk

Mr. Kennedy

Commander Mitchell

Mr. Dulles

Lt Colonel Tarwater

After a few introductory remarks Secretary Rusk was asked his estimate of the probability of success of the Zapata Plan.

Secretary Rusk: It was in the neighborhood of fifty per cent. It appeared the landing might be followed by further uprisings. If this failed the force could become guerrillas.

Mr. Dulles: I think we all looked upon this as a pretty risky operation.

Secretary Rusk: The risks of the operation were accepted, however, because the importance of success was fully appreciated. Time was running out. It was the last chance in some time to have this job done by Cubans. Otherwise we might have to do this with American personnel and this would be less desirable. Castro's police power was increasing and he was also receiving a large inflow of Soviet arms. Further, it should be pointed out that when we talked about the possibility of failure we talked about far more disastrous results than actually occurred. For example, we had discussed the possibility of such things as being ousted from the OAS or censure by the UN, and lively and adverse reaction by our allies in Europe. The results that developed were not as serious as those that we had considered.

Question: What was the feeling of the likelihood of a popular uprising following the landing?

Secretary Rusk: There was a very considerable likelihood of popular uprisings.

Question: How essential was such an uprising regarded for the success of the operation?

Secretary Rusk: It was believed that the uprising was utterly essential to success in terms of ousting Castro. At one point we discussed the possibility of putting these men in as guerrillas. However, this concept was rejected on the basis of the fact that it would not spark an uprising.

Question: What was your understanding of the requirements for sufficient shock to spark uprisings?

Secretary Rusk: The impression existed that 1,200 highly trained men expected to get ashore and run into some militia units and beat the hell out of them. This would be the kind of a bloody nose that would get things moving. The feeling was that there would be no fighting on the beach. It seemed that this area was virtually empty. There was a good chance the invasion force could get well ashore without being discovered.

Question: What was expected to happen if the landing force effected a successful lodgment but there was no uprising?

Secretary Rusk: In that case they would commence guerrilla operations, move into the swamps and then into the

hills. This swamp area was stated to be the home of guerrillas.

Question: Was the point made that this area had not been used for guerrilla operations in this century?

Secretary Rusk: I don't recall.

Question: Was the possibility of a sea evacuation of the force considered?

Secretary Rusk: I don't recall. At least, it didn't make an impression on me. Let me point out that there was a minimum of papers.

Question: What was the understanding of the position of the JCS as to Zapata? Was it appreciated that they favored Trinidad over Zapata?

Secretary Rusk: They approved the Trinidad Plan. Trinidad involved a larger scale, more spectacular operation. It didn't offer the immediate possibility of an airstrip. It was felt that Zapata had considerably more political advantages and that the JCS approved Zapata.

Statement: The JCS commented that Zapata was the best of the three alternatives they considered, but that they still favored the original Trinidad Plan.

Secretary Rusk: They didn't put their view in writing and that didn't come through. There was a strong impression that they favored the plan. At one meeting the President went around the room and asked everyone personally their opinion and I believe that I was the only one that didn't approve.

Question: Was it understood that control of the air was considered essential to the success of the landing?

Secretary Rusk: Yes, it was understood that it was essential to the success of the landing, but there was an inadequate appreciation of the enemy's capability in the air. Furthermore, neither the President nor I was clear that there was a D-2 air strike. We did have it in our minds that there would be a D-Day air strike. Following the D-2 air strike there was considerable confusion. It wasn't realized that there was to be more than one air strike in the Havana area. The President was called on this matter and he didn't think there should be second strikes in the area unless there were overriding considerations. We talked about the relative importance of the air strikes with Mr. Bissell and General Cabell at the time. However, they indicated that the air strikes would be important, but not critical. I offered to let them call the President, but they indicated they didn't think the matter was that important. They said that they preferred not to call the President.

Question: Did you attempt to advise the President as to the importance of the air strikes?

Secretary Rusk: I had talked to him and he had stated that if there weren't overriding considerations the second strikes shouldn't be made. Since Mr. Bissell and General Cabell didn't want to talk to the President on the matter, I felt there were no overriding considerations to advise him of. I didn't think they believed the dawn air strikes were too important. I believe that Castro turned out to have more operational air strength than we figured.

Mr. Dulles: I don't believe they had any more. However, they turned out to be more efficient.

Question: Do you recall why the question of air strikes was withheld until Sunday evening?

Secretary Rusk: As far as I was concerned, I was caught by surprise with the first air strikes. I was trying to advise Adlai Stevenson at the UN on what was happening and suddenly found out there were additional air strikes coming up. We didn't want him to have to lie to the UN.

Question: What was the understanding of the ability of the landing force to pass to a guerrilla status in an emergency?

Secretary Rusk: The impression was that the ability of this force to pass to guerrilla activities presented no difficulty. At the beginning of the second day the President and I discussed the question of whether it was time to move the force out as guerrillas. However, it appears there was a delay in turning to this because they didn't have this action in mind.

General Taylor: They were told to fall back to the beaches so that they could be evacuated from the sea.

Secretary Rusk: Guerrilla actions were regarded as far more feasible than they turned out to be. I do regret, however, that consideration was not given to another alternative. I suggested earlier that they land in the eastern portion of Cuba and then get a position with Guantanamo behind them. However, our military friends didn't want to spoil the virginity of Guantanamo.

Question: What was the understanding of the ammunition situation at the end of April 18? Was the importance of air cover for the returning ammunition ships understood?

Secretary Rusk: It was apparent that it was critical. The requirement for air cover wasn't as apparent as for air drops and getting the ships back in there, particularly in regard to getting them some tank ammunition.

Question: Was it known at your level that two of the ammunition ships had taken off from the beach area and kept going south?

Secretary Rusk: No.

Question: What degree of nonattribution was sought and why? Were the operational disadvantages arising from some of the restrictions imposed by the efforts to achieve nonattribution clearly presented and understood?

Secretary Rusk: We were hoping for the maximum. In retrospect, however, this looks a little naive. The considerations involved in this were that if you have success all the problems solve themselves. However, if you have failure it's very nice if the United States is not involved.

Statement: Of course, there are degrees of nonattribution. The most costly restriction was the requirement not to have the air strikes even by Cubans./2/

/2/Taylor wrote an addition to the end of this sentence which reads as follows: "which were out of Cuba."

Question: To what extent did the CIA operations representatives have to "sell" the operation to the other agencies of government?

Secretary Rusk: You have to draw a distinction between the policy side and the operational side. The policy side we were willing to look at, if it was policy. On the operational side, we were oversold on the operational aspects.

Question: What do you mean by oversold on the operational aspects?

Secretary Rusk: It was presented in too optimistic terms.

Question: Do you have any remarks on the integrated planning and coordination?

Secretary Rusk: This is very important. These covert matters are handled on such a restricted basis that the resources of the departments are not brought to bear.

Secretary Rusk: When you go beyond a few people in an operation of this sort it shouldn't be handled by the CIA.

Question: What didn't we do that we should have?

Secretary Rusk: Before the President made his decision, CIA and Defense should have spelled out the entire CIA plan in one presentation. While the President had all the factors in his mind, I think this would have helped.

Secretary Rusk: Furthermore, we overemphasized some of the factors. For example, the question of what to do with this 1,200-man force. This question played too large a role because we certainly should have been able to handle these 1,200 men.

Secretary Rusk: If you are not prepared to go all the way you shouldn't put 1,200 men ashore.

Secretary Rusk: When you get to the final decision stage the room should be cleared of all those that have formal constitutional responsibility. People looking down the cannon's mouth should be in a solemn position and make a solemn decision without having large numbers of people in the room.

Statement: Mr. McNamara stressed the desirability of having written papers and decisions.

Secretary Rusk: That would have been helpful. However, it would have meant 50 or 60 pieces of paper around this town.

Secretary Rusk: One concluding remark. There was no one involved that didn't recognize this was a risky business and that failure would be costly. However, we overestimated the international effects of failure, and underestimated the effects of failure on this town.



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
**Volume X**  
**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **201. Letter From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to General Maxwell D. Taylor**

Washington, May 4, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Top Secret.

Dear General Taylor: I regret to say that I am not satisfied with the account of our interview which appears in the Memorandum for Record submitted to me today by Colonel Walmsley.<sup>/1/</sup> It seems to me that I can do a better job of presenting my views on this matter by sending you a memorandum covering my position on the points which are discussed in the Memorandum of Record.

<sup>/1/</sup>Reference is to the memorandum for the record prepared for the Cuba Study Group on May 1. For text, which did not include the draft record of Bundy's testimony, see Document 193. Two pages of the draft memorandum, which summarized Bundy's testimony (pp. 13-14), are attached to Bundy's letter.

The President on his entry into the office was faced with a decision of disbanding or using the Cuban force in Guatemala. He was informed that the force must leave Guatemala within a limited time, and that it could not be held together in the United States for a long period. It would begin to deteriorate; its existence could not be kept quiet; and if it were disbanded within the United States the results would be damaging.

When the Cuba plan was initially presented to the President, he did not like the scheme for an amphibious landing. He requested that a plan be drawn for infiltration of the force so that it might emerge as a Cuban force already on Cuban territory. The report from CIA was that this notion was not likely to be successful, and instead the agency proposed a modified plan for an unopposed landing in a much less populated area. This was the Zapata Plan presented by Mr. Bissell in the middle of March 1961.<sup>/2/</sup> As work on this plan progressed, the gradual impression developed that on balance the CIA preferred this plan to the original Trinidad Plan.

<sup>/2/</sup>Document 61.

It was clearly understood that the Air battle should be won. The views of the Joint Chiefs were presented in writing, and while there was no clear discussion of the opinion of the Joint Chiefs as to the relative merits of the two plans, I think these two statements are correct: (1) that there was no impression left that the Joint Chiefs as such preferred the Zapata Plan; (2) it was clearly understood that they had approved the plan and favored the operation on this revised basis. I base this statement upon the fact that the President repeatedly asked for the opinion of representatives of the Defense Department including members of the Joint Chiefs, and was invariably informed that the Defense Department favored the operation. I do not think this was merely a matter of "concurrence by attendance." The military certainly wanted the operation to proceed; I do not think that this was

because of a deep conviction that this was the best possible plan--it was rather that in view of the absence of desirable alternatives and the press of time, the military believed that the prospects were sufficiently favorable so that it would be best to go ahead. I would not wish to go further into detailed analysis of the motives or positions taken by the Joint Chiefs.

Success in this operation was always understood to be dependent upon an internal Cuban reaction. The first military phase would have been considered successful if it had established a beachhead that could be supplied effectively from outside and joined from inside by defecting Cubans. I do not think that the President was led to feel that the landing operation depended for its first success on immediate uprisings throughout Cuba. On the other hand, reports were made in the last few weeks that gave some hope that the chances of defections and uprisings were growing.

One of the serious misunderstandings in this operation, in my opinion, was over the practicability and likelihood of a guerrilla operation by the landing force. The President repeatedly indicated his own sense that this option was of great importance, and he was repeatedly assured that the guerrilla option was a real one. As one listening in the same way that he listened to most of the discussion before him, I was left with the clear impression that unless there was a quite unexpected catastrophe in the beaching process itself, a substantial portion of the force would almost certainly be able to survive for a prolonged period in guerrilla operations. I do not think there was any extended discussion of the relative quality of the Zapata Plan as against the Trinidad from a guerrilla standpoint. There was a considerable discussion of the option of a sea evacuation, but I do not recall that there was a clear decision as to which of these secondary alternatives would be preferable. My point is simply that the President steadily insisted that the force have an alternative means of survival, and that he was steadily assured that such an alternative was present. As I recall it, the report of the Joint Staff on the Zapata Plan explicitly included assurances on the guerrilla option.<sup>/3/</sup>

<sup>/3/</sup>JCSM-166-61, Document 62.

While it was recognized that the invasion force was much smaller than Castro's army, let alone his militia, the argument for landing it was that it would have much greater fire power, together with air supremacy, while the enemy would have to come toward the beach along narrow defiles. The invasion force would win the first battle because its soldiers were better fighters, with better equipment. After they had won this first battle, the balance would change; the will to fight of the Castro forces would be reduced; defections would begin; uprisings would occur in other parts of the island, and so on.

One startling omission, in retrospect, is the failure of any of the President's advisers to warn of the danger of the T-33s. I suspect that one reason for the later decision not to launch an air strike on the morning of D-Day was that this capability of the Castro air force was never put forward as significant.

While in retrospect I believe that too much attention was given to what General Taylor has called the question of "attribution," it certainly was believed that it would make a great political difference to have this force essentially Cuban. The Americans were offering moral, political and logistical support, but not battle forces. A question of shading is of course involved. At any rate, on March 29th or April 4th there was a direct statement by the President in a meeting that he wanted all U.S. forces out of the operation, and I recall no word of opposition to this decision at this meeting.<sup>/4/</sup> Afterwards, there was further discussion, at which I was not present, between the Department of Defense and the CIA, and agreed revisions were worked out. If those responsible for military judgment on the operation felt that the President's instructions were unacceptable, it seems to me that there certainly should have been some statements of this view.

<sup>/4/</sup>For the available records of the meetings with the President on March 29 and April 4, see Documents 74 and 80.

In my meeting with General Taylor and his advisory group, I was asked about the decision not to permit an air

strike by the Cuban invasion force early on Monday morning. This is a matter which arises from a conversation with the President and the Secretary of State, and I do not believe I am the right man to comment on it. I do have the recollection that during the presentation of the Zapata landings, the impression was conveyed to the President that there would be no strikes on D-Day that could not plausibly come from an airstrip in Cuba.

I have the general impression that all of those concerned with this operation were gradually put into an intrinsically unsound position because of the increasingly critical Cuban situation and the lack of desirable alternatives. Under these pressures the military planners, who had been given instructions by an earlier Administration, became advocates, rather than impartial evaluators of the problem. Moreover, I believe that many people were reticent in their representations to the President.

Mistakes were made in this operation by a lot of people whom the President had every right to trust, as a result of circumstances of all sorts. In the future, any such plan should have much more careful preparation and evaluation, and the President should have intelligence estimates presented to him by others than advocates. In the future also the President should have an explicit White House review, so that he can have an independent judgment, especially on points of interdepartmental responsibility.

I do not concur in any judgment that this operation was "run from the White House." What happened was rather that as trouble began to develop after D-Day, there was steady pressure on the President for a relaxation of rules which had previously been made, and in the light of changing circumstances some such relaxations were authorized. Only in the case of the decision on Sunday/5/ with respect to the D-Day strike was there an operational modification that restricted, instead of enlarging, the authorizations to the CIA. This, as I have said, is a matter on which others can comment more effectively than I. Nevertheless, I would agree that the rules of action should be more clearly stated in the future, and responsibility delegated within those rules to a man near the scene of action. I regard this as a somewhat academic point, because I doubt very much whether large-scale operations of this sort can or should be "covert."

/5/April 16.

I accept as accurate the statement of my views which runs from the middle of page 13 through the middle of page 14,/6/ and I specifically endorse the comment attributed to me that if the military had said at any time that calling off or modifying the air strikes would cause the operation to fail--or even damage it severely--the President would have reversed any such decision as that on Sunday.

/6/The draft record of Bundy's testimony to which he refers largely reiterates a number of the points Bundy made in this letter to Taylor. The concluding point he made in his testimony, as recorded on page 14, was: "I think the men that worked on this got into a world of their own. I don't believe the failure was `because of the want of a nail.'"

McGeorge Bundy

## **202. Paper Prepared for the National Security Council by an Interagency Task Force on Cuba**

Washington, May 4, 1961.

//Source: Department of State, S/P-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Top Secret. This paper, and the five attached annexes, were drafted by an interagency task force on Cuba composed of representatives of the Departments of State, Defense, and Justice as well as CIA and USIA. Much of the drafting was done in ARA in the Department of State and in ISA in the Department of Defense. Paul Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, had overall responsibility for the final draft. Annex I is an intelligence appraisal. Annex II presented "Considerations Bearing on Major Intervention." Annex III outlined proposed U.S. policy toward Cuban exiles. Annex IV dealt with psychological and propaganda warfare. Annex



V was entitled "A Doctrine to Preserve the Independence of the Latin American Revolution." None of the attachments is printed. The paper was circulated to the NSC on May 4 under cover of a memorandum from Acting Executive Secretary of the NSC Marion Boggs in advance of the NSC meeting scheduled for May 5. (Ibid.)

## CUBA AND COMMUNISM IN THE HEMISPHERE

Before deciding on a Cuba policy, it is essential to evaluate the nature of Cuba's threat to the national interests of the United States and the basic strength and vulnerability of the Cuban communist regime.

### I. The Nature of the Threat

#### A. The Military Threat

Continuing bloc arms shipments to Cuba--while strengthening Castro's own ability to withstand attack--will probably not be an important threat to U.S. interests. There is no danger of effective direct attack against the U.S. It is highly unlikely that Castro will overtly attack other nations in the Americas. If he did so, we would be able to intervene pursuant to our Treaty obligations and use the occasion to crush Castro. There is some possibility that Castro would use Cuba as a base for monitoring and harassing U.S. operations, e.g. interfering with communications, etc.

There is the remote possibility of an attempt to convert Cuba into a Russian base for strategic attack on the United States. If this happens, we would have to consider military intervention. (See Sec. B, *infra.*)/1/

/1/An apparent reference to Annex II, not printed.

B. As an exporter of physical aids to revolution--there is no doubt that Cuba is being used as a base for export of the communist-fidelista revolution. This is done through the supply of funds, counsel to subversive activities, and propaganda--mainly through the embassies. It is done through widespread propaganda apparatus of varying effectiveness, including a news service (carried by 24 newspapers) and a radio network. It is done, too, by making a supply of Spanish-speaking agents available for communist subversion and propaganda. At the present time, there is no hard evidence of an actual supply of arms or armed men going from Cuba to other countries to assist indigenous revolutionary movements. There have been allegations of such support being given in Colombia and other countries. There has been some movement of individual armed agents into other countries and some Cuban effort to train the revolutionaries of other countries. The export of physical aid to revolutionary movements, while important, is much less significant than the threat posed by Castro's example and general stimulus to these movements. (See C, *infra.*)

C. As an example and stimulus to communist revolution--Castro's basic aim (supported by the Chinese and principally the Soviets) has been to capture indigenous social revolutionary movements for the communists, strengthen existing communist movements, and, by supporting these movements, weaken the fabric of constitutional government throughout the hemisphere.

To some extent he has been successful in identifying his regime with the cause of economic and social progress. And as he moves forward economically his example may become more attractive. He has provided a rallying point and a source of ideological support for communist movements everywhere; and often for left-wing nationalist movements. One of his principal objectives is to identify and unify the nationalist left and the communists. He has provided a working example of a communist state in the Americas, successfully defying the United States. Thus he has appealed to widespread anti-American feeling, a feeling often shared by non-communists. His survival, in the face of persistent U.S. efforts to unseat him, has unquestionably lowered the prestige of the United States and the presence of Castroist extremist elements are often an important obstacle to orderly social and economic reform.

This picture is not all dark however. As Castro's Soviet-communist identification has become more apparent the communist-fidelista elements have suffered an increasing isolation from the democratic left. Several leaders of the Democratic left have already condemned him publicly. Castro's erratic and often extreme personal behavior has helped to increase this isolation.

There is no doubt that Castro's regime adds significant support to communist efforts to take over the hemisphere, and is a source of strength to communist efforts in every country. However, Castro could not hope to succeed without the conditions of social unrest, widespread poverty and general economic discontent on which the Communist Revolution prospers. If the island of Cuba should sink beneath the waves tomorrow, we still would have to face a significant and steadily growing communist threat in the hemisphere. The fall of Castro would be a severe defeat for the Sino-Soviet bloc, but it would not be, by any means, the end of the battle.

## II. The Present Situation in Cuba

### A. The Armed Forces

The armed forces of the Castro regime number approximately 250,000, of whom some 200,000 are militia. The regular forces have been shaken by purges of officers and men who previously supported Castro against Batista but later became disillusioned.

Bloc arms deliveries and intensive training have increased the military capabilities of the army, but its tactical training is still deficient. The militia is composed of people who generally serve only part-time, but some full-time units are now being trained. The Air Force and Navy suffer from a lack of trained and qualified personnel.

### B. Control Mechanisms

The Castro regime has established a complex of interlocking mechanisms enabling it to control virtually every phase of life in Cuba.

### C. Class and Regional Attitudes

The upper class has been destroyed as an effective political or economic force in Cuba. The middle class provides the principal organized opposition to the Castro regime. It is that part of the newly self-conscious lower class--perhaps 25-30% of the total population--which has already received positive benefits from the Revolution, or still hopes for future improvement in conditions, that now provides the real mass support for the Castro regime.

Not all of the Cuban lower class can be considered to favor the Castro regime. His major strength is with rural workers, whereas there has been considerable disaffection among the labor unions. The failure of the government to carry out many of its earlier promises has led to increasing disappointment and dissatisfaction. This does not mean, however, an equal increase in willingness to act against the regime.

### D. Economy

The Cuban economy continues to decline both in terms of physical output and in living levels; although basic needs for food and textiles are being met. Output in the industrial sector has been adversely affected by parts and raw material shortages, although sugar production may match or exceed last year's level and the regime is making strenuous efforts to expand agricultural production. Cuba's trade has been redirected largely to the Soviet Bloc, whose economic support is vital for the Castro regime.

## III. Probable Trends Within Cuba, Assuming No Major U.S. Intervention

## A. Political Prospects

Over the short term there will be no major change in internal political conditions. However, by the end of one year organized anti-Castro opposition will probably have increased its activities, but with Castro's intensified controls this will not offer a threat to the stability of the regime. Over the long term (5 years) all effective opposition to the regime will probably have been eliminated. However, such a long-term estimate is based on many variables and is highly contingent. It may be the most probable outcome but many other outcomes--including growing resistance--cannot be discounted.

## B. Probable Trends in the Armed Forces

With Bloc assistance the combat effectiveness of the Cuban armed forces will substantially increase.

## C. Economic Prospects

The economy will deteriorate further over the short term, but it will not jeopardize the regime's stability. Within a year the economic situation will have improved slightly, and within five (5) years Cuba's natural resources and Bloc economic assistance will permit greater self-sufficiency and gradual economic growth. There is a possibility that the Communists--through an extensive program of aid--might try and make Cuba a showcase of economic progress.

## IV. Cuban Vulnerabilities

### A. Economic

Economic vulnerabilities of the Castro regime include its foreign exchange position, spare parts and raw materials shortages, lack of sufficient technical and managerial personnel, declining per capita income, and consumer shortages and the growing black market. Imposition of the Trading with the Enemy Act against Cuba (which would inter alia reduce Cuba's foreign exchange earnings from the United States and would extend the U.S. export embargo to all products) and a campaign of limited sabotage against Cuba's industries and utilities would aggravate these problems, though not sufficiently, by themselves, to jeopardize the regime's stability.

### B. Political

Castro's elimination from the scene would cause serious problems, but the bureaucracy and apparatus are so firmly entrenched that they could continue to operate without him.

Popular resentment against the totalitarian controls imposed by the regime has steadily increased. This resentment is open to exploitation. The hold of the regime depends in large part on control of mass communications media. Sabotage of these facilities would deprive the regime of this advantage; sabotage of other communications would impair the effectiveness of police controls.

We recommend a study of possible weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the elements which exert control in Cuba (e.g. military, key political figures, labor leaders, etc.) and weaknesses in their relations to each other, assessing discontent, possible disaffection, etc. This would be an anatomy of the Castro regime.

Increased guerrilla operations, effectively supported by the U.S., would disrupt normal activities in Cuba and serve to keep resistance alive against heavier controls and repression.

(For complete Intelligence appraisal see Annex I.)/2/

/2/Not printed.

## Conclusion:

There is no sure way of overthrowing Castro short of U.S. military intervention. There is a possibility, although a slight possibility that lesser measures--covert and overt--might result in the overthrow of the Castro regime from within. As long as Castro thrives, his major threat--the example and stimulus of a working communist revolution--will persist.

## V. The Decision to Intervene with U.S. Forces

### A. The Consequences of Intervention at this time and under present conditions:

(1) The Castro regime would be destroyed, but the possibility of protracted guerrilla conflict cannot be discounted.

(2) There would be a direct and perhaps substantial loss of life--Cuban and American.

(3) General World Reaction to Intervention--Reaction to the use of U.S. force to eliminate Castro would be clearly negative. It would severely impair the general international image of a non-aggressive, non-imperialist nation which we have tried to build over the past fifteen years. It would severely weaken our ideological position by blurring differences with the Soviet Union--differences based on their aggressive nature, imperialistic system etc. It would revive fears, especially in Latin America, about our intention to dominate and direct the affairs of all American States. There would be a general nervousness about the possibility of the conflict spreading--and a loss of confidence in the United States.

However, there would be some favorable response to our firmness in eliminating a nearby communist center. This would come from those governments most closely tied to the United States and which believe that their continued existence depends on the U.S. coming to their support, e.g. Nationalist China. The favorable reaction would be centered in those elements who see security from the communists dependent almost solely on power and the willingness to use it.

The Soviet Union--through propaganda, agitation etc.--would exploit the situation to the fullest. Direct armed support of Castro is unlikely. Acting against Castro on the grounds that we cannot tolerate a communist base 90 miles away would give the Soviet Union a counter-rationale for acting against our own base system, and the possibility of Soviet intervention in Iran could not be ruled out.

There would be at least a temporary setback to the likelihood of progress toward peaceful settlement of important international issues. Traditional points of confrontation--such as Berlin or Quemoy and Matsu--might become more explosive and dangerous.

Latin American reaction would range from support (e.g. Guatemala and Nicaragua) to outright resentment and opposition (e.g. Mexico, Ecuador and Bolivia). Another group might feel relieved, but political conditions would require them to oppose or remain silent. Reactions within the Latin countries would vary from support by the oligarchy to sharp reaction against Yankee imperialism among students, workers, campesinos, and much of the articulate middle class. This reaction would be exploited by the communists, and might endanger vulnerable democratic governments (e.g. Venezuela). (A more extended discussion of world reaction is found in Annex II.)

From the people, parties and press of Europe we could expect a severely censorious reaction--tempered by some restraint in deference to the Alliance. The Kennedy image and prestige in Europe would be severely weakened, perhaps to the extent of weakening U.S. leadership in the Alliance, and the Alliance itself. European governments would generally be neutral or support us. The CENTO and SEATO allies would react more favorably.

Perhaps the most serious reaction would come from the neutral states in Africa, the Near East and Asia. It would intensify our identification with the colonialist powers and tend to increase the tendency to see the U.S. and Russia as having similar ambitions and goals. An intervention would seriously impair and complicate our ability to work through the U.N. on the entire range of problems confronting that body.

## B. Considerations Bearing on a Future Decision to Intervene

A judgment whether to intervene will depend on many factors.

(1) The degree of provocation offered by Cuba or the Soviet Union, and/or the growing intensity of the Cuba threat. Below are listed, in roughly ascending order of seriousness of provocation, a number of conceivable fact situations:

- (a) Present conditions, following the unsuccessful attempt of Cuban exiles to overthrow Castro, without any essentially new action on the part of Cuba;
- (b) Upon a unilateral finding by the United States that its own self-defense requires armed intervention in Cuba to terminate the hemispheric threat of Castro-Communism;
- (c) Direct Castro regime involvement in an attempt at subversive overthrow in another Latin American Republic, the government of which requests United States assistance against Cuba;
- (d) Establishment of a Soviet military base on Cuban soil;
- (e) Indiscriminate and mass execution by the Castro regime of American citizens in Cuba, without regard to any prohibited activities or claimed offenses on their part;
- (f) Conditions of widespread unrest against the Castro regime produced not by United States covert operations but by popular Cuban hostility, with a general breakdown of law and order in Cuba, in which at least some local authorities requested United States intervention;
- (g) The event of the United States being asked for support by an anti-Castro provisional Cuban government which had succeeded on its own (without United States Government assistance) in establishing itself in control of a substantial part of Cuba, had maintained that control for a period of time, and had been recognized by the United States;
- (h) Systematic or large-scale attacks by the Cuban military establishment on shipping and aircraft of the American Republics on and over the high seas;
- (i) A decision by the members of the OAS under the Rio treaty to intervene, once that decision had received the United Nations endorsement or authorization required by the United Nations Charter;
- (j) A major and serious Cuban military effort to force the United States out of the Guantanamo base;
- (k) An armed attack by Cuba on the United States or another of the American Republics;
- (l) Retaliation against the Soviet Union for a Soviet action against the free world serious enough to warrant such retaliation.

Under existing international law and our treaty obligations armed intervention would be justified only under (h), (i), (j), and (k).

(2) The swiftness and cleanness of an effective, completed intervention in Cuba. An armed intervention executed quickly and without large casualties on either side would have smaller costs than a prolonged conflict. It is estimated that at the present time United States armed forces might have to engage in long and difficult military operations to bring under control the whole of Cuba--rural and mountain districts as well as the centers of population and lines of communication. The best estimate is that the passage of time will tighten Castro's political grip and increase his actual military strength in Cuba. On the other hand, we should not rule out the possibility that the passage of time might see increased popular hostility and resistance toward his regime, and the development of local conditions in which an American armed intervention would be generally welcomed throughout the island.

(3) The success obtained by the United States in its over-all Latin American program by the time of U.S. armed intervention. The costs of intervention, at least in Latin America, would be reduced to some extent in proportion as various elements in the United States Latin American program are successful:

(a) Economic development and social progress through the Alianza para Progreso:

(b) Achievement of a wider understanding in Latin America of the Castro-Communist threat, and the undertaking of measures to defeat internal subversion.

(4) The development of a new theory or doctrine of international law justifying U.S. armed intervention in cases of Castro-inspired takeover. Such a doctrine would materially improve the basis for our intervention only if it were generally accepted by the countries of Latin America and elsewhere throughout the free world, and if those countries generally were convinced that the doctrine was applicable to the facts of the Cuban situation.

### C. Conclusion: The Choice of a Policy

The cost of eliminating Castro by military intervention would be substantial at the present time and under present circumstances. These costs might include significant loss of life and other military and civilian casualties, and would severely endanger the U.S. position of leadership in the Free World. It is our judgment that these costs outweigh the advantages of intervention.

In view of these considerations, it is the recommendation of the Task Force that:

1) We should not undertake military intervention now.

2) We should make no statements or take no action that would foreclose the possibility of military intervention in the future.

3) We should work to reduce the Castro threat through measures discussed in the balance of this paper--thus seeking to avoid the need for more drastic and costly action at some time in the future.

4) We should attempt to reduce the costs of intervention should it become necessary. There is not a great deal the United States by itself can do along these lines as a matter of deliberate policy. We can, however, plan for various contingencies so that intervention will be sufficient and more effective. We should strive to develop a creditable doctrine based on self-defense against indirect aggression which would justify more drastic action, and we should seek to have that doctrine generally accepted by world opinion. At the same time, we should seek to continue our efforts to establish a multilateral base for action./3/

/3/On May 3 the final draft of this paper was circulated for comment. In the Department of State, Achilles reviewed the paper in a memorandum to Rusk and concluded that it "comes up with the right answer." He felt, however, that while the paper accurately presented the risks of intervention, it did not adequately present the

risks of allowing Castro to remain in power or of conveying an impression of weakness or irresolution in dealing with Castro. He drafted two paragraphs that he felt should be added to the paper at this point to strengthen the impression of determination to confront the threat posed by Castro. These paragraphs, which were apparently adopted by the NSC on May 5 for inclusion in the paper (see Document 203) read as follows:

"5) We should keep in mind

"(a) the possibility that if the Castro regime remains in power and succeeds all of Latin America may succumb to Soviet-dominated Communism within a relatively few years, and

"(b) that the measures recommended in this paper are highly unlikely to cause the regime's fall although they will both cause it difficulties and retard its influence elsewhere.

"6) It should also be borne in mind that as a result of the President's April 20 statement the U.S., Latin American and world opinion is looking to the Administration for strong and prudent leadership with respect to Cuba. We cannot afford weakness, irresponsibility or failure." (Department of State, S/P-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Cuba and the Dominican Republic)

In a conversation with Admiral Burke at 8:45 a.m. on May 5, shortly before the NSC discussion of the paper, General Bonesteel said that Achilles had called him the previous night to indicate concern that the paper was not strong enough. Bonesteel noted that Achilles had briefed Rusk on the paper and felt that Rusk would take a pretty strong position in the NSC. Achilles' implication, Bonesteel felt, was "for goodness sakes for us to get in there and keep pitching for something stronger." Burke responded that he had taken the same position in discussing the paper with McNamara the previous evening. (Memorandum of telephone conversation, May 5; Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials)

#### Measures Short of Armed Intervention

#### VI. U.S. Policy Toward Cuban Exiles

There are approximately 116,000 Cuban aliens, largely middle class and educated with 23% professionally and semi-professionally trained, who could be an asset, but a diminishing asset to a liberated Cuba. Annex III outlines a detailed plan under which their training could be undertaken. It includes a program for the training of approximately 4,000 military.

Approval of the plan, with the exception of its military component, is recommended by the entire task force.

The following arguments have been advanced for and against the military component.

##### 1. Arguments for:

- a. Such a contingent would be helpful should an invasion become necessary. It would give Cuban participation and military assistance to the invasion.
- b. In the event of an overthrow of the Castro regime, whether by invasion or by internal overthrow, it would furnish leadership cadres, counter-guerrilla teams and civil affairs units.
- c. The military potential of these Cubans will be a rapidly wasting asset if their training is not promptly organized.
- d. Not to train these men would be taken throughout Latin America as a decision not to intervene in Cuba.

##### 2. Arguments against:

- a. The United States would be faced with continuing questions in the U.N. and by world opinion as to the purpose of such military training. It would be asserted that such a program implies an intention to intervene in Cuba.
- b. Should an invasion become necessary, such a contingent would be a useful, but not an essential, element.
- c. It would be difficult to disband the contingent once organized without a serious morale impact on the Cuban exiles.

## VII. Steps To Quarantine and Weaken the Castro Communist Regime

### A. Steps Designed to Isolate Cuba morally and diplomatically in the hemisphere

1. Endeavor to persuade other Latin American governments to take steps aimed at completing Castro's isolation--such as withdrawal of Ambassadors, diplomatic breaks, appeals to Cuba to free itself of Sino-Soviet ties, etc. The greatest prospect for success with these measures--among those nations which have not already broken ties--is Venezuela and Colombia, and possibly Argentina.
2. We can apply the Trading with the Enemy Act. There is a difference of task force opinion on this point. This cut-off of trade will not appreciably harm the Cuban economy; although it will intensify their foreign exchange difficulties. It is, however, a political step aimed at increasing isolation and an expression of our intention not to finance, to any extent, the communist revolution in Cuba. It will make more difficult--by emphasizing his isolation from the Western Hemisphere--Castro's effort to persuade his people that he can solve his long-run economic problems. This could be a prelude to a blacklist of Cuban commercial activities in Latin America. A large part of the trade is in foodstuffs and medicines.
3. The plan for OAS action, discussed below, would also contribute to the effort to isolate Castro.

### B. Steps To Weaken Castro

1. Make public statement setting forth our liberal aspirations for a post-Castro Cuba in the political, economic and social fields--our general agreement with the original objectives of the revolution.
2. Formulate and announce concrete measures whereby we intend to assist the Cuban people and economy after Cuba is free.
3. Continue to give open support to the Cuban liberation movement and to the Revolutionary Council. Conduct relations with that body on a more overt basis.
4. Continue understanding with allies that no arms will be shipped to Cuba.
5. See measures discussed below in the plan for OAS action which will make some, although minor, contribution to weakening Castro.

### C. Steps Designed To Quarantine the Castro Communist Regime

1. Plan to provide assistance to any Latin American country requesting help against Castro inspired subversion or attack. Wherever possible this understanding between us and other governments should be formally incorporated into a bilateral defense treaty. This would be an effective way, within the existing framework of international law, to provide a basis for U.S. action in coming to the defense of any nation threatened by the techniques of subversion, infiltration and/or guerrilla activity. Although a broader doctrinal basis for such action might be



thought desirable, and is discussed further on in this paper--such a series of arrangements would provide a basis for action and would, in themselves, signal a new doctrine.

2. Obtain the necessary legislative authorization and budgetary support to enable us to help other countries build up their internal security forces.
3. Offer intelligence liaison and assistance to other Latin American countries to enable them to identify Castro and other communist inspired subversive efforts, discover shipments of arms and funds, cope with subversive political organizations, etc. This means aiding and building-up local intelligence efforts and making our own information available.
4. Encourage Latin governments to bring pressure to stop use of Castro press service in their country.
5. Attempt to build a Caribbean force within the framework of the OAS. This would be a series of bilateral arrangements within a multilateral framework among the Caribbean nations and the United States.

We would enter into formal bilateral commitments with all Caribbean nations willing to participate to do those things outlined in the first three paragraphs of this section, i.e. provide assistance against subversion and threatened attack. We would pledge armed forces to a Caribbean Security Force in which other member nations would participate. As a step in accomplishing this we would renegotiate the MAP agreements which we now have with five of the proposed member states (Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, Nicaragua and Colombia) to incorporate these commitments and permit MAP trained forces to be deployed against internal as well as external threats, and we would seek to negotiate similar agreements with non-MAP states.

In return the Central American countries would bilaterally (a) accept our assistance in internal security field, (b) earmark forces for a Caribbean security force, and (c) pledge themselves to orderly economic and social development within the framework of country development plans.

This would be coupled with a multilateral agreement which (a) recognized the common threat, (b) set up the Caribbean Security Force, (c) provided for an exchange of information and intelligence on the Castro threat, and (d) contained a commitment on the part of each member to deny its territory to Castro activities aimed at another member.

The agreement, although based on the Caribbean nations, would be open to all OAS members who wished to join.

Aside from its potential effectiveness in dealing with the Castro threat, such an organization could provide an effective legal and international basis for U.S. action where necessary.

6. Either within a Caribbean arrangement or outside it conduct a navy patrol and other feasible surveillance of possible movements of arms and men from Cuba to other nations. Halt these shipments when discovered: even if unilateral action is necessary. It is possible that such a surveillance operation might be approved by the OAS. See below.

7. OAS Action: To the extent that OAS action can substitute or reinforce the goals of a Caribbean Force it should be used. Therefore the possibilities of OAS should be explored.

The following program to propose for OAS action is deemed feasible, in the sense that all of the measures could be adopted without undue physical strain upon the Latin American governments, and probably would be supported by them once they have made the decision to take a stand in the OAS against Castro. There would be reluctance on the part of certain of them to contribute to a Caribbean surveillance operation, but token assistance for this purpose would be forthcoming from several. The big question now is the extent to which any program

will be supported by certain of the major governments, particularly Brazil. We do not have an estimate of likely support on this or any program because we have not had an agreed program to propose, but present indications are that Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Paraguay would support action against Castro. Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Haiti might go along. It is almost certain that Chile, Bolivia and Brazil would oppose forthright OAS action and the position of Mexico and Ecuador is certain to be opposed.

Adoption of such a program would contribute immeasurably to the moral isolation of Castro. Physically, it would contribute to weakening him, but not greatly in addition to steps we might take unilaterally, since Cuba has little trade and direct communication with Latin America. It would eliminate Castro diplomatic and other missions as focal points of propaganda and subversion, and the Committee on Defense of Pan-American Principles could contribute to ferreting out Castro-communist activities, depending on our leadership. It would also provide an important OAS umbrella for actions which we have taken or desire to take. It would put the United States in a stronger position for more forcible measures which might at some time be required.

We should consult individually on the following program for action under the Rio Treaty.

(a) A finding that the Castro regime is in violation of basic OAS principles and specifically that its actions are contrary to concepts set forth in the Declaration of Caracas/4/ (against communist domination or control); The Declaration of Santiago/5/ (calling for respect for human rights); and the Declaration of San Jose/6/ (denouncing extra-continental intervention by Sino-Soviet powers and acceptance of such intervention).

/4/The Declaration of Caracas was the Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States Against International Communist Intervention, adopted by the Tenth Inter-American Conference, Caracas, Venezuela, March 28, 1954. For text, see *American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955: Basic Documents*, pp. 1300-1302.

/5/The Declaration of Santiago was approved at the Fifth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics, Santiago, Chile, August 18, 1959. For text, see *ibid.*, *Current Documents, 1959*, pp. 361-363.

/6/The Declaration of San Jose was approved at the Seventh Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics, San Jose, Costa Rica, August 29, 1960. For text, see *ibid.*, 1960, pp. 219-220.

(b) Decisions to apply with respect to Cuba the following measures specified in Rio Treaty Article 8:/7/

/7/For text of Article 8 of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, signed at Rio de Janeiro on September 2, 1947, see *A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-1949*, p. 228.

1. breaking of diplomatic and consular relations;

2. suspension of trade in all items except medical supplies, and interruption of all other economic relations.

(c) Establish a joint naval-aerial patrol of the Caribbean area for surveillance purposes designed to help identify shipment of arms and personnel from Cuba to other countries for the support of subversive activities and insurrectionary movements, and to assist affected states to prevent such intervention. (Plan to be developed by COAS with the advice of the Inter-American Defense Board.)

(d) Recreate the Committee for the Political Defense of the Continent for the purpose of identifying Castrista or Sino-Soviet infiltration into American States, devising and recommending techniques and methods to prevent or counteract such infiltration, and recommending parallel action by American governments in dealing with such

infiltration.

(e) Establish a continuing committee of the OAS to observe compliance with the actions agreed upon and to assist governments to carry them out. Should consultations reveal that required 2/3 or more of the governments are agreed, proceed with OAS action required to formalize that agreement and put steps into effect. If majority not in agreement, press for adoption by individual governments unilaterally of as much of program as they are in a position to carry out. This would include possible establishment of Caribbean surveillance force as discussed above.

(f) Should Castro initiate direct or indirect aggression against any other American State, encourage the affected government to invoke the Rio Treaty, support it with military force if armed attack is involved, and to support maximum feasible application of Rio Treaty if aggression has been indirect.

Recommendation:

That quiet negotiation be begun immediately to explore where practicable the willingness of other American nations to join in bilateral, multilateral and OAS-wide arrangements of the type discussed throughout this section. Such consultation should accompany or follow the necessary discussions which will precede the IA-ECOSOC meeting in July. A special team should be appointed for this purpose.

8. The Dominican Republic and Haiti are two of the countries most vulnerable to a Castro takeover. In both countries democratic alternatives to the present regimes are not developed; and there is little doubt that Castro hopes for a communist takeover when Trujillo and/or Duvalier go. We recommend the following:

(a) That we immediately develop emergency plans for both these nations in case of a blow-up in the next several weeks. These plans should include preparations to send in U.S. troops to maintain order, coupled with an emergency meeting of the OAS to authorize intervention as a preventative to civil strife and bloodshed. We should immediately consult with other nations, especially Venezuela, in an effort to get an advance commitment for joint action. If time allows the meeting should precede the troops. If there is no time troops should land immediately. This would be followed by a provisional government, free elections, etc.

(b) We must immediately develop a longer-range program for these nations. This includes the organization of a democratic alternative to Trujillo and Duvalier. Such a group can be formed basically out of exiles since there is little opportunity for opposition or potential opposition to exist within the framework of the Haitian and Dominican regimes, though possibilities appear to exist in the Dominican Republic. When the formation of democratic alternatives is well under way, we should develop and begin to put into effect a plan for accelerating a transition from the regimes of Trujillo and Duvalier. In this way the timing and initiative on replacement will be ours, and we will gain the tremendous propaganda advantage which will accrue to us as a result of participation, however indirect, in an effort to eliminate these dictatorships. The methods whereby this can be accomplished have not yet been explored.

(c) In this connection, we should step up our campaign against tyranny in the hemisphere and, wherever possible, couple Trujillo and Castro.

9. Clarification of Juridical and Political Basis for the Protection of Free Nations against Communist Aggression

The present basis of international law is grounded on the nation state system as it evolved largely in Europe, from the 15th to 19th centuries. The present situation involving the duality between a nation state system and loyalties to a political and organizational system that transcends nations and has worldwide pretensions (the communist system) presents wholly new problems which require the development and exposition of an entirely new juridical basis. Existing international law concepts, be they the rights of belligerents, interference in the internal affairs of another state, the legitimacy and recognition of governments or the definition of armed aggression, play into the

hands of the communists while they tie the hands, or lead to confusion in the ranks, of those proposing to assist nations attempting to preserve their freedom.

#### Recommended Courses of Action:

(a) Secretary of State to assemble a group of knowledgeable people in this field to propose a new political rationale and new set of legal principles appropriate to today's realities. (Possible names: Dean Acheson, Herman Phleger, Eric Hager, Arthur Dean, Mike Forrestal, C. B. Marshall.)

(b) After U.S. approval of these principles, the State Department to negotiate their acceptance by as wide a group of our NATO allies as possible.

(c) Then inform the members of OAS bilaterally that we propose to accept these principles and expect their concurrence; after having obtained concurrence from OAS states bilaterally submit the principles to OAS for ratification.

### VIII. Measures Designed to Defeat Communist Subversion and Infiltration Generally--as well as to Quarantine the Castro Communist Regime

#### A. Strengthening of the Alliance for Progress

The present status of work on the Alliance for Progress is summarized in Annex III. Favorable Senate action on the \$500 million appropriation for the Inter-American Program for Social Progress (Bogota Program), passed by the House of Representatives on April 25, is expected by May 5, so that implementation can begin at once. Planning for the Ministerial meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in July--the next major formal step--is proceeding smoothly.

Action requirements for strengthening the Alliance for Progress are as follows:

##### 1. Rapid implementation of selected social development projects.

a. Direct the ICA to negotiate forthwith a number of projects in the fields of education and training and public health assigned to it under the Bogota Program, selecting cases where recipient governments are making the greatest efforts at self-help and institutional reform, and covering a number of countries and a number of types of educational projects. The target for obligation of funds by June 30, 1961, should be a minimum of \$25 million and an optimum of \$35 to \$50 million.

b. Direct the U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to encourage the Bank to take similarly prompt action in its assigned fields, giving priority to aid in the realization of agricultural settlement and land reform measures and to low-cost housing in areas of serious unemployment and social unrest, and emphasizing the readiness to assist governments undertaking the most far-reaching self-help measures for social improvement.

c. Direct the USIA to arrange for the maximum informational coverage of the actions in Latin America.

##### 2. Acceleration of other Latin American aid implementation.

Direct the DLF and the Export-Import Bank to accelerate implementation of projects already funded, avoiding "policy" obstacles not required by law (e.g., DLF financing of aided self-help housing in Colombia).

##### 3. Ensure prompt development of affirmative U.S. positions for Inter-American Economic and Social Council.

Direct the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs to arrange for the prompt development of clear U.S. positions on Latin American economic integration and on commodity market and foreign exchange income stabilization which will be as responsive as possible to legitimate Latin American aspirations in these fields. These positions should be incorporated into the planning documents for the July meeting of the IA-ECOSOC.

#### 4. Provision of additional resources for Latin American economic and social development.

a. Direct the Foreign Aid Task Force, after completion of its current work in preparing the foreign aid bill for FY 1962, to review the data on Latin American needs and capital absorption capacity with a view to requesting a supplemental appropriation for development loans later in FY 1962 of approximately \$300 million, in addition to the \$250-\$350 million now contemplated.

b. Direct the ICA and the U.S. Executive Director of the IDB to proceed with the obligation of Bogota Program funds as rapidly as projects can be negotiated which are genuinely consistent with the criteria governing that program, with a view to asking Congress for a second installment of social development funds for FY 1963, rather than waiting for the FY 1964 program as hitherto contemplated.

#### B. Organization of a Political Counterforce

A number of liberal, democratic Latin American political parties have organized themselves into an informal League of Democratic Parties. Moreover, an Institute for Political Education in Costa Rica to train young men in the techniques of democratic leadership has recently been established. We should support, in every way possible, this very hopeful effort. The Director of the appropriate U.S. agency should be instructed to give financial assistance in all amounts which can be usefully absorbed, to aid this organization in establishing a permanent headquarters and independent information and propaganda apparatus, expand a training institute, call international conferences of democratic parties in the underdeveloped world, etc. We should also assist with counsel and technical assistance where desired.

Given a firm ideological base and efficient organization this group could become a highly effective political counterforce to Castro.

#### C. Psychological and Propaganda Warfare

We must develop a firm propaganda line on Cuba and on communism and provide effective means for disseminating that line.

Annex IV describes the general rationale and suggests several themes for propaganda.

We recommend the establishment of radio broadcasting into Cuba on a 24-hour a day basis independent of the now compromised Radio Swan.

Additional methods of dissemination are discussed in Annex IV. The key decision is the decision to engage in propaganda activities on a greatly enlarged scale, and making the means of propaganda (e.g. radio transmitters) available to non-US groups (e.g. League of Democratic Parties, Cuban Revolutionary Council, etc.). If this decision is made then the USIA Director and CIA should be asked to prepare an estimate of costs.

#### IX. Organization of Effort

A. The key to conduct of Latin American affairs is the immediate appointment of a top-flight Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs--and a Latin America regional director for the new aid agency. If these jobs are to be done effectively it means the centralization of greater authority than that normally afforded to regional Assistant Secretaries vis-a-vis the aid operation and other government agencies.

In the interim the Cuban task force should be continued to keep a watch over those elements of the above plan aimed specifically at Cuba.

**203. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Kennedy**

Washington, May 5, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, May 1961. Top Secret.

**ACTION AT NSC MEETING, FRIDAY, MAY 5**

A. The only agenda item is Cuba. Dean Rusk may ask for discussion of Laos, but we should resist any extended debate--we have had too much, and there is still no agreed, reviewed, State-Defense position. Frank Ellis has a brief paper on Civil Defense whose meaning is hard to assess--he will want to speak to you about it, and you will have to decide whether you want to discuss it.

[Here follows discussion of an unrelated item to be discussed at the NSC meeting.]

C. On Cuba, the starting point is the fine report of the Nitze task force./1/ The first point to make is that we cannot debate it all--the following are the principal points for your decision. They are stated in each case with three elements:

/1/Document 202.

- a. The recommended decision
- b. Who concurs or dissents
- c. The action agency

Recommended decisions:

1. There should be a detailed study of possible weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the elements which exert control in Cuba today--an anatomy of the Castro regime. (cf p. 8, Report)

Recommended by: Task Force and White House

Action: CIA, with State.

2. There should be no military intervention now, but the U. S. should retain the right to intervene if (a) Castro's Cuba should become a direct military threat to the U. S., or (b) if Castro commits aggression against any American republic.

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force (cf. p. 15, Report)

Action: President

3. While the Castro threat should be reduced, if possible, by other measures, there should be careful contingency planning for sufficient and effective intervention if it should become necessary. (pp. 15-16, Report)

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: Department of Defense

4. Cuban exiles in the U.S. should be dealt with in general as outlined in Annex III,<sup>/2/</sup> Task Force Report, except that:

<sup>/2/</sup>Not printed.

a. There will be no separate Cuban military force, but Cuban enlistment in the U.S. armed forces will be encouraged, and the Department of Defense will keep track of such Cubans against the day when they may be needed.

b. Exiles will be screened, first, for refugee status and, second, on a selective basis, for immigrant status.

Recommended by: White House and Task Force, except that Defense and CIA would prefer a Cuban brigade, while the Task Force did not report on the notion of immigrant status for a few.

Action: Defense, HEW, CIA, and Justice.

5. Possible economic sanctions against Castro should be carefully reviewed--it is not clear what their effect would be, or whether they should be applied by the Trading with the Enemy Act, the Battle Act, or a direct embargo. (cf. Report, p. 19)

Recommended by: White House (Task Force was split)

Action: Department of State (Assistant Secretary Martin)

6. Relations with the Revolutionary Council should be improved, and support should be given to that body insofar as it continues to represent substantial Cuban sentiment.

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: Department of State

7. Our commitment to lasting reform and progress in a post-Castro Cuba, as elsewhere, should be reaffirmed, along with our commitment to assist the Cuban people and economy after Cuba is free. (cf. Report, p. 19)

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: President, then State and USIA

8. We should at once initiate negotiation to enlarge the willingness of other American states to join in bilateral, multilateral and OAS-wide arrangements to quarantine Castro. Such negotiation should be separate from preparations now proceeding for the IA-ECOSOC meeting in July, and a special team of negotiators may be needed.

These negotiations should include the following possibilities:

a. agreements for mutual support against subversion, infiltration, or guerrilla activity

b. increased cooperation in strengthening internal security forces

- c. increased intelligence and liaison assistance
- d. cooperative action against Castro press services and other prop-aganda
- e. a Caribbean security force
- f. naval patrol against movements of arms and men, within the rules of international law
- g. censure of Castro by OAS under Declaration of Caracas, Santiago, and/or San Jose
- h. rupture of diplomatic, consular, and/or trade relations
- i. creation of appropriate Inter-American committees of enforcement
- j. invocation of the Rio Treaty, and U.S. support, in the event of aggression.

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: Department of State

9. Both emergency and long-range plans should be developed promptly for anti-Communist intervention in the event of crises in Haiti or the Dominican Republic.

Recommended by White House and Task Force

Action: Department of State (Mr. Berle)

10. The Legal Adviser--with such external consultation as may be appropriate--should consider how far existing concepts of international law play into the hands of communists, and whether a new juridical basis for effective anti-communist action can and should be developed. (Report, pp. 30-31)

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: Department of State (Mr. Chayes)

11. The Alliance for Progress should be strengthened on the lines recommended in Section VIII A of the Task Force Report, specifically including a plan for a supplemental appropriation for development loans, later in FY 1962, of the order of \$200-\$400 million, in addition to the \$250-\$350 million now contemplated, and including further an expectation that a second installment of social development funds in FY 1963, rather than in FY 1964. (Report, pp. 32-34)

12. We should engage in propaganda activities on a much enlarged scale, and the means of propaganda should be made available to non-U.S. groups. An estimate of costs should be prepared by USIA and CIA.

Recommended by: White House and Task Force

Action: USIA and CIA

13. An Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs should be appointed.

14. In the interim the Cuban Task Force should be continued under the temporary chairmanship of Richard



Goodwin.

Recommended by: White House, adapted from Task Force

Action: The President

## **204. Notes of the 483d Meeting of the National Security Council**

Washington, May 5, 1961.

//Source: Johnson Library, Vice Presidential Security File, National Security Council (III). Top Secret. Although there is no drafting information on the source text, these notes were prepared by Howard L. Burris, Vice President Johnson's military aide.

[Here follow 2 paragraphs unrelated to Cuba.]

The President asked Mr. Nitze for a report on the Cuban situation. Nitze replied that the Navy could blockade the island but results would not be immediate but rather long-range, and in the course thereof unfavorable world reaction would probably accrue. Admiral Burke pointed out that only complete interception of all ships approaching Cuba would achieve eventual success, and the job could be done with 24 ships. Mr. Rusk interrupted Admiral Burke to point out that such action would be an act of war and was wholly impracticable.

The President asked about a reported letter from Senator Goldwater<sup>/1/</sup> in which the statement is made that the Air Force could resolve the Cuban situation. Admiral Burke replied that there had in fact been an Air Force proposal with which other services had disagreed, especially the Marines. In any case, the Air Force had made the suggestion that the Cuban problem be resolved through rather heavy and perhaps indiscriminate bombardment. The President immediately rejected such an idea, and added further that there would be no Navy blockade. He emphasized the importance of more effective watch committee action on Cuba. He also asked Mr. Dulles what new information was available on foreign equipment going into Cuba. Mr. Dulles replied that we know practically everything about the equipment, but offered no specifics. The President directed that close surveillance be continued including overflight with an American pilot. The President approved flights of a frequency of every two or three days, but suggested extreme caution.

<sup>/1/</sup>Not further identified.

The President suggested that all Americans be urged to leave Cuba and asked Secretary Johnson to study ways and means of exit and transit visas.

Mr. Murrow assessed world-wide reactions to the U.S. position with regard to Cuba. He felt that the departure of the clergy, the reign of terror, and such incidents as the imprisonment in the theater will result in favorable reactions toward the U.S. and tend to considerably offset the unfavorable ones. He felt that world-wide impressions of the United States were improving generally. The President suggested that the Iranian issue might be interpreted abroad as a possible result of the failure of the U.S. to act in Laos. He suggested action by USIA to discount this possible impression. Secretary Rusk suggested the over-riding theme of U.S. rejection of Castro and went on to say that the U.S. must take all measures to precipitate his downfall or face the possibility that all South America will come under Communist influence.

The President asked what specific courses of action we should take to prevent the crippling influence of the Cuban fiasco, assuming that no military action by the U.S. will be taken. At the same time the President asked what circumstances would have to exist before the United States could move unilaterally against Cuba. Rusk stated that action could be taken under Article 51 of the Rio Treaty.<sup>/2/</sup> In this connection the President asked if the U.S. could recognize the Cuban Government in Exile and what might be expected of this group. Rusk replied

that such recognition was not possible because of the absence of certain essential elements of a governmental organization, identity and territory. The question then arose as to the status of the Cubans in the United States and Robert Kennedy replied that they should be designated refugees and stated that legislation exists to handle them under this designation. The Department of HEW will begin registering the refugees with the assistance of CIA. The President stated that the United States will invoke the Trading With the Enemy Act across the board as far as Cuba is concerned at such time as some overt act or incident occurs in Cuba. The President gave as an example the shooting of a United States citizen. The President would exempt from the restrictions of the Act some \$30 million for food and drugs. At the suggestion of Mr. Fowler, Under Secretary of the Treasury, the drugs should be donated to the Cuban people through the Red Cross. The President suggested the acceptance of the policy to encourage all Latin American states to sever relations with Cuba and to establish a complete economic boycott. The United States however should draw the line on becoming involved in the affairs of another country, such as active participation in the overthrow of Trujillo. Instead, the United States should determine appropriate courses of action in case Trujillo falls. The common danger in Haiti should be included in these considerations.

/2/Rusk is apparently referring to Article 51 of the U.N. Charter; for text, see *A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-1949*, p. 102. He could also be referring to Article 6 of the Rio Treaty; see *ibid.*, p. 228.

## **205. Record of Actions at the 483d Meeting of the National Security Council**

Washington, May 5, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, NSC Meetings, 1961, No. 483, May 5, 1961. Top Secret. A note on the source text indicates that the President approved this record of action on May 16 as Record of Action No. 2422.

The President presided at this meeting. The Acting Secretary of the Treasury and the Director, Bureau of the Budget, participated in the actions below. The Attorney General; the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare; the Acting Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director of Central Intelligence; the Director, U.S. Information Agency; the Under Secretary of State; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Deputy Under Secretary of State; Theodore C. Achilles, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State; Stephen E. Smith, Assistant to Mr. Achilles; the Special Counsel to the President; the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Special Assistant to the President; the Assistant to the Special Counsel to the President; the Assistant to the Vice President; the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA); the Adviser to the President for Para-Military Affairs; the Military Aide to the President; the Deputy Director (Plans), Central Intelligence Agency; the Acting Executive Secretary, NSC; and Bromley Smith, NSC Staff, attended the meeting.

[Here follow NSC Action No. 2420, "U.S. Policy Toward Iran," and NSC Action No. 2421, "U.S. Policy Toward Korea."]

2422. U.S. Policy Toward Cuba (NSC Action No. 2413-c;/1/ Memo for NSC, same subject, dated May 4, 1961/2/)

/1/See Document 204.

/2/Document 202.

a. Agreed that U.S. policy toward Cuba should aim at the downfall of Castro, and that since the measures agreed below are not likely to achieve this end, the matter should be reviewed at intervals with a view to further action.

- b. Agreed that the United States should not undertake military intervention in Cuba now, but should do nothing that would foreclose the possibility of military intervention in the future.
- c. Agreed that the United States should not impose a naval blockade or attempt an air war against Cuba; it was noted that neither course had the support of the Department of Defense or the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- d. Noted the importance the President attaches to obtaining timely and adequate intelligence as to Cuban military capabilities, especially the enhancement of such capabilities by Sino-Soviet Bloc military assistance, so that U.S. capabilities for possible intervention may be maintained at an adequate level.
- e. Noted the importance the President attaches to publication in the Free World press of the terroristic actions of the Castro regime, and to possible political action to end the current terror.
- f. Noted the President's direction that the Central Intelligence Agency, with other departments, should make a detailed study of possible weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the elements which exert control in Cuba today.
- g. Agreed that relations with the Revolutionary Council should be improved and made more open, and while it cannot be recognized as a government-in-exile, support should be given to it insofar as it continues to represent substantial Cuban sentiment.
- h. Agreed that no separate Cuban military force should be organized in the United States, but that Cuban nationals would be encouraged to enlist in the U.S. armed forces under plans to be developed by the Secretary of Defense.
- i. Agreed that Cuban nationals now holding U.S. visitors' visas will be given refugee status and assisted, under a program to be developed and directed by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, in carrying on their former occupations. Refugees now in Miami will be encouraged to locate in other areas. Cuban nationals entering the United States will be given refugee status. All refugees will be eligible to apply for travel privileges, and it was understood that they would also be eligible for citizenship.
- j. Agreed not to impose an immediate trade embargo on Cuba. The Secretary of State agreed to send to the President an analysis of the effects of a U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba in relation to the Battle Act. It was agreed that when an embargo is imposed, it should be as complete as possible, with certain exceptions for Canada and with Red Cross distribution of drugs.
- k. Agreed that the United States should at once initiate negotiation to enlarge the willingness of other American states to join in bilateral, multilateral and OAS arrangements against Castro, such as (1) breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba; (2) controlling subversive activities of Cuban agents; (3) preventing arms shipments to Castro; (4) limiting economic relations with Cuba; (5) creating a Caribbean security force; (6) initiating a naval patrol to prevent Cuban invasion of other states in the Caribbean; and (7) denunciation of Castro as an agent of international communism by all nations of this hemisphere.
- l. Agreed that the Alliance for Progress should be strengthened by such measures as (1) rapid implementation of selected social development projects; (2) acceleration of the implementation of other Latin American aid; and (3) provision of additional resources for Latin American economic and social development, including consideration of a supplemental appropriation for development loans of the order of \$200-\$400 million.
- m. Agreed that the U.S. Information Agency would expand its existing program in Latin America, but not initiate electronic warfare against the Castro regime; means of propaganda should be made available to non-U.S. groups.
- n. Agreed that U.S. military officers, under general guidance to be prepared by the Department of State, would discuss the Castro threat to all Latin America with Latin American officers.

o. Agreed that the Secretary of State should prepare a report on a possible new juridical basis for effective anti-communist action.

p. Agreed that pending appointment of an Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, the Task Force on Cuba should be continued under the chairmanship of Richard N. Goodwin, Assistant to the Special Counsel to the President.

## **206. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 5, 1961.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Hold Closely. Prepared by Admiral Burke.

SUBJ

Debrief of NSC meeting, 5 May 61

[Here follows a brief summary of the discussion of Iran and Korea.]

Cuba

7. Mr. Nitze then discussed his paper on Cuba./1/ It was asked whether or not anybody in the room believed that we should intervene militarily in Cuba now. I said perhaps not now, but it must be realized that the longer we delay in intervening in Cuba, the more strength Castro will have, both internally because of his training, and externally because he is representing the anti-United States group of Latin America, and because he is getting away with it. I said that in six months, if Castro were wise, he could have a small, well trained Army, and that within a year he could have a good military machine if he really wanted to put his back to it.

/1/Document 202.

8. It was decided that sooner or later we probably would have to intervene in Cuba, but that now is not the time.

9. A blockade of Cuba was discussed and it was decided that a blockade was not worthwhile, for the reasons given in the talking paper./2/

/2/Document 202.

10. It was asked what was the Air Force's proposal to handle the Cuban situation. Some Congressman had written a letter to the White House stating that if SAC were turned loose, they could handle all of Cuba./3/ The question was asked if the Department of Defense knew of this proposal.

/3/Not further identified.

11. Mr. McNamara stated that there had been much discussion on how to land forces in Cuba. The Air Force believed that all the forces should be air landed very quickly, which they thought they could do in 36 hours. All the other Chiefs thought that in addition to air landing of troops, there should be material and other people brought in by ships. Mr. McNamara thought that it was better to use both airborne troops and amphibious troops. If what was meant was bombing of Cuba, it was decided that this should not be done.

12. The question was asked whether or not we were setting up a watch group on Cuba. Mr. Rusk stated that we

do have a group which will keep up to date on Cuba. It is a matter of great importance to the White House to know the status of Cuba in detail. For example, the White House will want to know what military equipment the Cubans now have, what military equipment [they] get in the future, and what is the state of training of the Cuban forces.

13. Apparently the White House has received letters indicating that the equipment in the hands of the Militia was better than the equipment available to the CEF forces. Mr. Dulles stated that he knew about all the equipment in the hands of the Cubans and that their equipment was not superior. I seconded his remarks.

14. It was decided to continue the high-level overflights over Cuba, but that we should not fly any more than we have to.

15. A task group for Cuba was again discussed. It was decided that the task group and CIA would both be responsible to determine the Cuban military forces and how fast they were advancing, as well as other Cuban intelligence.

16. The question was then asked whether or not there was really terror in Havana. Several foreign ambassadors had reported that the situation in Havana was worse than they had seen, even in occupied countries. For example, four or five hundred people of many nationalities, but mostly Cubans, were herded into a theater and kept there three or four days without food or water, and without sleeping or bathroom accommodations. The question was asked why the European reporters hold back. They should harden up their articles. Mr. Murrow is to take action and will attempt to get foreign correspondents to get truthful stories from Cuba. We need the support of our NATO allies and the rest of OAS. Good stories from the foreign correspondents would be very helpful.

17. Mr. Rusk said that he would talk with NATO Foreign Ministers in regard to Cuba next week.

18. It was stated that Cuban farmers could not get United States transient visas. State is to act on this fast with Switzerland so that Cubans that want to get out of Cuba can do so on an American visa.

19. *[1 line of source text not declassified]*

20. It was stated that the troubles in Iran, whatever they may turn out to be, will be charged to our difficulties in Cuba and Laos.

21. Mr. Rusk then read three paragraphs that State wanted to add to the Cuban papers.<sup>/4/</sup> These paragraphs strengthened the paper and no opposition to them was made.

<sup>/4/</sup>An apparent reference to the revisions proposed by Achilles in a May 3 memorandum to Rusk; see footnote 3, Document 202.

22. There is to be a formal covert annex on the Cuban paper. Mr. Rusk wanted to hold off on covert actions for a little while at least. CIA and the task group will look at all covert proposals for Cuba.

23. The United States policy in regard to Cuban exiles (page 27) was discussed at length. It was agreed that it would be nearly impossible to form a freedom brigade, but that Services should look into possibility of recruiting Cubans. Mr. Ribicoff is to review the nonmilitary part of the recommendations in regard to the Cuban freedom brigade. We should be very careful never to make a commitment to any Cuban group that the United States will intervene in Cuba.

24. Cubans in this country are now on visitors visas, and a lot of them are Castro agents, using the passports to move around the United States freely. We are therefore going to make them refugees, to control some of them

and to permit others to work, and to deport some.

25. It was asked what position the government should take in regard to the committee in exile. The answer was that we can't recognize it as a government in exile because they are really no government. It is not a pre-established government that has been driven from its territory. Recognition of such a committee would be called political intervention, and it would get no OAS support. It would be a precedent for a future action. There might be lots of such governments in exile in the United States if we established one.

26. The next question was how do we deal with Cuban Legion. The answer was that the Cuban Legion can't possibly succeed unless the United States intervenes. We tried the Cuban Legion and it didn't work. However, the United States will intervene if the circumstances make intervention desirable. We can't tell the Cuban refugee group that we will never intervene for we will under some circumstances, nor can we tell them we will.

27. Mr. Ribicoff is to take charge of the refugee problem. He is going to encourage them to continue their trades. They will become an immigrant group. They will have the right to work; he will watch the labor situation to insure they can continue their old trades if they want to, and that they can expand their skills. Some students will be offered scholarships. We will try to keep the refugees from concentrating in Miami.

28. The Trading With the Enemy Act was discussed as to whether it should be absolute or not. After some discussion on whether to continue trade, Burke made his "Hurt Castro" speech. It was brought out by others that we don't want to make Castro a hero but we should hurt Castro every way we know how--in little ways--any way we can, but don't make a hero out of him. Sometimes by doing things against Castro, we build him up and make a popular figure out of him. We don't want the United States to appear to be a bully pushing Cuba or Castro around, or for the United States image to become weakened because we were unable to successfully overthrow Castro.

29. Mr. McGeorge Bundy suggested that maybe we would want to cut off United States imports, but permit food exports to Cuba on humanitarian grounds. It was stated that if restrictions on trade were invoked, it should be done on the ground of specific unacceptable actions on the part of Castro, and we should go all the way and not just part of it. He can get anything that he actually needs elsewhere.

30. It was decided that if we do invoke the trade restrictions we will go all the way. We will invoke the restrictions the first time we can hang them on some situation. It may be necessary to induce a situation, although Castro will probably soon create the situation himself.

31. There was then a discussion of the Battle Act, but no conclusions.

32. Mr. Murrow said that we should let medicine go in to Cuba. It was finally agreed to let medicine go in, but not sell it. It will go in free of charge to the Red Cross.

33. There was a discussion on United States subsidiaries in Canada. They will be included in blanket order, but any individual company with a Canadian subsidiary can get a license which will permit him to trade.

#### Western Hemisphere

34. There was much discussion on bilateral defense treaties. Mr. Rusk finally said that these treaties should not become a big project. If we want bilateral action when the time comes, it will be easier to get agreement then. If and where it is easy to get bilateral agreements, he has no objection. Elsewhere, let it ride for the time being.

35. Mr. Rusk stated that he has been consulting with OAS States and the OAS Organization on Latin-American countries breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba. Eight have suspended diplomatic relations and nine had recalled their Ambassadors without breaking diplomatic relations.

36. It was stated that the instructions to our Ambassadors in Latin America should be reviewed by the White House. The question was asked what do we want our Ambassadors to Latin America to do. Mr. Rusk stated that it would have to be OAS or Rio type action.

37. There was some discussion on whether Brazil would oppose an anti-Castro movement or not.

38. There was some discussion on a Caribbean defense force and it was agreed that this needed more looking at.

39. Mr. Dulles stated that much more could be done in Mexico than was indicated in this paper.

40. It was brought up again that we have got to be sure that our Ambassadors know what is in our minds so we can all work towards the same goal. We must bring others in the program. We must denounce Cuba as a satellite and get other people to ostracize Cuba.

41. The Vice President stated we have got to be tough. He wants to drag our feet on help to those countries that help Castro, and those countries that opposed Castro, we should help quickly. We should do all we can to hurt Castro and we can't ignore or reward those who play with the enemy.

42. Mr. Bowles was in favor of going easy. We should not be in too much hurry, and should build up examples of courses of action before action is taken.

43. It was still not clear what we wanted our Ambassadors to do, so the question was again asked. It was then stated that American nations should break diplomatic relations, ostracize Cuba, and increase their own internal security.

44. Burke said that the Services could accomplish a great deal in Latin America through the MAAG's and Attaches.

Comment. The JCS should prepare and coordinate with State a paper to provide guidance on such action, which individual Services can use as a source paper for instructions to our people, with copies to CINCARIB, CINCLANT and CINCPAC.

45. It was emphasized that we have got to get all government programs to use all means to weaken Castro.

46. Mr. Murrow stated that it was possible to blanket Cuban radios, and that we could put two naval aircraft in the air to transmit television shows over Cuban channels or we could beef up United States radio and television shows in Spanish to Latin-American countries. It was decided that the latter was the only one to do. Mr. Murrow is going to increase short-wave transmissions and put up some new stations.

[Here follows discussion of the Dominican Republic, British Guiana, and Costa Rica.]

Personnel

51. Mr. Goodwin is to take over Mr. Nitze's Cuban job at least while Mr. Nitze goes with SecState to Oslo.

[Here follows discussion of Thailand and Vietnam.]

**207. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to His Special Assistant (Yarmolinsky)**

Washington, May 5, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Yarmolinsky Files, Cuban Volunteer Program. Secret.

Today at the NSC meeting, the Department of Defense recommended against the formation of a "Cuban Freedom Brigade." Instead, we proposed, and the President approved, the induction of Cuban volunteers into the U.S. military forces.

I should like to ask you to assume the responsibility for working with each of the Services, ISA, Manpower and the State Department to develop a plan for carrying out this policy. The plan should provide for recruiting the Cubans in such a way as to avoid any implication that they would ever participate in an invasion of Cuba. Instead, they should clearly understand that their role would be the same as that of any other individual accepted into the U.S. forces. The Services should:

- a. Consider the possibility of associating with the Cuban volunteers, volunteers from other South American and Central American nations.
- b. Plan to identify the Cuban volunteers in such a way as to permit their consolidation into a Cuban unit, should the need for such a unit ever develop.
- c. Outline the special type of training to which the Cuban volunteers might be exposed, e.g., "special forces" training.
- d. State the changes required in our current recruiting regulations to permit the enlistment of foreigners.

I should like to be kept informed of the progress of your work. By what date do you anticipate it will be possible to present a plan to me which has been coordinated with all the parties concerned? Along with the plan, please send to me a brief memorandum to the President outlining what we propose to do./1/

/1/In a separate memorandum to the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and the Air Force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, McNamara instructed the Joint Chiefs of Staff to respond to NSC Action No. 2422 by preparing plans for creating a Caribbean security force, and for initiating a naval patrol to prevent Cuban invasion of other states in the Caribbean. He instructed the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs to work with the Department of State to implement the element of the NSC Action that called for U.S. military officers to be prepared to "discuss the Castro threat to Latin America with Latin American officers." (Ibid., Cuba 381 (Sensitive))

RMcN

## **208. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to the Political Warfare Subcommittee of the Cuban Task Force**

Washington, May 8, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, Papers of Arthur Schlesinger, Cuba 1961, Box 31. Confidential. The Political Warfare Subcommittee was headed by Schlesinger and was subordinate to the interagency Cuban Task Force, which was chaired after May 5 by Richard Goodwin.

Our mission is to redefine the conflict in Cuba in a way which will transform current opinion not only within this hemisphere but in Europe, Africa and Asia.

A current widespread view (e.g., *Manchester Guardian*, *London Observer*, *Le Monde*, Fair Play for Cuba Committee) is that the conflict is between the Castro regime, which, for all its excesses, is at least dedicated to



the welfare of the Cuban people, and a crowd of emigres, whose aim is to bring back the old order to Cuba. Our job is to work out ways and means to combat and destroy this view--to show that the essential conflict in Cuba is nothing more or less than between the totalitarian (or communist) and the libertarian (or social democratic) wings of the Cuban Revolution. This means putting over (a) the true character of the Castro regime and the betrayed revolution; and (b) the progressive character of the Revolutionary Council and its determination to rescue the revolution. Particularly relevant to all this is the terrorism within Cuba in the period since the landings.

The President has expressed an urgent and recurrent interest in this particular phase of the Cuban task force. We should therefore come up with something as concrete and immediate as possible.

We might well start by considering this problem in terms of target areas. For purposes of a first approximation, I would suggest the following targets: (1) Europe, Asia, Africa; (2) Latin America; (3) the United States.

1. Europe, Asia, Africa. Most of the world outside the hemisphere still regards Castro as essentially a left-wing nationalist, no doubt aggressive and emotional, but still basically a man devoted to national self-assertion and propelled into communism only by the short-sighted and imperialistic policies of the United States. Castro is perceived, in short, as a Latin American Nasser, wildly irritating in the short run but nonetheless the victim of Wall Street and the United Fruit Company, striking out in understandable resentment against ancient enemies. If he has become totalitarian, it is because Washington has left him no alternative. His Cuban opposition consists of middle and upper class businessmen and landowners who object to the whole idea of social revolution.

How do we deal with this? (a) We must refute the notion that American policy drove Castro into the arms of the USSR. This can be done by simple chronology: Castro took the communist turn in the course of 1959; the first trade agreement with the bloc took place in February 1960; the first massive American reprisal--the sugar action--took place in the summer of 1960. (b) We must continue to demonstrate the increasingly communist character of the regime. (c) We must get out as promptly as possible the stories of the post-landings terrorism.

How are these things to be done? There is no particular advantage, I would think, in floating these things through the American press. From the viewpoint of the rest of the world, this would discredit the testimony from the start. The points should be made initially in the foreign press--through the correspondents of foreign newspapers in Washington and also directly through our Embassies to key journalistic figures in London, Paris and elsewhere. Two basic presentations perhaps should be involved: (1) a careful chronology showing that Castro's commitment to communism preceded rather than followed US economic retaliation; (2) a compilation of paraphrased reports from neutral embassies in Habana concerning post-landings terrorism. Conceivably there should be a background briefing in Washington developing these points; and London and Paris should be asked to carry the ball locally. This should not be done in the form of public statements, and the case should be made to rest as much as possible on undisputable facts and on neutral reports.

We should also try to send to Europe anti-Castro figures of unchallengeable progressive credentials: for example, Rojas,<sup>1/</sup> who as Castro Ambassador to Great Britain went around the country in 1959 delivering hot pro-Castro speeches, might now come back to explain the betrayal of the Cuban Revolution. Figueres<sup>2/</sup> and Haya de la Torre<sup>3/</sup> could, of course, do powerful jobs in Europe and the underdeveloped world.

<sup>1/</sup>Sergio Rojas Santamaria.

<sup>2/</sup>Jose Figueres, former President of Costa Rica.

<sup>3/</sup>Victor Haya de la Torre, head of the APRA, the Peruvian Social Democratic Movement.

2. Latin America. In Europe our main target is essentially an elite audience--politicians, editors and opinion-makers. In Latin America, most elite opinion is probably pretty well convinced by now of the main propositions; those still unconvinced are probably beyond intellectual persuasion. This means that in Latin

America our main targets are popular groups--intellectuals, students, labor, campesinos.

These groups will be particularly resistant to any overt US campaign or, indeed, to official campaigns of almost any sort. The best approach will be through unofficial and indigenous agencies--the League of Democratic Parties, which should be transformed as soon as possible into a serious operation; the San Jose Institute of Political Education; the local offices of the Cuban Revolutionary Council; the labor movement; the universities. The USIA should expand its Latin American activities, but its role should be essentially to supply indigenous groups with necessary material rather than to go into exhortatory and polemical utterances on its own. Radio Swan should be liquidated as soon as possible in its present form.

If the Cuban Revolutionary Council is to be effective, it must end any possible remaining doubt about its commitment to the social and libertarian goals of the Cuban Revolution. This will enrage a lot of rich Cubans in Miami, but their resentment is a burden which will have to be borne. It is far more important to send into circulation throughout Latin America a collection of authentic Cuban progressives who can make clear where it matters that our objection is not to social reform but to the establishment of a Soviet outpost in the hemisphere.

3. The United States. A job remains to be done here. We should not be lulled into complacency by the Gallup poll showing that the President has achieved new heights of public approval. It is equally important to note that, according to the more recent Gallup poll, the American people are 65-24 percent against armed intervention in Cuba and only 44-41 percent for indirect help to the anti-Castro forces. It would be foolish, I think, to underestimate the recent shock to liberal and church opinion or the potential impact of the Fair Play for Cuba group.

Again official government hand-outs are not going to be effective. What we need is the establishment of a Fair Play for Cubans Committee under liberal sponsorship. Such a committee would have as its main function the redefinition of the conflict; it would spell out exactly what the Castro regime is doing to human freedom in Cuba; and it would support the progressive aims of the Revolutionary Council. In time, it might even serve as a source of funds for the progressive anti-Castro front.

We should also make a particular effort to get the stories of Castro terrorism into the hands, not of the New York Journal American, but of liberal newspapers and columnists. In particular, Manuel Ray should be encouraged to make as many public appearances as possible in liberal, labor and student circles; his recent appearance at Harvard was, I understand, a great success.

Arthur Schlesinger, jr./4/

/4/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

## **209. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 8, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the 12th in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and was held at the Pentagon. The participants at the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included General White, General Decker, General Shoup, Bissell, Mitchell, and Tarwater. A note at the top of the source text reads: "The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made."

General Shoup

Question: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late

January?

General Shoup: It was considered by the JCS, but I don't know to whom it was distributed nor what action was taken on it.

General Taylor: At no time after January was there any reconsideration by the JCS of the need for that kind of paper to pull the whole thing together?

General Shoup: To my knowledge there was no reference to it by the Chiefs, but what the Chairman might have done I don't know.

Question: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of Trinidad and Zapata?

General Shoup: Only by having an opportunity to give my feelings on this whole operation can my observations be taken in the proper context. When I first learned that something of this nature was happening as a military man it immediately dawned on me that this was a whole lot more than dropping a few parachutists or running a boat in at a few various places along the island. I went through the NSC papers and discovered that the national policy was the overthrow of the Castro regime. CIA then drew up the Trinidad Plan and asked that the Joint Chiefs and the Joint Staff evaluate it from a military feasibility standpoint. This led to a very careful look at the mission. The mission had nothing to do with the armed forces of Cuba or the militia, with the exception of that necessary to enter Cuba. The personnel of this force were being better trained than the ordinary Cubans. Their task was to get ashore with this tremendous amount of equipment and supplies which was to be made available for distribution to the people who would rise up to assist the operation. They had considered time and space factors available to them, and determined that this organization had sufficient time to get in there, get the materials ashore, and distribute them to the dissidents. The intelligence indicated that there were quite a number of people that were ready to join in the fight against Castro. These people were to come into the beachhead and pick up this material, and then the beachhead would expand and they would very soon have a formidable military organization. Considering this plan and the location of the enemy forces on the basis of the time and space factors, it appeared to me that they could accomplish their objective. Sometime later the Chairman said the President would not approve the Trinidad Plan because it smacked too much of Normandy, which would make it impossible to deny U.S. involvement. Consequently CIA was directed to develop some alternatives. Later Gen. Gray came in and briefed us on some alternate plans and, as I understood it, there was no question about the Trinidad thing. It was out right there as far as doing it in its original form. A new requirement was levied on CIA to make their landing where there was an airfield. It was my personal feeling that the airfield requirement virtually restricted the operation to the Zapata region. The JCS decided that there was no question about it, the Zapata area had the greatest possibility of success of the alternatives we were considering. Following this there was considerable discussion about how many aircraft Castro had, and the best way to eliminate the tanks. There seemed to be no question about being able to destroy Castro's aircraft with napalm, strafing and rockets, nor the ability to disrupt the tanks. That brings us to the place where the decision was made to go in and try the Zapata thing. However, one thought was predominant. You must achieve and maintain air superiority or you are not going to be able to get ashore.

Question: Did you feel that Zapata was as good a plan as Trinidad?

General Shoup: No, sir. I questioned the swamp area. However, after considerable thought and discussion, I was satisfied that by dropping parachutists to block the roads and by using anti-tank mines you could accomplish the same objectives in the Zapata area that you could in the Trinidad area. However, there were complications in the distances the people would have to come to get the weapons, the problem of maneuvering would be more difficult, and the possibility of debouching would also be more difficult from the Zapata area.

Question: There was no civilian population in the area at all, was there?

General Shoup: There were about 1,800 people where the landings were made.

Question: You made the point that one of the essential parts of the Trinidad Plan was the fact that they had a population there on which they could base their expansion. Did you consider that possibility existed in Zapata?

General Shoup: Yes, sir. The idea was that time and space factors were favorable. It was my understanding that there were lots of people just waiting for these arms, that they would get them in the same manner as they would have in the Trinidad Plan. However, you were closer to some of Castro's army forces and tank forces and you would have more difficulty debouching from this area.

Question: Did you visualize that this landing would attract sizable Castro forces?

General Shoup: Obviously, once he determined the location of the main invasion, Castro was bound to bring in his forces.

Question: How were the dissident Cuban civilians going to get their arms then?

General Shoup: The parachutists and anti-tank mines would block the roadways. Then the whole area would be in a state of revolt. There would be no problem of them coming through. These people would have been much closer to their source of arms than the enemy, because the enemy didn't know where they were coming in.

Question: Was there any impression that there was going to be a pre-D-Day message to the population?

General Shoup: My understanding was that the possibilities of uprisings were increasing, that people were just waiting for these arms and equipment, and as soon as they heard where the invasion was that they would be coming after them.

Question: If you were in charge of the defenses in this area couldn't you get some artillery in and really give them hell?

General Shoup: It takes time. It's time and space. I didn't conceive of them stashing all this stuff on one spot on the beach and waiting until somebody brings artillery down.

Question: What was your opinion of what they were going to do? Get these arms out of there?

General Shoup: Right. And there would be people there to assist them and get the arms. This force, from my understanding, was highly trained in comparison with the militia. They had proper arms, equipment, and leadership to enable them to stand off the armed forces they could expect Castro to commit against them.

Question: How long did you think they'd be in the Bay?

General Shoup: One day. I thought they'd unload those ships and get out of there. If they didn't get unloaded, they'd come back after dark, depending upon whether they were actually rushed by the enemy or if they weren't, and depending upon where the people were that could use the arms.

Question: Was it your understanding that a lot of people in this area were going to come in and help?

General Shoup: I certainly thought there was going to be a number of them. We weren't just talking about the people that had homes in this area. We were talking about the people who wanted to get the help they knew was coming to them with this landing force.

General Shoup: I didn't think the militia were going to band together and harm this thing. It would take some

elements of the organized force and if the actual time and place of the landing was not known, the enemy could not afford to commit all of his forces because he doesn't know where the main thrust will be. It was my opinion that the arms and ammunition they had with them was nowhere near sufficient for the people that wanted them.

Question: The JCS commenting on Trinidad said that it had a fair chance of success. Then I think that the record shows that they viewed the next alternatives and said that Zapata was the best of these three plans, but that they still preferred Trinidad.

General Shoup: Yes, sir, any corporal would have said that.

Question: The Chiefs rated the chances of success for Zapata as something less than fair. What was your appraisal of the chances of success of this operation?

General Shoup: The plan they had should have accomplished the mission in Zapata, if the plan had been brought to fruition.

Question: You did not expect a quick or strong reaction from the Castro forces?

General Shoup: I expected them to react, but not with some of the equipment with which they did react, and I don't think they would have if the plans had been carried out.

Question: As you saw this plan develop, the amphibious landing on a hostile shore, did you have any misgivings?

General Shoup: I very frankly made this statement, if this kind of an operation can be done with this kind of a force with this much training and knowledge about it, then we are wasting our time in our divisions, we ought to go on leave for three months out of four.

Mr. Dulles: Do you realize how many military men we had on this task force? Some of your very best officers. We took a great deal of responsibility, but we called on the Defense Department and I looked to them for military judgments. I didn't look to our people for military judgments.

Question: General Shoup, isn't that statement of yours somewhat in contradiction with your over-all optimism that this plan would work?

General Shoup: No, sir, it is not.

Question: Would you say that you took the same interest in this operation and made the same personal analysis as you would have done had you been in charge?

General Shoup: I'll say this. I spent a lot of sleepless hours over this because I worried about the thing because there was no plan for helping these men if there was something unforeseen, an act of God or something, that prevented a successful landing. In my opinion there would be no way to save them. There was no way to guarantee its success, but if the plan was executed, as planned, I believe it would have been successful. I couldn't find out all I wanted to about the plan. I knew I wasn't supposed to. It wasn't my responsibility. Had I been completely responsible I think that I would have known about everything. There were only four people in my headquarters that knew anything about the plan.

Statement: Let's go back to this question of military responsibility. Certainly you, as Commandant of the Marine Corps, had no responsibility for it, but as a member of the Joint Chiefs you did have responsibility for this operation.

General Shoup: That's not my understanding.

Statement: At least the JCS as a corporate body had responsibility for this operation.

General Shoup: That's not my understanding, only insofar as the Commander in Chief might want to know something about the adequacy of the plan, or the probability of success. Otherwise I don't feel that I or the other Joint Chiefs had any responsibility for the success of this plan.

Question: The Joint Chiefs are by law the advisors to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council, and the President. Consequently, would you say that you should volunteer any advice on this subject?

General Shoup: As a member of the Joint Chiefs I don't know what the Chairman did. I don't know what happened at a lot of meetings at the White House or the State Department but I do know this, that within the corporate body I for one emphasized time after time that we had to have air superiority and we had to help this outfit fend off the force they were going to have opposing them down there.

Admiral Burke: There are three or four things that are the basis of this thing that ought to be clear. One is the responsibility of the Chiefs to comment on the plan. Another is the actual conduct of the operation, which was all in one place and that was in CIA.

Mr. Dulles: But that was done by military personnel.

Admiral Burke: But not under our command structure.

Statement: But as advisors to the President the JCS had a responsibility. The President had the right to look to the Joint Chiefs for advice during the planning or execution phase if they thought they had something important to offer.

General Shoup: That's true, as limited by their knowledge of all aspects of the plan.

Statement: And in the absence of hearing from the Chiefs he had a right to assume that everything was going satisfactorily.

General Shoup: Yes, to the limit of our knowledge. I want to tell you this right now. Had I as an individual heard that they were going to call off the air strikes I'd have asked that the Commander in Chief be informed. I'd have called him myself because it was absolutely essential to success. The D-2 affair was only a half effort.

Mr. Dulles: General, may I add this. The D-2 Day was essentially a plot, not a plan. The plan was the D-Day strike.

Question: Do you feel that you had absolute and complete knowledge about this operation?

General Shoup: Absolutely not.

Question: Did you understand that the President and his advisors were looking to you for your military evaluation of this plan?

General Shoup: The thing that we were asked to do was to determine which of the three alternatives was the best.

Question: But then after that, did you understand that during that period of time that the President was looking to you, the JCS, for the military evaluation of the operation?

General Shoup: I would have to presume that in accordance with his title as Commander in Chief he would be thinking about the military part.

Question: But you understand that he wanted to get your advice and ideas also?

General Shoup: That was never stated.

Question: What I am getting at is that if you feel that you didn't have full knowledge and information on the plan and at the same time the President was looking to you for advice, it seems to me it would be almost impossible for you to give him the military evaluation.

General Shoup: Well, you had to look at it in the context of what the agency said about the uprisings. I had no possible way to know or evaluate them. That in itself was a particularly important factor.

Statement: There was a general impression that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had approved this operation. I don't think there is any doubt but what they went ahead thinking that you and the other Joint Chiefs had approved the plan, but you now say that you didn't have full knowledge and information in order to evaluate the plan. That in itself is of some significance for the future.

General Shoup: One of the main features relating to the ultimate success of this was not whether you could put these ships in here and unload this military equipment, whether the people were properly trained to fend off a reasonable enemy effort.

Statement: Your idea of the plan is entirely different from some other peoples' idea of the plan.

General Shoup: I'm telling the truth as I know it.

Statement: I don't think there is any doubt about that.

Statement: The idea that the people would land on the beach and then take off into the swamp is a new one to us.

Admiral Burke: There was great emphasis on the uprisings and we spent hours and hours determining how to get additional equipment. We ended up with equipment for 30,000 people. The only slight difference I have with General Shoup is that it was my understanding that this group had to be able to hold a beachhead for some time, for several days.

Statement: It's very significant that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, whom the President of the United States and the Secretary of State thought had approved this plan, had an entirely different idea of what the plan was. It seems that something has gone wrong somewhere along the line.

General Shoup: This whole thing was a function of time.

Statement: But when I asked you, you said they were going to get out of there the same day. They were only going to hold a beachhead long enough to unload the equipment. There wasn't any possibility of anybody coming down there. There wasn't anybody around there. Their idea was to hold that beachhead. I think it is important that when the President and the Secretary of State think they have your view, that they do have your view.

General Shoup: I don't think that the Chairman should go to the President as Commander in Chief on an operation of this kind by himself. There are three people here who are quite knowledgeable. The Chairman undoubtedly has a good grasp, but when you hit something like this, details are important.

Question: During the execution of this operation did you keep informed of what was taking place?

General Shoup: It is a question of degree. I had a liaison officer working for me to keep me advised.

Question: The ammunition situation turns out to be the vital factor that caused the ultimate defeat at the beachhead. Did you have a clear picture of how vitally the beach was hurting for ammunition?

General Shoup: No, with the exception that I was told that the ship that was sunk had arms and tank ammunition.

Question: But at the end of the second day's fighting no one communicated to you the crisis that had arisen as a result of the lack of ammunition?

General Shoup: Yes, to the extent that the ships that were sunk had this vital ammunition. Whether or not the drops had rectified this situation I didn't know.

Question: What was your understanding of additional resupply of ammunition by ship?

General Shoup: They had a regular plan drawn up. I can't tell you exactly what the plan was. The equipment was for 30,000 people.

Question: Was it reported to you that two of the cargo ships that had reserve ammunition had fled the area and one got as far south as 200 miles?

General Shoup: No, sir.

General Taylor: May I summarize now what my understanding is? That you would say that you as members of the Joint Chiefs first concurred in the feasibility of Trinidad Plan; that with regard to the Zapata Plan you concurred that it was the best of the three alternatives considered, and as you saw the plan develop you still felt it had a reasonable chance of success.

General Shoup: For the mission as I understood it.

General Taylor: You feel that the Joint Chiefs recognized their responsibility for advising the President, but did not make any special comments to him mainly because you thought the plan was going along all right.

General Shoup: I think you have to preface all these remarks by recognizing that I was not consulted as to whether such a thing ought to happen. That wasn't my business.

General Taylor: The overthrow of Castro you accepted?

General Shoup: Yes, that was national policy.

General Taylor: Wouldn't you say that the Joint Chiefs had every right and responsibility if they didn't believe that an amphibious landing of this kind would succeed, to so advise the President?

General Shoup: Absolutely.

General Taylor: Were you satisfied with the plan as being a feasible, reasonable plan?

General Shoup: To accomplish the mission as I understood it, not the destruction of the armed forces.

Question: What was the mission?



General Shoup: The mission was to get some well-trained military people into Cuba, who could gather into their fold and equip all the people that were just waiting for a chance to get at Castro, then these military people could develop a real military organization and increase their strength to the extent that the whole Castro regime would fall apart.

Question: The success of this operation was wholly dependent upon popular support?

General Shoup: Absolutely. Ultimate success.

Statement: Not only ultimate success, but any success really.

Question: Who gave you this information on the uprisings?

General Shoup: I don't know. I suppose it was CIA. Well, it's obvious we wouldn't be taking 30,000 additional rifles if we didn't think there was going to be somebody to use them. I don't think any military man would ever think that this force could overthrow Castro without support. They could never expect anything but annihilation.

Question: You'd say then that they would still be on the beach if the plan had been carried out as conceived and depended upon popular uprisings throughout the island of Cuba? Otherwise they would have been wiped out?

General Shoup: Absolutely. I don't think there is any doubt at all. Eventually 1,500 people cannot hold out against many, many thousands.

Question: Would you send 1,200 Marines in there to do that?

General Shoup: No, I wouldn't, unless 1,200 Marines are going to be assisted by 30,000 Cubans.

Question: Did somebody tell you there'd be 30,000 Cubans?

General Shoup: No, they didn't, but we were getting materials ready for them.

Question: Did you ask about the swamp?

General Shoup: Yes, I asked about it on the first briefings. Even in the rainy season parts of it were passable by foot and in the dry season much of it was passable by foot. There were a number of egresses other than the roads. That's what we were told.

Question: Were you in touch with General Gray during this?

General Shoup: To my knowledge I was personally present each time that General Gray briefed the Joint Chiefs.

Question: But aside from that, did he give you any individual briefings?

General Shoup: No, sir.

Question: If you were going to do this again and there was still the requirement that it be a covert operation, what changes would you make? Anything that would be materially different?

General Shoup: I don't think that at this time in 1961 or hereafter you are going to do it covertly.

Question: Did you really think that this could be covert in the sense that it would not be attributed to the United

States?

General Shoup: I did not.



**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**1961-1963**  
**Volume X**  
**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **210. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 8, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the 12th in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and took place at the Pentagon. The participants in the meeting, in addition to Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, and Burke, included General White, General Decker, General Shoup, Bissell, Mitchell, and Tarwater. A note on the source text reads: "The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made."

General White

Question: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late January?

General White: I don't know.

Question: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of the Trinidad and Zapata plans?

General White: Our evaluation was that the operation had a fair chance of success based on (1) the mission and (2) the intelligence, which indicated that popular uprisings were likely. The next point that weighed heavily in my mind was the probability that this force could escape into the hills to the northwest of the search area and join with guerrillas there if they were unable to enlarge the beachhead. The third point was the importance of surprise, particularly in the air part of the picture. The Zapata plan was briefed at a JCS meeting. I was not there. Curt LeMay was, however, and he filled me in on the three alternatives; and the fact that the Chiefs thought that the Trinidad operation was still the best, but that of the three alternatives presented, Zapata was probably the best.

Question: As you learned more about the Zapata plan, did you ever make an appraisal in your own mind as to the probability of success?

General White: I felt all along that the success or failure of this operation depended almost entirely upon the reaction of the Cuban people. If we were able to establish and enlarge the beachhead somewhat, plus other subsidiary operations, if we did these things, the Cuban people would join in.

Question: Describe your recollection of the beachhead plan. How did you visualize that this force would behave when they got ashore?

General White: Well, the number one thing that I felt was vital was surprise air attacks on the several air fields. While I don't have a high regard for the Cuban air force, certainly it is a prerequisite for going ashore that you have air control, and I think the air strikes were the key to it and surprise was the key to the key so to speak. It seemed to me that if the location and timing of the attack were not known, that they would have a very good chance of establishing at least sufficient lodgment to be able to escape without disaster.

Question: Assuming the air strikes?

General White: Yes, and that the air strikes were achieved with surprise.

Question: When the Joint Chiefs commented on Trinidad and as Zapata initially developed to have the only strikes on D Day, did that appear adequate to knock out the Castro force?

General White: It was felt that heavy surprise attack, and if I could have only had one, I would have picked the one on D Day rather than one earlier, for two reasons: (1) I think the early one may have tipped off that this thing was coming, (2) I remember mentioning down there that I was a little bit worried about the relationship between Cuba and Guatemala because it would be obvious that the aircraft were coming from there, and I wasn't quite sure what the situation would be. At another point I thought that if we did do the pre-D Day strikes, there was a pretty good chance that world reaction would be such that the thing would be called off, and I had been keen on the United States seeking the initiative in some areas, and I thought that on balance this was a feasible show and I wanted to see it go on.

Question: How did you feel about the final limited plan of eight sorties against the air fields?

General White: In my opinion, it was fatally weak.

Question: Would it have been better not to have had them?

General White: I think the best operation would have been to launch as heavy a strike as we could on the air fields on the day of the attack.

Question: Who was the proponent of the D-2 strikes, Allen? I don't recall that point.

Mr. Dulles: I think that it was partly in our shop and partly with Mac Bundy, as I recall. The idea of the defections--this was one of the keys to the idea that the planes that were striking Cuban airfields were operating from Cuba.

Mr. Dulles: I can't say whether that limited strike concept was ever brought over here or not. I think it must have been known to General Gray, but I don't know whether it was discussed in the Joint Chiefs.

Admiral Burke: It was, but not before it was decided to do it. I think that this was done at the behest of State in order to get a Cuban defector ahead of time, so that it would be believed that Cubans were conducting the air strikes from Cuba.

Statement: Well, we'll see what Gray's record shows on that.

Question: You thought that Zapata looked like a feasible plan?

General White: Yes. However, I felt it was inferior to the Trinidad plan.

Question: Did you feel that you had a reasonable understanding of what the plan amounted to by the time D Day approached?

General White: Yes, I had a reasonable understanding of the plan as it was supposed to go but didn't.

Question: Would you say you made a personal study of this, at least of the air elements?

General White: Yes, and I had action officers who were privileged with this information who worked very close with the Joint Staff and with CIA and on appropriate occasions they briefed me on what was going on in addition to the meetings we had formally in the JCS.

Question: Do you recall when you learned about this D-2 plan?

General White: No, I do not. I have no memory of any change. The D-1 strike and the D Day strikes were the ones that I was under the impression would go.

Question: I forgot the D-1 air strikes, Allen. That was discussed I know, but did that ever get going?

Mr. Dulles: Well, that was discussed, but it never went.

General White: May I say I remember very well the discussion of defectors. We got into it because we had the air defense force moving down to Homestead in Florida with its additional radar, and we wanted to get the defectors in and to be on guard in case the Cuban air force made a strike against Florida.

Question: You were in favor of this plan then?

General White: Yes, to the degree that it had a fair chance of success on the basis that the objective was to get a rallying of Cuban people.

Question: Did you make any distinction between Zapata and Trinidad?

General White: In my opinion the Trinidad operation was a better one, but once the decision was made to go into Zapata, we backed it.

Question: You wouldn't have backed it if you didn't think there would be a chance of success?

General White: I think it also had a fair chance of success, but I think the chances were better in the Trinidad operation.

Question: Viewing this from the point of view of the President, you, of course, felt that the JCS were the primary military advisors. He heard nothing from the Chiefs with regard to any infeasibility of this plan. Is it fair to say that the Chiefs would have volunteered their comment if they really thought that this thing was going badly?

General White: Without any question. The problem was that there were last minute changes of which we did not know.

Question: You refer to the last minute cancellation of the air strikes?

General White: Yes.

Statement: But that was just one factor.

General White: I think that was a very key factor, sir.

Statement: Well, in this operation, I think we would be convinced that the plan wouldn't have been any more successful if we had had the air strikes.

General White: Well, I really believe that the Cuban air force had a whale of an effect on the bad outcome. It is difficult to say what an air strike on D Day at dawn would have done, but it might very well have made the difference in my opinion.

Question: In the performance of the T-33s, were you surprised at how effective they were?

General White: I was surprised to find that they were armed.

Question: You did not consider that they were combat aircraft?

General White: We did not.

Question: Well, had you known they were armed?

General White: Well, there again you come back to how effective the air strikes would have been. I certainly would have wanted the T-33s to be one of the main targets of the strike force.

Question: Was it any surprise to you that these T-33s could take out the B-26s?

General White: No, there was no surprise about that. That's another thing, the B-26s were used as air cover over the beaches. The B-26 is a light bomber.

Statement: Yes, but you knew that was the case--that that was the only cover they would have on the beach.

General White: Yes, but they were supposed to have air strikes which would come first and the B-26s, as I understood it, would be used largely for ground support.

Question: You said that you would have recommended that the T-33s be knocked out?

General White: In planning these strikes for the three airfields, certainly I would have urged that we concentrate strikes on the fields that had the T-33s.

Question: Would you have made a recommendation that they be knocked out?

General White: We didn't know that they were armed.

Question: Based on the information you had, then you would never have recommended that they be knocked out?

General White: They would have been included in the over-all plan to knock out Castro's air force.

Statement: Yes, but they were on the field on D-2, but they didn't knock them out.

General White: Had we known that the T-33s were armed, we might well have highlighted the field where the T-33s were located.

Question: Did you think that the crews they had were sufficient in number? Did that concern you at all?

General White: I think the numbers were adequate. We sent an Air Force officer down as part of a team to make

an evaluation. They made quite a complete report. The report was very favorable on the quality of the Cuban pilots.

Question: By the time D Day afternoon came, the crews were exhausted because they had to fly from Nicaragua to Cuba in a seven-hour trip.

Statement: This is a very important point. I think the record shows that they had 17 Cuban pilots and about six American pilots. Now, suppose they had knocked out Castro's aircraft and then provided air cover over the beach because the invasion force immediately attracted very heavy forces of the Castro ground units. As I picture it, this would have put a major strain on this little air force.

Admiral Burke: I think some of the pilots' energy was dissipated in sitting up all night waiting to go and they didn't go, but this was just as bad as going.

Question: How many pilots would it take to keep two planes over the airfield during daylight?

General White: Do you want me to check it or give you an off-hand answer?

Question: Did that ever occur to you during this time?

General White: Perhaps not specifically, but I'm sure I evaluated it in my own mind and my people did.

Question: What was your concept of this plan? What was it intended to do, and how would they go about it?

General White: It was intended to make a lodgment and then fan out to gain as much of the beachhead as possible, expecting that there would be a great many of the guerrilla people and other defectors that would join in, and we had ammunition and equipment to give them as they came in to the fold.

Question: The guerrillas were to come in to the beach?

General White: Yes, wherever they could join in.

Question: Then they would just come down into that area where the landing took place?

General White: I understand that there were leaflets to be dropped and a general call for the people to rise against Castro.

Question: When was the uprising to take place?

General White: I think as soon as it could be generated.

Question: Was it to take place simultaneously or within a short period?

General White: Within a short period, I would say beginning with D Day it ought to snowball.

Question: How did you visualize any great number of these civilians coming in to the beachhead area with Castro's forces coming down the same route, in, behind, and along the lines of communication?

General White: I understand there were a good number of defectors who came over even under the circumstances.

Question: Did you think that this group of 1,200 people could hold this beachhead?

General White: There was a fair chance of holding the beachhead if the air was knocked out. We had also anticipated that there would be more uprisings throughout Cuba which would divert the Cuban armed forces elsewhere and they would not be able to concentrate on this one place.

Statement: Just so the record is complete, when we had a briefing from one of the pilots, we asked him about the T-33s and he said they weren't aware at the time of the problem or difficulty with the T-33s and they concentrated on the B-26s.

Question: The question of going guerrilla has come up. It was thought that if things went badly, these people could operate as guerrillas. How was this presented to the Joint Chiefs and how did they regard that alternative?

General White: On this particular operation, I cannot say. On the Trinidad operation, I've a very clear memory.

Question: Would you say that the guerrilla phase was specifically studied by the Joint Chiefs?

General White: Only the fact that there were guerrillas in the area and that it was anticipated that the people would join with them.

Question: Was there any thought to evacuating by sea?

General White: Not until later in the game.

Question: How did the Joint Chiefs follow the course of the operation after D Day? Were you kept informed of what was going on?

General White: I was kept informed generally by my action officer.

Question: Did you have liaison with General Gray's office?

General White: Yes, sir.

Question: Were you aware of the criticality of the ammunition situation at the end of the second day?

General White: I had heard about it.

Question: But you didn't have any realization that the battle would be won or lost the night of D+1-D+2 unless they got ammunition?

General White: No. My impression is that in general we had very little knowledge of what was actually taking place at the beachhead.

Question: How would you define the responsibility of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in this operation?

General White: Number one, we were called on for our views; we gave them to the best of our ability; and once the decision was made to go into Zapata, we supported it any way we could.

Question: Would you say you had the responsibility to volunteer advice to the President and since he received no contrary advice he had a right to assume that all was well?

General White: Yes, except that a number of things took place that I did not know about. I knew nothing about the cancellation of the air strikes.



Question: I am going to ask the same question I asked General Shoup. Do you feel that the JCS studied this plan and gave it that cold hard look which they would have given it had it been their plan?

General White: Certainly they did with the Trinidad plan. I don't know about Zapata. I was not there when it was briefed. It was my understanding, however, that the basic over-all considerations were similar. I would say we did not make as detailed an evaluation of the alternatives as we did the Trinidad plan.

Question: Looking back on this thing now with the benefit of experience, how do you feel about the covert nature of the plan? Was it realistic to consider that this could be kept covert--by that I mean a plan that cannot be attributed plausibly to the United States?

General White: I am sure that we could not expect to train a very sizable group of people with aircraft in any part of the world, at least any populated part of the world, without the world knowing. So I am sure that the training base in Guatemala was well known to the Cubans. This is hearsay. I was told that somebody briefed many Latin American governments about this forthcoming operation to get their views and met with almost unanimous disapproval. I'd say this alone was enough for a tipoff.

Statement: I believe this was Mr. Berle's mission down south.

Question: Do you have any comment on a landing on a hostile shore which is covert?

General White: I don't object to the military doing covert things; in fact, this may be a wise way for the future on this sort of thing. But there are certain considerations; I don't believe you should have U.S. officers in uniform because this puts them into a different category and they take risks beyond those which are usually expected of them in peace time. As far as covert operations are concerned, I think probably they should be done under the aegis of some agency other than Defense.

Mr. Dulles: The question is, can there be a section in the Department of Defense that has been sheep-dipped or something. How are we going to do this in the future?

General White: I think there should be greater Department of Defense participation; in fact, I think perhaps the responsibility ought to be placed on military professionals, but I believe it still should be under the aegis of some other agency. I would not like to see this type of operation attributable to the Department of Defense.

Statement: It might have been done something like this. The CIA could have done everything up to and including recruiting, assembling, and putting them into a covert training area, and organizing the covert protection around it. Training at that point could have been turned over to the Department of Defense. Planning could have been turned over to the Department of Defense and the execution turned over to the Department of Defense.

General White: That's all right with me. However, I think that the cover should be with the CIA or some agency other than the DOD.

Mr. Dulles: When you get an operation this big, the cover blows off.

Question: What do you say about the quality of interdepartmental coordination on this plan?

General White: I think it could be improved very much. I don't know of a formalized body short of the NSC that takes a problem like this and integrates all the interested Government agencies into a planning group.

Statement: It's been a problem for a long time.

General White: I think not only in this type of thing but in the cold war. After all, in hot war, we're certainly organized for it and we hope ready for it. Limited wars--we're organized for and we hope prepared for, but this kind of covert operation we're talking about now is part of the cold war. The cold war is on every day of our lives and I think we need a similar organization to fight the cold war.

Question: Have you spelled that out?

General White: OCB started this kind of a thing I believe, but it was always kind of loose. The organization we need is not only to oppose Soviet power, but to take the initiative.

Statement: I wish you would give us your thoughts at your leisure.

General White: My staff has prepared a study on this subject which I subscribe to.

General White: Almost every agency in the Government is involved in fighting this cold war.

Question: Are you suggesting that possibly the NSC framework is the place to hang this or are you talking about something separate?

General White: I think the NSC is too high level an organization. I don't think it should be an operating organization. I conceive this to be an operational group. They undoubtedly would have to report to the NSC or send it to the President.

Question: Would you give us your views on this thing?

General White: My views will be just what is contained in this study.

Question: Will you send us a copy of the study?

General White: Yes, sir.

Question: Will you go back to the operations for a minute? Do you think that in view of the circumstances, this was given sufficient time and attention by the Joint Staff?

General White: Yes, up to the word "go" but there were a lot of last minute changes.

Question: I understand that, but as of the 15th of March, the "go ahead" signal from a military point of view to the President and to those who were making the decisions was given. Thereafter, there were continuous meetings that took place and nobody came forward and said, this is going to be fatal; we shouldn't go ahead. Really considerable support developed from individual members and from the Chairman. The President understood that it was supported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In view of all this, do you feel it was given sufficient time and attention by you as an individual and by the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

General White: I will make the single point that General Shoup made. I think there were times when the Chairman was consulted and although he has been extraordinarily conscientious to keep us informed, I think that things took place at levels above the Joint Chiefs of Staff about which we were not fully informed. On those things which we had cognizance of, I believe the Joint Chiefs accomplished their task.

Mr. Kennedy: For instance, as I look at the records, I see that the original Zapata plan plus the alternatives were considered by the JCS for twenty minutes.

General White: I can't tell you the times because I wasn't there, but I believe by virtue of the study that was made

on the Trinidad plan, that it was fairly easy to have a good look at the Zapata plan and come up with a statement that the Trinidad plan was still the best, but that of the three alternatives Zapata was the best.

Question: Then your answer is that you feel that you gave sufficient time, opinion and study.

General White: On an over-all basis, yes, sir.

## **211. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All Posts in Latin America**

Washington, May 8, 1961, 10:52 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/5-861. Secret; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Achilles and W.G. Bowdler of ARA/RPA. Cleared in L by Chayes and Whiteman and by Bowles and in substance by Rusk. Also cleared in Defense by General Polk, and in the White House by Goodwin and in substance by President Kennedy. Repeated to Rusk at Oslo as Tosec 19, to USUN for Stevenson, and to the Consulate at Ciudad Trujillo.

1755. Depcirtel 1661./1/ Under President's guidance highest officials this Government in past few days have been carefully and deliberately reviewing problems posed by Castro regime.

/1/Document 171.

We have concluded that its complete subservience to Sino-Soviet bloc as evidenced by repeated statements of regime itself culminating in May 1st statement,/2/ complete crushing freedom in all aspects of Cuban life, including refusal to permit self-determination through free elections and hundreds of executions without trial, and presence of massive quantities of bloc armaments, leave no doubt that regime has become base in this Hemisphere for extracontinental power and constitutes threat to peace and security of Americas. There is no question of bilateral dispute between Cuba and U.S. U.S. has on contrary shown long restraint but considers that threat to Hemisphere as whole must be reduced and eventually removed. We believe that this requires recognition by all governments in Hemisphere of the danger and appropriate action to reduce and eventually eliminate danger.

/2/See Document 189.

While we do not wish to miss currently favorable psychology in Latin America, neither do we wish to give appearance of rash or precipitate action. We also realize differences in situations in each country and wish to leave you maximum discretion in carrying out following instructions. We recognize that governments will require time to consider action proposed and have no thought of requesting meeting of consultation unless assured that sizable majority are agreed upon program of this nature.

Decision has been made to seek as promptly as possible inter-American program to condemn, isolate, and weaken Castro regime and assist other governments to counter its subversive activities. Take earliest occasion to present orally to President or Foreign Minister, pursuant to helpful consultation recently held in your capital and Washington, outline of action set forth below which USG believes Organ of Consultation should adopt as resolution in response threat posed by Castro regime as clearly demonstrated in recent events, particularly continued intervention Sino-Soviet bloc through Cuba in hemispheric affairs and proclamation by Castro placing Cuba clearly in Sino-Soviet bloc.

1. Finding that:

a) International communist movement has come to dominate the political institutions of Cuba, extending to this hemisphere the political system of the Sino-Soviet bloc.

b) Government of Cuba has surrendered Cuban independence to extracontinental powers of Sino-Soviet bloc.

c) Government of Cuba has been carrying on interventionist and subversive activities against other states of hemisphere and has attempted to destroy integrity of inter-American system.

d) Foregoing constitutes type of situation denounced by American States in Resolution 93 of Tenth Inter-American Conference/<sup>3/</sup> and Declaration of San Jose.<sup>4/</sup>

<sup>3/</sup>Resolution 93 of the Tenth Inter-American Conference is also known as the Declaration of Caracas of 1954; see footnote 4, Document 202.

<sup>4/</sup>See footnote 6, Document 202.

e) Within meaning of Article 6 of Rio Treaty/<sup>5/</sup> this constitutes aggression which is not armed attack and a situation endangering peace of America.

<sup>5/</sup>Article 6 of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, signed at Rio de Janeiro on September 2, 1947, provides that if the inviolability or the integrity of any American state is affected by an aggression that is not an armed attack, or by a situation that might endanger the peace of America, the Organ of Consultation will meet immediately to agree on necessary measures to assist the victim of aggression, or to maintain the peace and security of the continent. (*A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-1949*, p. 228)

f) Government of Cuba has violated principles of representative democracy set forth in OAS Charter/<sup>6/</sup> and Declaration of Santiago/<sup>7/</sup> and deprived Cuban people of these rights, creating situation which seriously aggravates international tensions and has become danger to peaceful relationships in hemisphere.

<sup>6/</sup>For text, see *ibid.*, pp. 230-242.

<sup>7/</sup>See footnote 5, Document 202.

g) Foregoing shows that Cuban Government has violated its basic obligations under OAS Charter and deprived Cuban state of its place as respected member of OAS.

2. Condemn Cuban Government for its acts of intervention and subversion against other American states, attempts to destroy integrity of inter-American system and imposition upon Cuban people of a totalitarian regime subservient to extracontinental powers and alien ideologies.

3. Apply following measures to Cuba pursuant to Article 8 of Rio Treaty:<sup>8/</sup>

<sup>8/</sup>See footnote 7, Document 202.

a) Breaking of diplomatic and consular relations;

b) Suspension of economic relations, including trade in all items except medical supplies.

4. Establish joint naval-air patrol of Caribbean area for surveillance purposes designed to help identify shipments of arms and personnel from Cuba to other countries for support of subversive activities and insurrectionary movements, and assist affected states in preventing such intervention in their territory. COAS, with the advice of Inter-American Defense Board, to prepare immediate plan for organization and coordination of this patrol for implementation by governments.

5. Charge COAS with immediate establishment of an ad hoc committee, composed of representatives of 5 to 7 governments to observe carrying out of measures specified in paragraphs 3 and 4 above, to assist governments in this connection, to observe development of situation in Cuba, and to keep Council appropriately informed.

6. Establish Committee for Defense of Freedom (in tradition of Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense) to identify techniques used by Castro-communist movement to undermine and destroy principles of inter-American system, to expose such techniques to governments and peoples of American states, and to devise and recommend methods required to counteract them.

You should endeavor find out how much of foregoing action program government to which you are accredited is prepared to support. You should also estimate or discreetly ascertain what would be government's attitude toward proposing or attending meeting Foreign Ministers to which Cuba and/or Dominican Republic would not be invited. If your government is one which still maintains diplomatic and consular relations with Castro regime and you believe there is any possibility of government severing these relations, in your discretion you should urge that it do so at early opportunity. Castro May 1 address identifying Cuba as part of Sino-Soviet system and dismissing any intention of holding elections appears offer ample justification.

Report reactions promptly.

Department informing Washington and OAS Ambassadors.

For Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Santiago, La Paz, Quito. Recognizing delicacy of making approach of this nature to government to which you accredited, you should use your discretion in what sections to emphasize, bearing in mind government will know we are consulting all American governments. Advise Dept. of your handling this matter.

Trip mentioned Depcirtel 1735/9/ would be related to situation at time trip made.

/9/Dated May 5. (Department of State, Central Files, 120.1520/5-561)

Bowles

## **212. Memorandum of Conversation**

Oslo, May 9, 1961, 2:45 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Secretary's Memoranda of Conversation: Lot 65 D 330. Confidential. Drafted by R. N. Magill and approved in S on May 13. The conversation took place at the U.S. Delegation Office.

### **NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING**

Oslo, May 8-10, 1961

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

United States

The Secretary of State

Mr. Kohler

Mr. Steeves

Mr. Magill

Canada

The Honorable Howard C. Green, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs

Mr. G. Ignatieff, Assistant Under Secretary for External Affairs

Mr. R. Campbell

Mr. J.J. McCardle

SUBJECT

Cuba

The Secretary said the U.S. had taken the initiative three times recently in attempting negotiations with Cuba, but had been rebuffed each time. He asserted that the U.S. nevertheless remained prepared to negotiate with Cuba on any issue except that of Cuba's Sino-Soviet ties, which was not negotiable from the U.S. viewpoint. He cited as one aspect of these ties that there were over 2,000 Soviet and Chinese Communist technicians in Cuba. The Secretary said that the U.S. must work for the downfall of the Castro regime so long as this situation obtains. This objective is in line with traditional U.S. policy based on the Monroe Doctrine and it is also inter-American policy. The U.S. takes this policy very seriously.

Mr. Green observed that last summer Canada had explored the possibility of joining with Mexico and Brazil in an effort to resolve the Cuban problem, but that this had not succeeded. He had the impression that the U.S. did not want outside intervention. The Secretary said that twice last year the U.S. had tried to have the Cuban problem taken up in the Peace Committee of the OAS but that Cuba had spurned these efforts. He expressed the hope that Canada would inform the U.S. if it saw any indications of a possibility of severing Cuba's Sino-Soviet ties. Mr. Green said that Canada was not close enough to the Cuban situation to be likely to know of such possibilities if they should develop.

The Secretary emphasized that the U.S. concern regarding Cuba did not arise from Cuban expropriation of U.S. properties. Mr. Green said that if the U.S. intervened directly in Cuba, it would stir up a hornet's nest in Latin America and the U.N. and would not settle the problem in the long run. He said that last year's rumors of U.S. intervention had greatly disturbed the Canadians despite the fact that they were more removed from the problem. The Secretary said he could understand some differences in attitude between the U.S. and Canada on Cuba. Canada was more remote geographically, and the U.S. lay between Canada and Cuba. Furthermore, Canada did not have the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine. Mr. Green said that the Canadian Government was giving serious consideration to the possibility of joining the OAS. However, he had the impression that drastic actions seem to push the Cubans further into the arms of the Communists.

The Secretary said that by January 20 of this year the course had already been set by the U.S. in its handling of the Cuban situation. Mr. Green asked whether U.S. possession of Guantanamo Base strengthened the U.S. position. The Secretary said that if the Cubans attacked Guantanamo Base, supported aggression against other countries in the area, or accepted Soviet missile bases, the U.S. would be faced with a very difficult decision regarding counter action. Mr. Green surmised that such Cuban action would provide the U.S. with a basis for direct intervention. The Secretary said he could not prejudge U.S. action in such circumstances, but it was quite clear that the U.S. could not tolerate having the Soviets operating through a Cuban "cut-out." Mr. Green said he thought the U.S. had been right in deciding not to use its armed forces against Castro.

Mr. Green said if there was any way in which the U.S. thought Canada might be able to help, he hoped that the U.S. would let Canada know. The Secretary suggested that one possibility for such help might be the need for arranging a rescue service through the International Red Cross. He thought Canada might be able to help with the Europeans in working this out.

Mr. Green asked what in the Secretary's view would be a liquidation of Cuba's ties with the Sino-Soviet Bloc. The Secretary said Cuba would have to send the Communist technicians home and realign itself with the OAS. Mr. Green said that it was very important that the U.S. should move with the Latin American countries on Cuba. The Secretary observed that covert Latin American support was much stronger than the overt posture because of Communist penetration in many Latin American countries. The Governments of these countries were worried and inhibited by the attitudes of their own people. The U.S. has been moving with the Latin American states although the latter have not been able to say so publicly.

### **213. Telegram From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Atlantic (Dennison)**

Washington, May 9, 1961, 12:28 p.m.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Priority. Repeated to CGUSCONARC, Ft Monroe, Virginia, and TAC, Langley AFB, Virginia.

JCS 995627. Exclusive for Adm Dennison, Gen Powell, Gen Everest. Subject is Guidance for Development of Operations Plan on Cuba.

1. Submit to the JCS for approval a plan for military assault of Cuba. The plan must:
  - a. Assure overthrow of the Castro government in minimum time.
  - b. Assure necessary control of Cuba following overthrow of Castro government.
  - c. Assure continuous control of the US base at Guantanamo.
  - d. Provide the capability of initiating the assault without prior warning and within five days after the order to execute.
  - e. Be capable of execution at any time during a prolonged period after required forces and equipment are positioned.
2. Forces and equipment will be tailored as necessary to accomplish the plan, and may be repositioned as required.
3. Following Forces may be considered available for planning purposes:
  - a. Army
    - XVIII Airborne Corps Hdqtrs
    - 82nd Airborne Division
    - 101st Airborne Division
    - 3rd Armored Cavalry Regt

4th/68 Tank Bn

2nd Infantry Brig

4 Helicopter Companies

1 Inf Battle Group (-) for helicopter operations

Special Forces

b. Navy

Striking and Covering Forces

Combatant Air and Naval

Elements as required

Underway replenishment group

Amphibious Task Force

Landing Force

II MEF

Headquarters, II MEF

2nd Marine Division (-)

2nd Marine Air Wing (-)

Force Troops Atlantic

c. Air Force

1 Command Hdqtrs

Troop Carrier/MATS Wings as required

(Reserve units with quick reaction time may be used)

4 Tactical Fighter Wings

2-1/3 Recon Squadrons

1 TAC Control System (Reduced)

Aerial Refueling as required

d. CIA Force Atlantic



e. Special Operations Task Force Atlantic

f. On Call Forces

(1) Naval: Uncommitted Forces US Atlantic Fleet Amphibious ships and Marine Forces as required, Pacific Command

(2) Army: 4th Infantry Division

CCA, 1st Armored Division

g. Air and Surface Lift

MATS and MSTs provide air and surface lift as directed by the JCS.

4. Submit initially, on a priority basis, an outline plan and a concept of operations. Include estimate of time required to accomplish 1 a and b above. Concurrently submit requirements for:

a. Total forces and equipment.

b. Repositioning and/or prepositioning of forces and equipment necessary to obtain required state of readiness. Include estimate of time required to accomplish these actions.

5. Any recommendation you may have as to an alternate solution which will enhance the feasibility of the plan together with its impact on reaction time and total forces required is invited.

6. This guidance should not be interpreted as an indication that US military action against Cuba is probable.

#### **214. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 9, 1961.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI Files: Job 85-00664R, Box 3, Vol. IV (6). Secret; Eyes Only.  
Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency.

SUBJECT

Meeting with the DD/P re Cuban Operations

PARTICIPANTS

Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr.--DD/P

Mr. C. Tracy Barnes--A/DDP/A

Col. J. C. King--C/WH/D

[*name not declassified*]*--AC/WH/4*

Mr. G. Droller--C/WH/4 [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

[*name not declassified*]

1. Mr. Bissell stated that the President is anxious that family allotments to strike force dependents should continue and that they should not be halted without first consulting with the President. Mr. Bissell said the payments must continue through June at which time we should make appropriate recommendations as to their continuation. He said the concept we used would call for continuation in case of families of prisoners. It is understood that the allotments to families of returnees would be paid through May. It was agreed that the 170 recruits who had never left the country and who were now clamoring for their "bonus" should be paid the "across the board" bonus of \$250 inasmuch as most of them had given up their jobs to join the brigade.

2. Mr. Bissell then stated that there has been a round of policymaking sessions--externally with NSC and Mr. Goodwin of the White House--and internally. He said that there is an urgent need to decide what we are going to do next--what people and facilities we are going to use. He asked if there was general agreement (there was) that we start building up our internal assets--FI first; plus planning and carrying out sabotage operations which would call for the use of a minimum number of people; that we should start commo training promptly; also think of training programs for resistance and underground types. He said he had read the papers/1/ prepared by Messrs. [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] and had found them of interest, but he agreed with [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] comment that it was perhaps too elaborate a plan for current policy restrictions and the idea of setting up another headquarters of "agency" in Miami was not practical. Mr. Bissell commissioned [less than 1 line of source text not declassified], with the assistance of Mr. Reichhardt, to come up within a week's time, if possible, with an outline proposal for covert action. [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] suggested that the best place to start would be with the old operational plan which could be reviewed, updated and "sprinkled with the experience" which we have gained to date. Mr. Barnes promised to provide a copy of a paper/2/ which was recently prepared on this subject. Mr. Barnes, in response to a statement by Mr. Droller that he understood from Dr. Miro that the President was opposed to sabotage operations, said that the White House is expecting a paper from us as to what we propose to do--recommendations for action, unilateral or otherwise, and on the basis of this we could expect to get some policy approval. That sabotage is still open whenever it seems appropriate. Mr. Bissell said we will want to take the paper to the President and also to State and Defense. We will also need the operational outline for our own internal purposes. He asked if there was general agreement to this approach and Col. King said he would like to see included in the plan the use of B-26 aircraft against refineries and other targets but that we could leave the timing open.

/1/Not found.

/2/Not found.

3. Mr. Bissell then discussed our position vis-a-vis Dr. Miro and the Revolutionary Council. He said we need a clear affirmation of policy position re relations with the Cubans. He said we are looking to Dr. Miro as the senior official of the opposition and that we must not deal with independent groups without Miro's approval. He felt it was important that the Council be strengthened and proposed that Mr. Droller see Dr. Miro to discuss with him the opening of appropriate offices, acquiring a small staff, taking over the welfare and perhaps other functions of the FRD, etc. He said either he or Mr. Barnes would try to check this out first with Mr. Berle but nonetheless Mr. Droller should proceed to make this contact. Mr. Barnes said we would have to come up with our recommendations for Mr. Goodwin re our contacts with the Council. He said that it was not practicable for State to try to handle the day to day problems. Mr. Barnes asked Mr. Droller to work with him on preparation of our recommendations for Mr. Goodwin. He remarked that Mr. Goodwin had suggested that we might lend State an Agency man who could handle the Council for State. Mr. Bissell said it is important that we draw lines as to when they go to State and when they come to us. Mr. Droller presented his ideas with respect to creating a Cuban operations panel.

4. The question of supporting operations proposed by Manuel Ray was discussed. All agreed that we should have no dealings with Ray or any other independent group unless it has the approval of Dr. Miro. Mr. Bissell said that we should be prepared to work with Ray or any other group, provided Miro agrees, with these provisos:

- A. They have the necessary assets.
- B. They employ secure commo.
- C. They keep us informed of what they are doing.

Mr. Barnes said that Mr. Ray had indicated a willingness to carry out his activities under the aegis of the Council although he naturally will not want to identify precisely his assets, etc. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] said the problem might be simplified if Dr. Miro would re-affirm Mr. Ray as "minister in charge of clandestine activities" or some such designation. Mr. Bissell questioned whether Ray would be able to pull all the groups together in view of his somewhat controversial position. At any rate it was agreed that [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] should meet with Ray for the purpose of drawing up a prospectus. Once this has been done and we have had an opportunity to study it, etc., and if we decided to support it, we would then see that Dr. Miro was apprised of the plan and we would not go ahead with it unless and until he gave it his approval.

5. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] brought up the problems created for the Branch by the multitudinous requests received from Congressmen, newspaper people, etc., for information and briefings, etc., and wondered if a good part of this couldn't be diverted to the State Department so that this pressure could be taken off the Branch. Mr. Bissell agreed that something must be done to relieve the Branch of this burden and maybe the flow could be diverted to State or some of it to the Council office once it is established.

[*name not declassified*]

## **215. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All Posts**

Washington, May 10, 1961, 5:31 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/5-1061. Secret. Drafted in ARA by F.J. Devine. Cleared in ARA, AF, FE, EUR, NEA, L, USIA, and the White House. Approved for transmission by Achilles. Also sent to the Consulates in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Ciudad Trujillo, and repeated to all other consular posts, and to Bangui, Ouagadougou, and Fort Lamy. Libreville, Niamey, and Cotonou were excluded from the list of recipient posts.

1763. USG following closely all developments fast-moving Cuban situation and has had under continuous study determination this country's policy and posture. Special importance attached Castro's May Day declaration/1/ Cuba now "socialist" republic without further need electoral process which clearly indicates full extent to which Castro regime has taken Cuban people down road toward totalitarianism and full membership Sino-Soviet Bloc.

/1/See Document 189.

US has been consulting Latin American Governments with respect their reactions and attitudes toward Cuban developments. Although impossible predict this juncture exact course inter-American action likely, US firmly believes time now at hand when OAS members must be asked face up serious problem represented by Sino-Soviet penetration this hemisphere through domination Castro regime and need for clarification and modernization of existing interpretations and applications doctrine non-intervention with reference to legitimate self-defense. Accordingly we are consulting all other OAS members except Cuba and Dominican Republic regarding collective action designed to isolate the Castro regime.

US posts throughout rest of world should give priority to enhancing awareness and full understanding by government officials, public media and all other key target groups of true nature Castro regime, including threat

posed for LA by Cuban arms build-up, announced intention to spread revolution and repressive domestic actions against Cubans. You should emphasize theme that suppression of liberty within Cuba has now been confirmed and compounded by Castro's rejection any prospects free elections and that sovereign will Cuban people clearly no longer has opportunity for expression. Penetration by Sino-Soviet Bloc in Western Hemisphere is not accomplished fact and members inter-American community have no choice but recognize this and speedily adopt those counter measures mutually agreed to be warranted.

At same time as efforts isolate Castro and as long-range policy far more important, US energetically pushing "Alliance for Progress" program intended to advance social and economic progress in Latin America and thereby contribute correction and elimination fundamental causes social and political unrest. Inter-American meeting for that purpose being called for July 15. It is essential that world opinion recognize and appreciate true US objectives and you should make them clear on every appropriate occasion. Informational material will be supplied by Department on a regular and continuing basis for this purpose.

As inter-American measures are taken, all posts have a responsibility to present them in proper perspective. Significant foreign reactions should be reported promptly./2/

Bowles

/2/In circular telegram 1764, sent out at the same time to the same posts, the Department provided information on the "repressive inhuman conditions" being imposed on the Cuban people by the "Communist-dominated regime" of Fidel Castro. The country teams receiving this information were instructed to employ their full assets to impress on their host governments the true nature of the Castro government. (Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/5-1061)



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**Cuba, 1961-1962**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

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## **Cuba, 1961-1962**

### **216. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Bowles to President Kennedy**

Washington, May 13, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, General, 5/61. Confidential.

#### **SUBJECT**

Application of the Battle Act/<sup>1/</sup> to Cuba

/<sup>1/</sup>The Battle Act was the Mutual Defense Assistance Control Act of 1951. (65 Stat. 644)

#### **The Problem**

The possible invocation of the Trading With the Enemy Act/<sup>2/</sup> and other actions under consideration with respect to Cuba raises the question of whether the United States should also invoke the Battle Act.

/<sup>2/</sup>See Document 12.

The terms of the Battle Act provide that it shall be applied with respect to any "nation--threatening the security of the United States, including the USSR and all countries under its domination". Notwithstanding the large extent to which Cuba appears in fact to be dominated by the USSR, no finding to this effect has yet been made by the Battle Act Administrator (the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs). Such a finding is required in order to bring its provisions into effect with regard to Cuba.

#### **Actions Required Under the Battle Act**

The application of the Act would require that we approach foreign aid recipient countries to inform them of the inclusion of Cuba within the Act and to request their cooperation in extending an embargo on shipments of arms and strategic materials to Cuba. It would then be mandatory (except where you wished to exercise your discretionary power or in cases where the Act is waived under Section 451 of the Mutual Security Act/<sup>3/</sup>) that all foreign aid must be cut off from any country which knowingly fails to cooperate. Of the strategic Battle Act items only quartz crystals from Brazil and borax from Argentina and Chile are produced in Latin America. Neither of those is consumed by Cuba in significant amounts. The Act would have a minimal economic effect on Cuba because that country's demand for strategic items (except for arms which it is now receiving from the Bloc) is very limited.

/<sup>3/</sup>Mutual Security Act of 1954. (68 Stat. 832, et seq.)

## The Alternatives

Although the effect of application of the Battle Act on Cuba may be minimal, the logic of our other actions and public and Congressional pressures may lead us eventually to invoke the Act. The immediate question is whether we should act now or whether we should delay until a multilateral framework has been established within which this action can take place.

In support of immediate invocation of the Battle Act are the following points:

- (1) Castro has openly declared his allegiance to the Sino-Soviet Bloc and this action would therefore be logical and generally approved by public and Congressional opinion in the United States.
- (2) It will probably become increasingly difficult to explain to Congress our failure to invoke this Act, particularly should we invoke the Trading With the Enemy Act.

In support of delay in the invocation of this Act are the following points:

- (1) Because of the requirement that the United States seek cooperation from aid recipient nations (which might be interpreted as requiring of them a similar policy judgment with regard to Cuba), its immediate application would probably cause some unfavorable response, particularly in Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, Chile and Bolivia.
- (2) Any harmful effect on Latin American countries would be mitigated if invocation of the Battle Act was part of a multilaterally agreed program on a Hemisphere basis to deal with the Cuban problem.
- (3) It is probable that certain of the COCOM countries which might occasionally be sources of Battle Act items for Cuba would be much more ready to cooperate if this Act had the apparent support of a majority of the Latin American countries.

## Legal Situation

The Executive has a considerable degree of flexibility as to any finding that Cuba is "Soviet-dominated" for the purposes of the Act. Moreover a finding that Cuba is "Soviet-dominated" for the purpose of one Act does not require that it be found "Soviet-dominated" for the purpose of all other Acts. For example, while Poland is considered as a "Soviet-dominated" country for the purpose of the Battle Act, it is not considered "Soviet-dominated" for the purposes of Public Law 480/4/ or Section 5 of the Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1951,/5/ even though these latter two Acts use similar language.

/4/P.L. 480 is the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954. (68 Stat. 454, et seq.)

/5/65 Stat. 72.

Should the Trading With the Enemy Act be invoked against Cuba, there is no legal requirement that the Battle Act must also be invoked.

## Recommendations:

1. Because of our commitment to the multilateral approach with regard to Cuba and our interest in making every effort to insure its success, I propose that any finding that the Act is applicable to Cuba be delayed until the chances of obtaining multilateral agreements or actions by the OAS with regard to Cuba have been fully explored.

2. I propose also that we immediately begin discussing with our NATO allies and bilaterally with Japan and other interested countries the probability of this eventual action.

Chester Bowles/6/

/6/Printed from a copy that indicates Bowles signed the original.

### **217. Editorial Note**

On May 16, 1961, Brazilian Finance Minister Clemente Mariani called on President Kennedy to express appreciation for U.S. financial assistance to Brazil. During the conversation, President Kennedy stressed the importance of inter-American isolation of Castro, whom he called "for all practical purposes an agent of international communism," and he pointed out the difficulty of agreement when President Quadros asserted a "strongly divergent view." After Mariani noted that Quadros had been moving away from his previous position in favor of Castro, he promised to report fully on the conversation to Quadros. The memorandum of conversation is in Department of State, President's Memoranda of Conversation: Lot 66 D 149. It is printed in full in volume XII, pages 435-436.

### **218. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 16, 1961.

//Source: National Defense University, Taylor Papers, Box 12, Cuba, Paramilitary Study Group Correspondence. Secret. This record of the meeting is marked as a draft, which apparently means that it was not subsequently cleared with the White House. There is no drafting information to indicate who drafted the memorandum, but internal evidence suggests that it was drafted by General Taylor.

SUBJECT

Meeting with President on May 16, 1961

PRESENT

President Kennedy

General Taylor

Attorney General Kennedy

Admiral Burke

Mr. Allen Dulles

The Cuba Study Group met at luncheon with the President to give orally an interim report on their conclusions to date. In the course of the conversation the following points were developed.

There was no formal governmental review after March, 1960 of the necessity for a paramilitary operation to replace the Castro government. Although the President had many doubts with regard to such an operation, the pressure for an affirmative decision arising from the need to use the Cuban Brigade quickly or disband it was a strong factor in causing an affirmative decision. In the President's mind there was reasonable hope for a popular uprising following a successful landing as well as the possibility of setting up a free Cuban government in the beachhead after it had been firmly secured.

The President was always reassured by the assumption that the Cuban Brigade in an emergency could pass to a guerrilla status. There was a breakdown in communications some place between the training base in Guatemala and the senior officials in Washington which occasioned the misunderstanding of the feasibility of exercising the guerrilla option.

It was clear to the President that the Trinidad Plan had military advantages over Zapata. However, the choice of the latter overcame many of the political objections raised against Trinidad.

With regard to the cancellation of the D-Day strikes, the President is inclined to think that a special NSC Meeting should have been called to deal with this important matter. However, the CIA officials in charge of the operation did not speak to him directly with regard to the critical nature of the cancellation.

The President was aware of the serious shortage of ammunition in the beachhead at the end of D+1. However, he was never approached for authority to extend the Navy air cover over the ammunition convoy in its movement to Blue Beach.

In connection with paragraph 14 of the Committee's paper "Study of the Anti-Castro Invasion Zapata" dated 11 May 1961, /1/ the Chart and paper entitled "A Mechanism for the Planning and Coordination of Cold War Strategy" were discussed. The President encouraged the Group to develop this organizational concept in greater detail for inclusion in their final report. The latter is to be oral, supported by a written memorandum. It was agreed that this final report and the supporting memorandum would not go beyond the President, but the possibility was left open of some sanitized document to set right the past misstatements of the press.

/1/Admiral Burke's copy of this paper, which was an initial version of the final report submitted to the President in June (see Document 230), is in Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials.

There was some discussion of the desirability of changing the name of CIA in order to reduce its visibility. Mr. Dulles undertook to study the matter and see if he could make a recommendation.

## **219. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 16, 1961.

//Source: Naval Historical Center, Area Files, Bumpy Road Materials. Top Secret; Hold Closely. Prepared by Admiral Burke.

### **SUBJECT**

Debrief of Luncheon conversation with the President, 16 May 1961

1. I attended a luncheon with the President, in company with General Taylor, Mr. Allen Dulles and Mr. Robert Kennedy.

2. General Taylor presented a question paper entitled "Topics for Tuesday", copy enclosed./1/

/1/Not found.

3. The President's answers to the questions in general were as follows:

a. Question 1. Was there any doubt about the necessity of some such military action against Castro?



He had some doubt about the necessity for military action against Castro and so did some people in State, but there were pressures such as what to do with the forces being trained, the rainy season coming up and the conduct of covert actions in the atmosphere at the time, that led the President to believe that Castro should be overthrown. It was much better, for example, to put the guerrillas on the beach in Cuba and let them fight for Cuba than bring them back to the United States and have them state that the United States would not support their activities. The end result might have been much worse had we done this than it actually was.

b. Question 2. What was the estimate of the probability of success of Zapata before D-Day?

It was thought that the possibility of some success of the Zapata Plan was fairly good, since if they could not establish a beachhead and hold it, they could go into guerrillas. This was probably the biggest error, as it turned out, but it was thought that they could hold the beachhead for some time and that a Cuban Government could be established on the beachhead which perhaps could be recognized later. He realized that not knocking out the Cuban air precluded this as it turned out.

c. Question 3. What was the feeling of likelihood of a popular uprising following the landing? How essential was such an uprising regarded for the success of the operation? How rapid a reaction was expected by Castro?

He felt that there was a good chance for a popular uprising following the landing but that the beachhead was not held long enough to permit a popular uprising. Although an uprising would be necessary for the overthrow of Castro, if there was no general uprising the members in the landing party could become guerrillas and they would do more good as guerrillas than they would outside of Cuba. This also answered question 4 which was "What was expected to happen if the landing force effected a successful lodgment but there was no uprising?"

d. Question 5. What was the understanding of the position of the JCS as to Zapata? Was it appreciated that they favored Trinidad over Zapata? What did the President expect from the Chiefs?

The President understood that the JCS preferred the Trinidad Plan to the Zapata Plan from the military point of view. However, policy implications were overriding in that it would be quite evident in the Trinidad operation that it was a United States operation since control of the air would be required, which could be accomplished only with the assistance of the United States. He thought that the Chiefs could very well have stated that if the Zapata Plan was adopted and there was not absolute control of the air, that it would fail. He felt that this could have been more forcibly said than it was.

e. Question 6. Was it understood that control of the air was considered essential to the success of the landing?

He did understand that control of the air was important but he did not believe it to be absolutely essential. If he had, then he would have launched the D-Day strikes.

f. Question 7. What were the circumstances surrounding the cancellation of the D-Day air strikes? How serious was the decision viewed? What was the understanding about pre-landing strikes?

Mr. Rusk had talked with the President in regard to the D-Day strikes and in connection with the activities in the United Nations and the strong recommendations of Mr. Stevenson. He felt, in retrospect, that the decision to cancel the strikes should probably not have been made, but he felt that the case for making the strikes was perhaps not recommended forcibly enough, although he understood why General Cabell would not want to dispute the Secretary of State after the President had made a tentative decision. He was very open minded on this and very fair.

g. Question 8. What was the understanding as to the ability of the landing force to pass to a guerrilla status in an emergency? To what extent did this factor influence approval of the operations?

He certainly had understood that the landing force could pass to guerrilla status and it greatly influenced his thinking of the whole operation.

h. Question 9. What was the understanding of the ammunition situation by the end of April 18?

He realized that there was a shortage of ammunition on the 18th of April, but just how acute it was, of course, he did not know. He realized that there was a long delay in communications and that the situation was never clear here as to exactly what was happening. Things were ordered done and it took a long time to find out that they were actually done or whether they were modified.

i. Question 10. What degree of non-attribution was sought and why? Were the operational disadvantages arising from some of the restrictions imposed by the efforts to achieve non-attribution clearly presented and understood?

Before the operation there was every effort made to keep the situation covert, with no attribution being possible for United States forces. The second part of the question I don't think he answered nor did he answer the rest of the questions because the conversation turned to the proposal of General Taylor on the establishment of a Cold War Chairman working group.

[Here follows discussion of the broader implications of organizing paramilitary operations.]

## **220. Memorandum From the Secretary of Defense's Special Assistant (Yarmolinsky) to Secretary of Defense McNamara**

Washington, May 18, 1961.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Yarmolinsky Files, Cuban Volunteer Program. Confidential.

### **SUBJECT**

Memorandum of Conversation

A meeting was called today at 11:00 A.M. by Mr. Richard Goodwin to consider the status of the Cuban exiles program now being developed. The following were present: Mr. Richard Goodwin, Mr. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., from the White House; Dr. Arturo Morales, Liaison Officer for State with the Cuban Revolutionary Council, Mr. Leon Uhlman from Attorney General's Office, Commissioner of Social Security, Mr. William Mitchell, from HEW; Mr. James M. Quigley from the Office of Education and Mr. Adam Yarmolinsky and Mr. Maurice Mountain from Defense.

Mr. Goodwin said there were three problems to be considered; first, the general program for exiles; second, relations with the Revolutionary Council and third, what sort of support might be given to any possible covert activities of the exile group. Only the first two items, however, were discussed.

For the time being, Mr. Goodwin says, we are to deal only with the present Revolutionary Council and on an open basis, both because it will simplify our relations with the exiles and because it may have the effect of keeping them somewhat unified. This means we are to work with Miro Cardona and consult with him and his associates before taking any measures affecting the exiles. In this connection the primacy of the Department of State is to be recognized, with Dr. Morales the individual at State through whom we should work. There is no intention of having Dr. Morales handle all details, but it is desired that he be kept informed and his concurrence obtained on any significant actions.

The program outlined by HEW is one of relief and resettlement with language training to be added. It was

indicated that funds could be made available either through the foreign aid bill or the HEW budget. A decision on this, Mr. Goodwin indicated, would be reached within a week.

Mr. Quigley reported an estimated cost of \$400 to \$600.00 per trainee for 8 weeks of intensive English language training. Mr. Mitchell said that any needed subsistence support of the trainees could be tied in with HEW's cash assistance program. Although no specific location was determined for conducting such training there were some expressions of disapproval of the idea of using vacant Army facilities. Mr. Mitchell, in particular, stressed the general objection to anything resembling a concentration camp.

In general the Defense presentation indicated that other than for language training and some questions on security which are yet to be resolved there appear to be no obstacles to carrying out a program of accepting volunteers in the armed services./1/

/1/In a note to Yarmolinsky on May 26, General Lansdale warned that past experience indicated that the major obstacle to accepting foreign volunteers into the U.S. armed forces might be the minimum mental and physical qualifications established by the armed forces. (Ibid.)

Defense was asked to provide as expeditiously as possible authoritative information on the methods used and problems encountered in the language training of Puerto Rican volunteers at Fort Buchanan. This information is being obtained now.

Mr. Mountain of Defense will join Dr. Morales tomorrow when he meets with representatives from the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

AY

## **221. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 18, 1961.

//Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Cuba, Subjects, Taylor Report. Secret; Eyes Only; Ultrasensitive. No drafter is indicated on the source text, but it was probably Colonel Tarwater. The meeting was the 17th in the series conducted by the Cuba Study Group and was held at the Pentagon. The participants in the meeting included Taylor, Kennedy, Dulles, Burke, and General Lemnitzer. Notes on concluding testimony by two leaders of the Cuban exile community are not printed. A note on the source text reads: "The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made."

General Lemnitzer

General Lemnitzer: The thing I would like to say at the very beginning is that I consider the JCS role was one of appraisal, evaluation, offering of constructive criticism, and assisting CIA in looking at the training and detailed plans. Defense participated in the role of support.

Question: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late January?

General Lemnitzer: Well, we prepared a plan of action for Cuba and forwarded it to the Secretary of Defense. There's some question of what happened to it up in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. I did discuss it with Dean Rusk and Mr. Dulles at one of the high level Governmental meetings on the 22nd of January. Several attempts were made by General Gray, at his level, to interest State and CIA in preparing a national plan based on the Trinidad concept. State was pretty receptive, but the people at CIA were not quite as receptive because they

were involved in planning this operation and were already pretty well under way, as a result of a previous decision taken way back in March 17, 1960.

Question: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of Trinidad and Zapata?

General Lemnitzer: Well, Trinidad first. Assuming control of the air, we felt that the landing could be effective against a light opposition which was the most that was anticipated in that area, but like all other considerations, the ultimate effect centered upon the uprisings that would be generated throughout the islands and the reinforcements which would be gravitating toward this particular beachhead.

Question: Control of the air--what did that mean to you?

General Lemnitzer: It meant that the air plan would succeed in knocking out the limited facilities available to Castro.

Question: 100%?

General Lemnitzer: Not 100%, but a great majority of the aircraft.

Question: How could you deal with any remaining aircraft, since you had only B-26s?

General Lemnitzer: It was expected that the initial strikes would be generally successful, since Castro's aircraft were concentrated on several fields. Following the initial strike, it would be a matter of matching the aircraft that were allocated to this plan against what remained of Castro's aircraft.

Question: In recurring strikes thereafter?

General Lemnitzer: That's right. We didn't intend to stop with just the strike on D-Day.

Question: It seems to me that several times there was a confidence in 100% control of the air and this just never happens.

General Lemnitzer: I never heard of a 100% success. On the other hand, you didn't have too many aircraft, and if we did some of the things that were anticipated and one important thing that I haven't heard discussed, the question of the diversionary landing has not received the attention that it deserves. Having been involved in this type of operation during the war, we always put great stress on diverting the enemy. This was a very important part of the Cuba plan but, unfortunately, it didn't go. When you only have one diversionary attack to attract the enemy's attention to another area and it doesn't get in, this is very detrimental to the over-all success of the plan.

Statement: There was a feeling that a 100% job would be done on Castro's air force, which just doesn't happen.

General Lemnitzer: I wouldn't go along with the idea that there was a feeling there would be 100% success in any kind of an operation.

Statement: This is Colonel Hawkins' reply to a message: "Since the plan called for the destruction of Castro's aircraft, there seemed to be no point in putting anti-aircraft guns on the ships."

General Lemnitzer: I inquired as to what machine guns, or anti-aircraft equipment they had aboard the ships, and they mentioned the 50 caliber guns, and so on, and this seemed reasonable for the type operation that was envisaged.

Question: Did the Chiefs approve Zapata?

General Lemnitzer: I don't regard our actions as approval as such--I'd like to make clear that we have supported the thing, but we didn't consider that it was within our purview to approve the plan. However, we did believe the plan was feasible, therefore, the plan was all right to go.

Question: Was there any question about the feasibility of the plan in your mind?

General Lemnitzer: The guerrilla aspects of the Trinidad Plan were much more obtainable than the Zapata Plan. We felt that in the Zapata Plan the same importance was attached to the whole air operation to the extent that the landing could be effected and the beachhead held for a period of time, but there again the success of this plan was dependent upon the full gravitation of guerrilla forces to the beach area.

Question: The ultimate success, or were uprisings a pre-condition to getting ashore?

General Lemnitzer: No, not for getting ashore. Ultimate success would be determined by the invasion serving as a catalyst for further action on the part of the anti-Castro guerrillas or elements throughout Cuba.

Question: By ultimate success, do you mean the overthrow of Castro?

General Lemnitzer: Yes. I never did count on an indefinite maintenance of this beachhead. When you get committed to a beach, the question of ultimate success depends on whether you can pump in resources faster than the enemy can build up around you. I think we generally believed that the establishment of the beachhead would constitute a trigger to set off a series of other events. It was never intended that this entire force would lodge themselves on the beach and maintain themselves there indefinitely since there were no reinforcements coming in.

Question: Was it anticipated that the military would be able to land in force on the beachhead and maintain the beachhead for a period of time?

General Lemnitzer: That is correct, and if the enemy forces built up faster than they had planned, they would go into the Escambray Mountains under the Trinidad Plan.

Question: How about Zapata?

General Lemnitzer: It didn't stand out so loud and clear, but never-theless the same general type of ultimate action was contemplated. There were three alternatives in Zapata, after they got on the beach, if it looked as though the uprising would not occur. First, we were in a guerrilla type country. Second, the Escambrays were quite a long way away, but they could be used as a guerrilla base. Third, if we succeeded in getting rid of most of the enemy air, the force could have been withdrawn and reassembled for possibly another type of attack somewhere else.

Question: Do you think they could have been withdrawn without overt U.S. support?

General Lemnitzer: I didn't regard this as a single beachhead. This particular plan never involved a 36-mile beachhead with 1400 men--that would be absurd. Green Beach and Red Beach and Blue Beach were small lodgments that never involved a continuous perimeter.

Statement: In talking to a lot of the operators I find that they felt that they really had impassable obstacles and that anyone coming into the area had to come down the roads.

General Lemnitzer: That is correct. There was no intention that the beachhead would include this whole area.

Question: With regard to the question of being in guerrilla territory, was any independent study made?

General Lemnitzer: Well, so far as I was concerned, I didn't go beyond the information we got from the CIA and from my own staff, that this was an area in which the guerrillas had operated for over 100 years.

Statement: I think this was considered guerrilla territory about 100 years ago and then about 60 years ago, but not recently.

General Lemnitzer: There are few people living in it and few roads, and so on.

Statement: There is no place in which you can maintain yourself in that swamp.

General Lemnitzer: I suppose the same thing could be said about the Escambray Mountains. I'd like to make clear that we did not like this area as well as the Trinidad area, and one of the reasons was that it was more difficult to break out of there.

Statement: You mention the preference for Trinidad--I'm not sure whether you're aware of it, but the Secretary of Defense apparently never appreciated that point. In fact, he had the impression that the Chiefs thought that Zapata was the better of the two plans.

General Lemnitzer: I just don't understand how he got that impression. I can show you in my notes on two accounts where I called it to his attention. We also put it in writing that "of the alternate plans, alternative three is considered the most feasible and likely to accomplish the objective. None of the alternates involved are as feasible and likely to accomplish the objectives as the present paramilitary plan." I don't see how you can say it any clearer than that.

Statement: I think it's just a question of too many papers and being confused.

General Lemnitzer: I'd like to go back to your question about guerrilla territory. This Zapata area is not much different from that in Vietnam, where they're having the devil's own time chasing the guerrillas through the swamps.

Statement: There are several problems. First, in comparison with the area in Vietnam, there isn't an expanse where these people could move. This is more limited. Furthermore, the towns and villages are on the outside where the invasion forces couldn't reach. The second problem is that these people were never trained or told that they were supposed to become guerrillas.

General Lemnitzer: I don't agree with that because they were trained as guerrillas for 9 months.

Statement: That was until November, 1960. There were only about 300 of them at that time, but then the great influx of about 1,000 came in after that time, and the great influx never received any instruction in guerrilla training.

General Lemnitzer: It was our understanding of the plan without any doubt that moving into the guerrilla phase was one of the important elements of the plan, and any idea that the Chiefs considered that they were making an indefinite lodgment on the beachhead is not right. Every bit of information that we were able to gather from the CIA was that the guerrilla aspects were always considered as a main element of the plan.

Question: What I can't understand is when it was presented to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, why didn't it receive a great deal of attention?

General Lemnitzer: That was regarded as one of the alternatives if they weren't successful.

Statement: General, if you look at that area and talk with anybody who has been there, you couldn't possibly become guerrillas in that damn place.

General Lemnitzer: I don't see why not.

Statement: Where are you going to get the water and the food? It's not like Vietnam. They sent helicopters over and shot all these people down.

General Lemnitzer: In Vietnam, for example, they don't get any food. They sustain themselves in an area just like this.

Statement: As I understood it, they did, that's why they put the wire around the villages.

General Lemnitzer: They put the wire around the villages to keep the food in, but there was also the possibility that these fellows would establish themselves as guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains or in the swamps and they would receive air drops.

Admiral Burke: Guerrillas couldn't sustain themselves in any of these areas until they got support from the populace. Supplies would have to be carried in to them until they received support from the populace.

Statement: The President had the same impression that you did--that if worst came to worst, this group could become guerrillas, but as we've gotten into it, it's become obvious that this possibility never really existed.

General Lemnitzer: Then we were badly misinformed.

Statement: Without training and instruction, they would never have gone guerrilla.

Mr. Dulles: I wouldn't wholly buy that. These people had a cadre of leaders--20% to 30% would be the leaders. They knew about guerrilla warfare. The guerrillas in World War II never had any training until they got into a guerrilla operation.

General Gray: It was always considered that the most feasible action was withdrawal from the beach by sea. This came up at one White House meeting when Mr. Bissell made the statement, that if we do have to pull out, the best course of action would be to withdraw from the beach.

Statement: But they had no plan to withdraw by sea. They had no capability to withdraw by sea, except as provided by the U.S. Navy.

General Lemnitzer: Well, it's a question of the time of withdrawal.

Statement: It still isn't clear to me how you're going to get them off if you wait until they are buttoned down on the beaches.

General Lemnitzer: Certainly as far as withdrawals are concerned, and I said this many times when the operation was on, the most difficult operation in the world is the withdrawal under enemy pressure from a beachhead. But that was not the kind of withdrawal that was anticipated, as far as I was concerned.

Question: That's the picture that shaped up and that's one of the unhappy aspects of the picture. Let's go back to Trinidad. The JCS said that Trinidad had a fair chance of success. What was your estimate of the feasibility of Zapata?

General Lemnitzer: Still feasible, but less so than Trinidad. We considered Zapata feasible. I could put words together and say that we said that Trinidad had a fair chance and that Zapata had less than a fair chance, but actually we felt that Zapata had a fair chance but of a lower grade than Trinidad.

Question: If the Chiefs had had any question as to feasibility, the Chiefs would have spoken up. Is that a fair statement?

General Lemnitzer: I'm sure they would.

Question: To what extent had the Chiefs made a personal study of the final operations plan?

General Lemnitzer: The final operations plan was received two days prior to the final D-Day and it was too late for a personal study. Portions of Zapata were proposed on four occasions and approved on the basis of explanations that we got from the working group.

General Taylor: Is it fair to say that you gave it de facto approval on a piecemeal basis?

General Lemnitzer: No other solution was feasible at that time. The rainy season was approaching and one thing that I would like to mention here was the fact that they had 100 MIG pilots being trained in Czechoslovakia, and we didn't know when they were going to be returned, and our thinking was strongly influenced by this fact.

Question: Was any discussion given as to what would happen if a few MIGs appeared?

General Lemnitzer: No, all we could do was to go on the basis of the information we had that the MIGs had not yet arrived. We also felt that if this operation was going to go, it should go before Castro received two Soviet destroyers that we understood were being delivered.

Question: What would have happened if you had had a couple of MIGs there at the time?

General Lemnitzer: Their appearance would have pretty well complicated the operation.

Question: Were any steps taken in order to prepare for that possibility?

General Lemnitzer: None, other than the possibility that you might go to the Navy and ask the Navy for overt support, but that was very unlikely.

Question: What was the Chiefs' view on the suitability of the terrain?

General Lemnitzer: We discussed that somewhat. It was considered not as suitable as Trinidad for the reasons that I indicated. Their success depended upon their ability to seize the approaches to the swamp areas. Now the size of the beachhead question was emphasized before. There was a plan to put lodgments in the entry ways into the swamp area. The size of the area was dictated by the necessity of protecting the airfields, and to prevent access to the swamp. The large area wasn't considered desirable but acceptable if the approaches were held and control of the air was established.

Statement: When you commented on Zapata the first time, the air plan was for D-Day strikes only, but with no limitations.

General Lemnitzer: That's correct.

Statement: Later there were limited strikes on D-2 and limited strikes on D-Day. Would you comment on this watering down of the air plan? Were the Chiefs satisfied with this?



General Lemnitzer: The D-2 strikes were added for non-military reasons. We would have preferred to do without the D-2 air strikes. They were never intended to accomplish the destruction of the Castro air force. They were to lend plausibility to the story that the D-Day strikes had been launched from within Cuba.

Question: Did you object to the D-2 air strikes?

General Lemnitzer: No, we did not object. We would have preferred not to have them, but for non-military reasons they were considered to be of great importance and they were approved.

Statement: They could have been quite disastrous because they could have alerted Castro and he could have dispersed his aircraft.

General Lemnitzer: Yes, but he didn't.

Statement: Yes, but that was just luck.

General Lemnitzer: Yes, but here again you get into the old battle of getting into an operation of this kind covertly, political and psychological considerations against military considerations. My conclusion here is, which I'll explain a little bit later, you have to be very careful about diluting military considerations in order to attain non-attribution and non-association with the United States.

Question: Do you feel that you or the Joint Chiefs were the defenders of the military aspects of the operation, or was CIA?

General Lemnitzer: The defenders of the military parts of the plan were the people who produced it and that was CIA. We were providing assistance, and assuring the feasibility of the plan.

General Taylor: What led to the idea that it was necessary to maintain that all of the air strikes emanated from Cuba?

General Lemnitzer: We were strong for the Trinidad Plan. However, about the middle of March during a meeting at the White House,<sup>/1/</sup> Mr. Mann was gravely concerned about the impact throughout the Latin American area of these air strikes coming from outside of Cuba. He hammered at the point repeatedly and wanted to know if there wasn't some area in Cuba where they could land on a ready-made area. At the conclusion of this meeting CIA was directed to review the whole idea and come up with alternative landing areas other than Trinidad, because Trinidad didn't have the kind of airstrip that was required to provide plausibility to the story that the aircraft had come from within Cuba. This was an important consideration.

<sup>/1/</sup>An apparent reference to the meeting that took place on March 11; see Document 59.

Question: Was this approved beyond Mann?

General Lemnitzer: He was the one who expressed the views. I don't know how much Secretary Rusk or any of the other people were involved. As a matter of fact, it was a disappointment to me, because I thought we had a plan that had been thoroughly worked out and hated to see another delay and another complete evaluation of the island. It caused some concern both in my own group and in CIA. On March 16, when we had another meeting<sup>/2/</sup> and were discussing the Zapata Plan, Mr. Mann liked the Zapata Plan because of the airfield and indicated that it provided us with a plausible denial. I indicated that the JCS had gone over the alternatives and didn't think that any of them were as good as the original Trinidad Plan, but of the three to be considered, Zapata was the most achievable. Then I said this, that it was not clear to me why Zapata was any more acceptable from the political point of view than the Trinidad Plan. Whereupon Mr. Mann replied that it gave plausible denial to

the launching of air operations from outside Cuba. He said we needed a facade behind which we could deny that these attacks came out of the United States, Guatemala, or Nicaragua.

/2/The Zapata plan was discussed on March 15 and March 16; see Documents 65 and 66.

Question: Why were they so sensitive about the fair name of Guatemala and Nicaragua?

General Lemnitzer: Well, his concern was how much this particular operation might upset or antagonize the other Latin American nations by doing violence to one of the members of the OAS. He was deeply worried about the impact of this type operation conducted with our support and assistance which he felt was generally known, and he was especially worried about the air aspects of the plan.

Question: With regard to the D-2 and the D-Day air strikes both of which were to be limited, did the Joint Chiefs feel they had an adequate plan?

General Lemnitzer: I won't say they regarded it as adequate; it was a reasonable air plan. I'd like to point out that the D-2 air strike was never expected to wipe out Castro's entire force. It was the D-Day strike which was the important one. The D-Day strike involved fragmentation bombs, napalm, 50 caliber machine guns. This was an all-out effort and one of the critical aspects of the whole operation. The air plans for Trinidad and Zapata were the same. They were the same for the reason that the targets were identical. In the examination of the Zapata Plan, we were merely looking at the location of the landing. The same number of aircraft were on the three essential airfields and the air plan was not considered to be affected at all as far as the D-Day strikes were concerned.

Statement: I would like to make two points: First, there were three plans considered and the objection to one of the plans was the fact that the air strip wasn't adequate. That same objection was not made in connection with the Zapata Plan. The second thing is that the Zapata Plan as it was originally considered, anticipated capturing this airport and then have the planes take off from the airport.

General Lemnitzer: No, sir. That's wrong.

Statement: I'm just going by what the paper/<sup>3</sup>/ says.

/3/This briefing paper is not further identified.

General Lemnitzer: Are you saying that these aircraft were supposed to fly from Nicaragua and then land and load up and take off and bomb and so on?

Statement: I don't know. I wasn't there.

General Gray: I think it's wrong to base that whole Zapata Plan on one paper because this was just the first cut at the Zapata Plan. After that the Zapata Plan was considered again and again over a period of time, and all this became very clear as it went on.

Statement: Yes, I understand, but we're just talking about the beginning. The important thing is that you didn't turn one plan down because of the air strike situation, and yet you did turn another plan down because the air strike situation wasn't adequate. You didn't turn Zapata down because the air strikes weren't considered adequate, and yet the air strikes consisted of taking off after dawn.

General Lemnitzer: I didn't think there was any material change in the air plan. The targets were the same regardless of where you'd land. On D-Day the air plan involved going after the Cuban air force; thereafter, they would take under attack any movements of troops to the area and they would attempt to knock out microwave

communications stations on which the Cuban national communications were largely dependent.

Question: What did you think would happen if you weren't 100% successful and didn't get a couple of T-33s?

General Lemnitzer: In war, you never expect 100% success. However, a couple of T-33s are not going to be decisive elements in an operation of this kind.

Question: Were there any comments or discussion about the T-33s in particular?

General Lemnitzer: I think I had information that they were armed, because we had been trying to get some kind of equipment against the Pathet Lao and were considering what the distribution of T-33s was around the world. We saw that some of them had been armed as reconnaissance planes and it was suspected that the Cuban air force had armed theirs--but they weren't bombers.

Statement: Yes, but they hit targets.

General Lemnitzer: Yes, but the T-33s didn't sink any ships.

Statement: Yes, they did.

Statement: No, not the T-33s. I think they were Sea Furies. A Sea Fury was the one that hit the Rio.

General Lemnitzer: I have a long list of the reasons why we preferred Trinidad to Zapata: It was more distant from Havana, the closeness to the Escambray Mountains, there was only one access road into the area, the nearest Cuban army unit of any size was 100 miles away, and considerable support from dissidents was expected in that area.

Question: What was the understanding of the importance of control of the air?

General Lemnitzer: Absolutely vital to success.

Question: Were the Chiefs satisfied with the plan of pre-D-Day strikes?

General Lemnitzer: We first talked about some strikes on the day before D-Day, but the D-Day strikes were regarded as critical. We were particularly interested in napalm, or I was, because I've seen the effects of napalm on aircraft when they're parked close together; also fragmentation bombs. Of course, elimination of the D-Day strike greatly eliminated the insurance against attack from the Cuban air force.

Question: Were the Joint Chiefs of Staff involved in the cancellation of the D-Day air strikes?

General Lemnitzer: They were not. It came as a surprise to me.

Question: When did you hear about it?

General Lemnitzer: At 2 o'clock on the morning of the 17th of April when General Gray and General Wheeler came to my quarters on another matter. They said they had received a call from CIA urging that they get air cover for the beachhead on the 17th. It was then that I heard that they had cancelled the D-Day air strikes. On that occasion I strongly supported putting U.S. Naval cover over the beachhead. I directed that Admiral Dennison be prepared to provide this cover. However, I recognized the major political implications involved and directed General Wheeler and General Gray to consult with the Department of State on this matter.

Question: Was the request for air cover an attempt to neutralize some of the effect of the cancellation of the

D-Day strikes?

General Lemnitzer: The way it came to me was that it was an urgent call for putting U.S. air cover over the beachhead.

Statement: Maybe General Gray can tell us.

General Gray: At the time I was called over to the CIA, it was about 1 o'clock in the morning. They informed me then that the air strikes were cancelled. Then General Cabell asked me if I would see what I could do to get air cover from the carrier. We eventually got permission for the Early Warning but not for the air cover.

Question: What was the understanding of the JCS as to the action of the landing force if it effected a lodgment but no uprisings occurred?

General Lemnitzer: Those were the three alternatives. Go guerrilla in the swamps; conduct guerrilla operations from the Escambray; or be withdrawn.

Question: What was the understanding of the ability of the force to go guerrilla?

General Lemnitzer: It might not have been ideal country but it had been used, and it was believed to be feasible guerrilla country.

Question: Did the JCS examine the feasibility of this course of action?

General Lemnitzer: No, no specific study. The Working Group studied the feasibility and presented it to the JCS on several occasions as being feasible.

Question: What did they think of the effect of the swamp on the operation?

General Lemnitzer: We felt that it assisted defense but it was also a double-edged sword--it aided defense but also made it more difficult to break out.

Question: How did the JCS follow the course of the operation?

General Lemnitzer: The Secretary of Defense and I attended briefing sessions held in the special War Room which we set up for this operation. Then Service liaison officers briefed their respective Chiefs with information from the War Room. There was a continual flow of information from the War Room and CIA. It came to our War Room by telephone calls, and messengers from their war room to this one.

Question: There was no electronic gear?

General Gray: Many messages came by teletype and some by phone, and then we had an officer on liaison duty with CIA.

General Lemnitzer: The Joint Staff met on the 17th and 19th of April and considered important action messages. On the 18th, Admiral Burke and I were at the White House for most of the day in conference, and we followed the operations from there. That's in general how we handled it.

Question: Would you say this was satisfactory?

General Lemnitzer: If we were running the operation, no. But we were in a support role. We were primarily concerned with logistic support. We arranged a rather elaborate extensive logistic support plan. We envisioned

arming a hell of a lot of Cubans if the uprisings occurred. Our logistic plan was 4 or 5 times larger than the original. The Secretary of Defense was particularly interested in being sure that they had all the support that they could possibly require.

Question: What was the understanding as to the ammunition situation at the end of D+1?

General Lemnitzer: Our understanding was that it was critical. However, we knew there was ammunition on the LCIs and the LCU's, and there was an air drop planned by CIA on the night of D+1.

Question: There was one on D-Day night and one planned for D+1?

General Lemnitzer: Yes.

Admiral Burke: We also tried to get some C-130s.

General Lemnitzer: That is correct. We had some C-130s over at Kelly Air Force Base but they never got into the action.

Question: Did the Chairman know of the flight of the ships?

General Lemnitzer: I sure did. I knew of all the attempts by CIA and CINCLANT to try and round them up.

Question: What recommendations were made regarding U.S. help after D-Day?

General Lemnitzer: Well, Arleigh and I were over at the White House when the question of using U.S. destroyers to pick up people off the beach was discussed. The feasibility and the need was discussed right there, and the decision was made to order them in.

Admiral Burke: We didn't know what was going on at the beach so we asked for reconnaissance, and the reconnaissance was approved.

General Lemnitzer: The afternoon or night of D-Day 4 B-26s were made available which we had been preparing for the Laos operations. Then 4 more were made available on D+1. In addition to that, we offered 5 T-33s and CIA accepted 4. On D+1 action was initiated to use C-130s in dropping ammunition on the beachhead. The aircraft were moved to Kelly, the packing crews were on their way, and the crews were set up for the drops on the night of D+1 but they never went into action.

Question: Why weren't the T-33s turned over to CIA on D+1?

Mr. King: I believe it may have been a question of getting pilots. We were short of pilots by D+1.

Question: When did you sense that the beachhead might be going down?

General Lemnitzer: On the morning of D+2, I made a comment to the President that this was the time for this outfit to go guerrilla.

Question: How were your comments received?

General Lemnitzer: I received a surprise when Mr. Bissell said they were not prepared to go guerrilla.

Question: This was the first time you'd known about that?

General Lemnitzer: Yes.

Question: That being the case, was there any discussion that we were going to lose the war or we were going to have to use the U.S. Navy? Was it realized that they were accepting defeat if that decision wasn't made?

General Lemnitzer: I'm not sure it was put in quite those terms.

Mr. Kennedy: Could I add something? I don't think there was complete information--all the messages showing the critical situation were not transmitted to the President. However, there was general knowledge that there was a shortage of ammunition. We were told on D-Day that the ships had gone out 15 miles and they intended to come back in that night. The President had said that day that he'd rather be called an aggressor than a bum, so he was prepared to go as far as necessary to assure success, but we were always about 5 or 6 or 7 hours behind on our information. The next morning on D+1 we knew the ships hadn't come in for some reason we couldn't understand, and there was a serious ammunition shortage. At this time there was no assurance whether it would be possible to hold the beachhead even if the Navy was ordered in. So at one o'clock Admiral Burke was instructed to send Navy pilots over to reconnoiter and send back a message stating whether they could maintain the beachhead. The message in reply stated there was no fighting going on, so there wasn't any point in going in that they could see. The next morning there was a message saying the beach had collapsed and they wanted to evacuate the men, so the President gave the order for the destroyers to go in, but by this time it was impossible to evacuate the men because the beachhead wasn't large enough, so then it was too late to do anything.

General Lemnitzer: It wasn't just the question of committing U.S. forces and saving the war--it wasn't that simple. It was question of whether or not the Navy could save it if you sent them in.

Mr. Kennedy: We didn't have any idea what the situation was there. The President said he used to walk around on that White House lawn thinking he'd like to do something if he knew what was going on.

General Lemnitzer: This is just like all actions. The Commander didn't have the kind of information that he'd like to have had.

Question: What we're talking about is the difficulty, in fact, the impossibility of running a military operation from Washington. Was this ever recognized during the preliminary considerations?

General Lemnitzer: The difficulty is that no Commander could have made these decisions down there because these were decisions to commit the U.S., and the only place that decision could be made was right here by the Commander-in-Chief. No matter where you had your command ship, you would still have to get the decision out of Washington because this was a decision to commit U.S. forces.

Statement: That's very true. But I thought you might have a number of representatives of different Departments on a first-class ship with first-class communications.

General Lemnitzer: But you would still have to rely on communications from the beach.

Statement: The men on the Blagar had a pretty good picture of what was taking place, but that picture never was transmitted up here.

General Lemnitzer: That's certainly correct.

Question: Were the JCS satisfied to have CIA conduct this operation?

General Lemnitzer: As far as we were concerned, the job was a covert operation and the JCS couldn't legally conduct a covert operation.

General Taylor: I couldn't find that you or anybody else ever raised the question whether or not CIA should have run this operation.

General Lemnitzer: This thing started back in March of 1960, when this assignment of responsibility was made. I didn't get into it until many months after all of this had been decided.

Mr. Dulles: I think some JCS representative was at that meeting at the White House.

General Lemnitzer: I don't know. I wasn't Chairman at that time. Maybe Nate/4/ was there. I was not there and I didn't know a thing about it, but nevertheless there were lots of times when various people indicated that this was something the military ought to run. But again it was a question of the dis-association of the United States.

/4/Reference is to General Nathan F. Twining, USAF, who preceded Lemnitzer as Chairman of the JCS.

Question: Well, the JCS could have been just as dis-associated as CIA was?

General Lemnitzer: How could you?

Statement: Didn't you turn over the training of these people to people from Defense? The only difference would be the responsibility for the execution of the plan.

General Lemnitzer: That's one of the things we have to look at in the United States Government right now. Are we going to run this thing on a covert basis--I think we were trapped by words, by covert.

Question: Do you agree that an operation can be covert and still be conducted by Defense?

General Lemnitzer: Yes, we can. We've conducted some. I think you can do it with CIA provided you provide them with the military staff that they need.

Statement: I think they had a lot of staff and they had what they needed.

Mr. Dulles: I thought we did. We had 38 trainers down in Guatemala that you supplied.

General Lemnitzer: Yes, we did.

Question: We would like to get your views on how you think paramilitary operations should be conducted in principle. Should we make the decision that covert operations of this sort be assigned to Defense?

General Lemnitzer: I think the answer to this question depends upon the size, the magnitude of the operation that is involved.

Statement: General Lemnitzer, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your ideas on where the line should be drawn with regard to covert operations.

General Lemnitzer: I don't see how you can have covert activities by armed forces. I think it's a contradiction in terms. We can have military people that are sheep-dipped and put them in an operation of this kind. But you can't just take any officer and say he's going to be sheep-dipped unless he volunteers for it. He has family problems. The military would have a hell of a time contracting these people.

Question: But there was no question of transferring it--no suggestion?

General Lemnitzer: No.

Question: What is your view of the accuracy of the evaluation of the effectiveness of Castro's force?

General Lemnitzer: The evaluation of the navy was accurate; the air force, fairly accurate--it was inaccurate as to pilots' capabilities, and also regarding the guns on the T-33s; concerning the army, I would say that the information was not accurate. My information was that most of the tanks were up around the Havana area, and how they moved their tanks down there that fast without having some in that area, I don't know and I haven't been able to get into it because I've been away, but I would say the navy information was accurate; the air force, fairly accurate; and the army and the militia not too accurate in terms of reaction time and capability.

Question: What impression did the JCS have of the likelihood of an uprising?

General Lemnitzer: We had no information. We went on CIA's analysis and it was reported that there was a good prospect. I remember Dick Bissell, evaluating this for the President, indicated there was sabotage, bombings, and there were also various groups that were asking or begging for arms and so forth. All they needed were arms and equipment, and the impression that we got was somewhat over-optimistic; particularly in light of measures that Castro took.

Question: Can defeat be properly attributed to any deficiency in the intelligence?

General Lemnitzer: I would say only to a degree. For example, the estimates of the possibility of the population rising up, and I don't think we estimated the effectiveness of Castro's control of the people.

Question: May I just mention the attitude most of us have on that now. This is related to the fact that no call to rise was given, and that this was withheld until they could be sure that these people had someplace to go for support, so the idea of the uprising was never really tried.

General Lemnitzer: I've seen all kinds of reports about the number of people they've put under arrest, in the stockades and so forth, which would have certainly inhibited any uprising.

Question: How should a paramilitary operation be fitted into Governmental machinery?

General Lemnitzer: I think we ought to have a national plan for any one of these situations like we have for Laos. We have a man now who is Mr. Vietnam. He does the coordinating activities for the Department and much more effectively than was ever done in the past.

Statement: We have developed a little chart of the kind of things that we are considering. Would you like to make a comment on this?

General Lemnitzer: This is about what I have in mind. With a permanent Chairman with no other kind of job, you have the representation from the Departments; knowing the nature of the operation ahead of time and determining which department has the paramount responsibility, the Chairman should be selected accordingly.

Statement: We visualized that this framework would be applicable to any situation.

General Lemnitzer: No, I don't think this would be practical. For instance, right now. We're enmeshed in Vietnam, Thailand and Korea. You can be Chairman of just so many things. No more than about one if you're going to do the job right. I think you'd have to have more than just one Chairman.

Statement: This over-all Chairman would get everything all straightened out, say here's your problem and send it to the President to make the decision.



General Lemnitzer: Secretary McNamara has some strong views about this, but I pointed out repeatedly that I had seen this tried and the Chairman can make the decision and then suddenly the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense finds that a big chunk of his resources have been allocated for something when he wants to put them someplace else, particularly when you get into the foreign policy field.

General Taylor: Then you feel it is good in theory but not in practice?

General Lemnitzer: That's right.

Question: Do you feel that the Chiefs discharged their responsibilities as military advisors to the President in the course of this operation?

General Lemnitzer: Yes, I do feel that the Chiefs discharged their responsibility.

Question: I mean as military advisors?

General Lemnitzer: Yes, I do.

Question: Were the Chiefs ever consulted as to whether or not this operation was really necessary?

General Lemnitzer: This question was resolved way back in the previous administration.

Question: How do you feel situations should be handled when only the Chairman is present at a conference?

General Lemnitzer: Many times the Chairman has to go to an NSC Meeting and questions come up which he has to answer from a military point of view what the Chiefs would have answered if they were in body, but you can't have everybody at that level all the time. I think the Chairman has to speak for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, generally speaking. On special occasions, I think all the Chiefs should be present.

## **222. Memorandum of Conversation**

Washington, May 19, 1961, 4 p.m.

//Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OASD (C) A Files: FRC 71 A 2896, Yarmolinsky Files, Cuban Volunteer Program. Secret. Drafted by Mountain on May 22.

### **SUBJECT**

Meeting with Representatives of the Cuban Revolutionary Council

At the request of Dr. Morales Carrion, Dept. of State, a meeting of representatives of several departments of the U.S. Government with representatives of the Cuban Revolutionary Council was held at the Department of State at 4:00 p.m., 19 May 1961.

The participants for the Revolutionary Council were:

Mr. Varona--Military Affairs

Mr. Hevia--Foreign Affairs

Mr. Maceo--Welfare

Mr. Carrillo--Finances & Propaganda

Mr. Ray--Underground Activities

Mr. Aragon--Secretary to Mr. Miro Cardona, who is ill in Miami

On the part of the United States, in addition to Dr. Morales there were several representatives of the Department of State chiefly from the Caribbean area and the following:

Mr. James Hennessey--Immigration and Naturalization Service, representing Dept. of Justice

Mr. Leon Uhlmann--Office of the Attorney General

Mr. James Quigley--Assistant Secretary, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare

Mr. William Mitchell--Commissioner of Social Security

Mr. Maurice J. Mountain--Policy Planning Staff, ISA, Dept. of Defense

After introductory remarks by both Dr. Morales and Mr. Hevia to the effect that this was an initial meeting to bring the Council and the United States representatives together in order to see what needs to be and can be done from here on to establish a free and democratic Cuba, Mr. Hevia raised the first problem.

He said that extra planes were needed to get the people out of Cuba who have papers to leave, but who are daily turned away by PanAm because no space is available. PanAm carries out about 100 per day and they are booked up through October of this year. Each day, Mr. Hevia said, as many as 500 are turned away. Mr. Brown of the Department of State was assigned the task of finding out what could be done about the matter.

The second problem was that of obtaining waivers of visas for members of the underground who, for their own safety, should get out of Cuba. These people do not qualify for waivers on ordinary grounds since they have no relatives already in the U.S. When the discussion disclosed that a figure of about 40 people were involved, the problem did not appear to be insuperable to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and Mr. James Hennessey agreed to see what could be done.

The third problem was how to get those Cubans who were now living in various Embassies in Havana, where they had sought asylum, to the United States without having them travel first to the country affording them asylum. The Council was aware of the fact that a Cuban granted asylum in, for example, the Argentine Embassy could claim safe-conduct only to Argentina. They wished to know how such people could be brought to the United States without first having to go to Argentina. The Department of State will study the problem.

The fourth problem was how the Council could dispatch its representatives--teachers, workers, etc.--on official missions abroad and be sure that they would be readmitted to the U.S. on their return. The status of the Cubans as refugees and the absence of customary documentation for reentry now makes it technically impossible for them to return to the United States once they leave. Mr. Hennessey and the Department of State will try to find a solution to this problem.

The fifth problem was what to do about those persons who held four-year visas for the United States which are about to expire. Dr. Maceo explained that he personally was in that position since his four-year visa would expire in another five or six weeks. Mr. Hennessey indicated that this was related to the previous problem and that he would seek a solution for both.

The sixth problem was a question of whether the United States would bring before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights or the Organization of American States, or both, the charge against the Castro regime of inhuman treatment of its citizens. A representative of the Department of State suggested that there were a number of reasons why the United States should not bring this charge, and he suggested that the Council work with other Latin American States to have them take the initiative. He assured the Council that the United States would support such a move, provided the initiative came from some other country.

The seventh problem was a question of finances. First, the Council wanted to know about financial support for the refugees as a group; second, the special problem of survivors and families of the invasion force; and third, the financial support needed for future Council activities, particularly in the field of propaganda. They said that members of the invasion force had been paid \$175 per month with \$25 per month additional for each child. A total of about 2,400 fighters were involved. 1,000 are now prisoners, 200 are dead or missing, and another 1,200 have returned. They felt these payments should be continued so long as, for those who returned, they are not gainfully employed.

The Commissioner of Social Security, Mr. Mitchell, explained that the United States was now supplying cash assistance to the extent of \$100 per month per family, and there were several reasons why this would have to remain the maximum. In addition, he pointed out, the United States is providing surplus foodstuffs free, is making available free education, extensive health services, and resettlement costs for those for whom employment can be found. For unaccompanied children all costs for their complete care are assumed by the United States.

In the discussion which followed, there seemed to be some confusion as to who was paying the \$175 per month. The Council members said it was CIA, but it was not clear whether these payments had been cut off for all, or were continuing for some, or what their status was. It was clear, however, that both Mr. Quigley and Mr. Mitchell would take up the question of support for the survivors of those killed, missing or captured in the invasion. Mr. Varona estimated that the fighting force and their families together numbered about 10,000 people. In response to a question by Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Varona stated that he was not asking for support for those Cubans, resident in the United States, who travelled, sometimes from as far away as California, to join the invasion army. He had in mind only those Cuban refugees who had no other means of support. At this point in the discussion there was no further reference to support of the Council's activities.

The eighth problem was brought up by Mr. Ray who suggested a program should be set up at once and carried out vigorously to train doctors, engineers, public administration personnel. It became apparent that he was talking about a morale problem and that such training would be a morale booster to the extent that these people would feel they were training for a post-Castro Cuba. Mr. Mitchell responded to this question by pointing out the efforts that were being made to find employment for exiles who wished to utilize their skills and training in the United States. The Council reiterated their belief that a vigorous program to train people of this sort was needed and that it should be promoted in such a way as to improve the morale of the Cuban exiles.

The ninth problem was posed by Mr. Varona and was addressed to the representative of the Department of Defense. Mr. Varona stated that it was the firm purpose of the exile group to continue the fight to free Cuba and to bring about the downfall of the Castro regime. He delivered an increasingly impassioned statement ending it with the following question which, he said, was the most important of all with which they were concerned. In accomplishing their objective of ridding Cuba and the world of the Castro government, what help, when, where and in what form could they expect from the United States?

Mr. Mountain responded by saying that the question Mr. Varona had asked was a most serious one. He said that he believed there was no American who did not share the desire of the Council to see the establishment of a free and democratic Cuba. The answer to Mr. Varona's question, however, could only come from the highest levels of the U.S. Government, by which he meant the President and his principal advisers. He wished to assure Mr. Varona that the Department of Defense would do whatever the President and the high councils of the U.S.

Government demanded of it. However, it was not a question which the Department of Defense, alone, could answer.

Mr. Varona replied saying that he did not expect to get an answer, but that he wanted to bring this matter up at this initial meeting to emphasize the importance that they attach to this matter. Mr. Mountain answered that he understood Mr. Varona's purpose and that Mr. Varona could be assured that his question and the seriousness with which he raised it would be made known to the Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Mountain then went on to say that the Department of Defense was now working on the development of a program along the lines of Mr. Ray's suggestion about further training for Cuban exiles. He explained that for those among the exile group who would like to receive military training, a program by which they could be trained as individuals within the U.S. armed forces was being worked out. Mr. Hevia asked whether the trainees would be separated and scattered or whether they would train as a group. Mr. Mountain replied that it was the view of the Department of Defense that their training would be helped most by being placed within the established units of the U.S. armed forces.<sup>/1/</sup> The Council as a group took a dim view of any arrangement which would tend to split up the exile group. Mr. Ray said that the psychology of the Cuban group was more important than the efficiency of their training. He said it was absolutely necessary to keep them together, to keep their spirits up, to give them hope for the future, and to give some sense of purpose to their pursuits. He was against any program which would split them up. Dr. Morales entered the conversation by saying that we had apparently identified an area where there was an important difference of views and he was glad to see the Council express itself frankly and openly on the matter. He suggested that perhaps this was a matter which, having been identified, could now be taken up in another forum where the alternatives could be explored. The Council agreed. Mr. Varona said that if it was publicity that the Department of Defense was worried about, the same problem would exist if an attempt were made to train Cuban soldiers scattered throughout the U.S. forces.

<sup>/1/</sup>On May 26 Yarmolinsky, acting on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, circulated a plan for "Service of Cuban Volunteers in the U.S. Armed Forces" to the various branches of the armed services for comment. The plan was based on the assumption that the Cuban volunteers inducted would be spread throughout the services for training and incorporated into existing military formations. (Ibid.)

Mr. Maceo asked if the Defense program could make provision for keeping Cuban officers in training, and Mr. Hevia asked what provision could be made for military personnel in the age group over 26 but perhaps not older than 35 or 36. Mr. Maceo also asked what provision could be made for doctors in the armed forces.

Mr. Mountain said that the problem of training Cuban officers posed some special difficulties which were not easily solved; that the defense program dealt only with the 17 to 26 age group; and as for the training of doctors, that was a problem which was not specifically a Defense matter. If some such program as Mr. Ray had proposed were worked out perhaps the doctors could be trained in that way. Mr. Maceo, however, repeated that it was training in the armed forces for doctors as well that he thought was important. He pointed out that many of them had been soldiers as well as doctors and he felt that training in military medicine or in medicine within a military organization would be highly desirable. Mr. Mountain agreed that Defense would explore these matters further.

Mr. Carrillo then read a prepared paper on the Council's plans for a world-wide propaganda effort. The paper itself was turned over to Dr. Morales. In effect, it proposes to make of the exile group an activist anti-Communist organization which will engage in propaganda, mobilization of public opinion, and popular agitation principally in the Western Hemisphere, but also in Europe and Asia. They will seek the integration of different local groups in each country, principally against Communists, and will employ for the purpose Cuban exiles and people native-born in the country of their operations. They intend to operate not only in South and Central America, but also in the United States and Canada. They visualize this effort not only as directed toward the overthrow of Castro, but also as a movement to destroy communism. They expect within the next two to three months to have committees established in all Latin American countries and to have enlisted some 50,000 people in their work.

The immediate need, however, they said--and all the Council emphatically agreed--was to construct at Key West a long-wave radio station which could overcome the jamming effect of Castro's device of having 500 ham radio operators in Cuba go on the air to prevent reception of long-wave radio programs from the U.S. They said he had confiscated all short-wave radios, and it was necessary for the people of Cuba to get encouragement and hope from the exile group, but this was not possible without a radio station which could cut through the Castro jamming system.

Dr. Morales said that he felt this whole area of propaganda activities was an important one, and that it should be taken up in an appropriate forum. The Department of State would be the agency to which the Council should look for further exploration of these possibilities.

One of the Council members mentioned that before the invasion the passports of about 400 of the fighters in the invasion force had been collected, he did not know by whom, but that he would like to have them returned to the individuals to whom they had been issued. A representative of the visa section of the Department of State said he would look into the matter.

Mr. Ray brought up the question of some 13 Cubans still being held in Camp McClelland and wanted to know what could be done about their release. Mr. Uhlmann and Mr. Hennessey promised to look into the matter.

Dr. Morales suggested, and it was agreed, that a similar meeting be scheduled on a regular basis, initially every two weeks in Washington to canvass whatever major and pressing problems existed and to receive reports on progress made in solving them. He suggested that he be kept informed of actions taken, but that the Council consult with the representatives of the Departments on specific matters without clearance through him. This was agreed, but Mr. Mountain noted that the questions addressed to the Department of Defense had implications extending beyond the competence of the Department of Defense. He, therefore, suggested that more fruitful discussion of some of these problems might be possible if Dr. Morales was present at least for the first few meetings with Department of Defense representatives. This was readily agreed to and the Council will, for the present time, contact the Department of Defense through Dr. Morales.

Maurice J. Mountain

Director, Policy Planning Staff

### **223. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency1**

Washington, May 19, 1961.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/DDP Files: Job 78-01450R, Box 5, Area Activity-Cuba. Secret; Eyes Only. No drafting information is given, but a note attached to the source text indicates that copies were sent to Dulles, Goodwin, and Berle. A May 24 memorandum from Barnes to Dulles identifies this paper as the covert annex to the policy paper prepared for the NSC on May 4 by the interagency task force chaired by Nitze. (Ibid., Job 67-01083R, Box 1, C.T. Barnes Chrono, Jan-Jul 1961) For text of the May 4 policy paper, see Document 202.

## **PROGRAM OF COVERT ACTION AIMED AT WEAKENING THE CASTRO REGIME**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The proposals submitted in this recommended program of covert action directed against the Castro regime are based on a realistic appraisal of existing assets, both in and out of Cuba; on potential assets, both inside and outside of Cuba which are capable of development within acceptable time limits; and on certain assumptions with

respect to United States policy.

2. For the purpose of this paper it is assumed that United States policy:

A. Will not contemplate the use of its armed forces to intervene directly or unilaterally in the absence of an aggressive military action on the part of Cuba directed against the United States or another country of this hemisphere.

B. Will not permit the organizing and training of a Cuban exile military force for further action against Cuba.

C. Will permit United States covert support of Cuban clandestine activities and the carrying out of covert unilateral operations as described herein, including the use of maritime and air facilities within the United States as the bases for the staging of sabotage, in-exfiltration, supply, raider and propaganda (including leaflet dropping) operations.

3. The Situation: The position of the Castro regime within Cuba has been significantly strengthened by the failure of the mid-April invasion. This is principally the result of two factors: (a) the psychological effects of the Castro victory on the Cuban people as a whole and the security forces in particular; and (b) a marked decrease in the capabilities of the anti-Castro forces, both in exile and within Cuba. It is probable, therefore, that there will be no major change in internal political conditions during the next six months.

Given the strength of the Castro military machine and the proven effectiveness of its security services, there is only the slightest possibility that the regime can be overthrown from within during the foreseeable future. With the expected arrival of MIG aircraft and the probable acquisition of a small fleet of fast naval cutters, the military capability of the regime will increase. Coupled with this is the fact that the opposition has lost some of its strongest forces; the underground has been badly hurt and will unquestionably take months to rebuild; and confidence in the United States has been shaken.

4. Background: The failure of the Cuban strike force in April 1961 to achieve its objective requires a careful re-evaluation of the extent of the problem and a re-assessment of the existing and potential assets which could be employed in a covert effort to weaken the Castro regime in order to accelerate its eventual overthrow.

There appears to be general agreement that there is no sure way of overthrowing the Castro regime short of United States military intervention. There is a possibility, albeit slight, that lesser measures--covert and overt--might result in the overthrow of the Castro regime from within. However, as long as Castro thrives, his major threat--the example and stimulus of a working communist revolution--will persist.

In summary, it can be said that Castro's position in Cuba is stronger than before the April 1961 invasion attempt, although more isolated in Latin America as a whole. The opposition has lost some of its strongest forces, its factionalism is greater, and its confidence in the United States has been shaken. Castro's armed forces and militia were effective to an unexpected degree in defeating the invasion. Increased police repression and terror has almost certainly badly weakened existing opposition and underground forces within Cuba. Castro's hard-core supporters are more heavily armed and more enthusiastic in his behalf, and the widespread support he has received abroad has probably increased his stature among many other Cubans. The abortive effort to unseat him will probably provide him with a useful excuse to justify further economic austerity, as well as a lever for additional Soviet aid. In general, unless Castro makes some major mistakes (e.g. direct armed attack on some other Latin American country or prolongation of an extreme reign of terror) or the United States scores some brilliant coup de main, Castro will probably be able to benefit from the fruits of his victory for some time to come.

## II. Objective

To plan, implement and sustain a program of covert action designed to exploit the economic, political and psychological vulnerabilities of the Castro regime. It is neither expected nor argued that the successful execution of this covert program will in itself result in the overthrow of the Castro regime. This plan should be viewed only as the covert contribution to an overall national program designed to accelerate the moral and physical disintegration of the Castro government and to hasten the day when a combination of actions and circumstances will make possible its replacement by a democratic government responsive to the needs, the aspirations and the will of the Cuban people.

### III. Tasks

1. To achieve these objectives a series of short-term and long-term tasks will be undertaken. Wherever feasible and possible, these activities will be carried out under the aegis of the Cuban Revolutionary Council. However, since this will not always be practicable or desirable, for a variety of reasons, unilateral Agency operations and independent operations by acceptable groups and elements outside the framework of the Council will also be undertaken.

#### Short Term Tasks

A. Operational Intelligence Collection: Every effort will be made to improve and expand our capabilities for the collection of operational intelligence on Castro's plans, intentions and capabilities; on specific industrial, military and communications targets; on candidates for defection; on the morale of the civil population and the extent of its support of and discontent with the Castro regime. This will call for the strengthening of existing internal agent nets; the recruitment of legal travelers; the recruitment, training and infiltration of new agents; liaison with Cuban exile groups and individuals with independent access to targets, and the continuation and intensification of existing special intelligence efforts.

B. Sabotage Operations Against Selected Targets: Sabotage operations will be planned and executed against such targets as refineries, power plants, micro wave stations, radio and TV installations, strategic highway bridges and railroad facilities, military and naval installations and equipment, certain industrial plants and sugar refineries. This will first require building up present capabilities through recruitment, training and infiltration of sabotage teams.

C. Operations in Support of Guerrilla Activities: Operations will be planned and executed in support of guerrilla bands which exist or may emerge in the hills of Cuba utilizing both air and maritime operations for the delivery of arms and supplies and for the infiltration and exfiltration of personnel. Since we believe that there is little likelihood of significant accomplishments by guerrilla activities for some time to come, we will discourage offensive guerrilla activities at this time in order that the strength of such forces may be preserved for a more propitious moment. Depending on success in building solid, reasonably dependable and reasonably compartmented assets, in establishing communication with them, and equipping them, the scale of sabotage and guerrilla activities will be stepped up. Our first concern is the rebuilding of our internal nets and of our capability for mounting significant operations.

D. Operations Directed at Defection of Castro Officials: Operations directed at defection, wherever possible in place, of well-placed officials of the Castro government and armed forces will be planned and executed. The objective is two-fold:

(1) in the cases of defections in place, to gain an insight into the intentions, plans and capabilities of the regime, and

(2) in the cases of open and publicized defections, to cause embarrassment and loss of prestige for the regime, especially in the rest of Latin America.

E. Operations Directed at Destroying the Popular Image of Castro: In the field of psychological warfare, operations will be planned and executed aimed at destroying the image of Castro as a true revolutionary interested in the welfare of his people and the replacement of that image with one of a ruthless dictator who, under the false banners of revolutionary reform, has deprived his people of their basic liberties and turned their country into a Soviet satellite. This will require expansion of existing covert press, radio and other media assets outside of Cuba and the strengthening of clandestine propaganda mechanisms inside of Cuba, including underground printed propaganda, clandestine radio broadcasting stations, radio and TV intrusion operations. Also required will be a re-direction of Radio Swan activities, with the Revolutionary Council playing an important part in the programming of the Cuban propaganda effort.

F. Operations Aimed at Strengthening the Prestige and Acceptability of the Revolutionary Council: Through all available propaganda warfare assets and mechanisms an effort will be made to strengthen the prestige of the Revolutionary Council and its programs, as well as the prestige of its individual members, in order to assure its acceptability as a provisional successor to the Castro regime. Through adoption of a program of political action an effort will be made (a) to maintain close and cordial contact with the Revolutionary Council for the purpose of providing unobtrusive guidance and material support for its organizational structure and its clandestine activities; (b) to improve the position of the Council by encouraging support of the Council by acceptable political groups and personalities who are now opposed to or do not recognize the Council as leadership of the opposition; (c) to encourage the Council to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards all acceptable political groups; and (d) to broaden its base to make it more representative of all political thought (with exclusion of extreme left and extreme right) and important social and economic sectors (church, labor, military, students, intellectuals, etc.)

## 2. Long Term Tasks:

A. Political Action: Develop friendly and close contact with leaders of the Revolutionary Council, and leaders (and/or potential leaders) of all political parties and social and economic sectors (church, labor, military, students, intellectuals, et al) in order to assure friendly and helpful contacts and attitudes towards the United States throughout the entire political and social spectrum during the post-Castro era.

B. Intelligence: From existing and potential assets in Cuba and abroad develop and train unilateral agent networks in all walks of life in order to assure the Agency a flow of reliable and significant intelligence during the confused and chaotic period which will exist during the post-Castro era.

C. Counter Intelligence: In coordination and cooperation with the Revolutionary Council create, train and support a highly motivated and professionally competent apolitical and career security service which will be dedicated to the preservation of the democratic form of government. Assign carefully selected and qualified Agency personnel to work with the service during the current and post-Castro eras.

D. Psychological: Maintain and strengthen the excellent contacts and relations which now exist with exile press and radio entities and personalities in order to assure friendly and helpful contacts and attitudes within mass media circles during the post-Castro era.

## IV. Assets Available

The following covert assets are believed to be in existence as of 1 May 1961:

1. [6-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

[1 paragraph (2-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

2. [9 lines of source text not declassified]



[1 paragraph (2 lines of source text) not declassified]

3. [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

[1 paragraph (4-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

4. Political Assets: The primary political assets are the members of the Revolutionary Council with our secondary assets being the other exile Cubans on the periphery of political activities with whom we are or easily can be in contact.

## V. Recommendation

It is recommended that the above described program of covert action, designed to exploit any economic, political and psychological vulnerabilities of the Castro regime, be approved.

### Annex "A"

Washington, May 20, 1961.

1. Practical experience acquired over the past year has taught us certain lessons with respect to security and operational problems in carrying out a covert program of this magnitude. If errors are to be corrected and unwanted publicity avoided, there are certain realities which must be faced at the inception of the Project and certain "ground rules" which must be agreed upon. The more important of these factors are described below briefly but clearly in order that they may be given due consideration at the time this paper is submitted for approval.

2. Training: Training will have to be provided for relatively small groups. With one exception, we feel this must be accomplished outside the Miami area for security reasons. That one exception relates to the training of singleton communicators (W/T operators). Training of such personnel can be carried out in safe houses. If this is done in the southeast of the United States the training can be tied in with practical work with our major covert communications base in the Miami area.

Small Boat Operations: Secure and suitable areas within the United States for training in small boat operations are required. Such training will involve relatively few men at a time. We are exploring the possibility of using a deactivated Navy facility at [1 line of source text not declassified]. Other appropriate sites will be sought in the Florida Keys, the West Coast of Florida, and the Gulf of Mexico area. The point is the training should be carried out in the United States where maximum security can be applied.

Sabotage Training: We propose to train up to thirty men at a time in resistance techniques, including the use of demolitions and other sabotage devices. It will be necessary that a site or sites be selected that are either sufficiently remote from centers of population or of such a nature (military installation) that the use of explosives and demolitions will be plausibly explained. If areas in the United States cannot be found, this type of training might well be carried out in the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] (where we have certain facilities) or on the island of [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] has a number of separate training sites with capacity for training up to twenty men each in trade craft, resistance techniques (including sabotage). Because of the coral reefs, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] would not be suitable for small boat training.

Radio Operators: In addition to the training of singleton radio operators (which must be closely compartmented), we also propose to train singleton W/T operators and specialist cadres [3-1/2 lines of source text not declassified], although not necessarily in that order of priority.

3. Cuban Air Crews: We propose to maintain control over some Cuban pilots, navigators and ground crews for

future operations. They would be placed under commercial air cover (our own proprietary setups) where they will be able to maintain their proficiency and where they will be readily available for operational missions such as re-supply air drops, leaflet raids and, if the need should ever arise, air strikes.

4. American Contract Air and Maritime Personnel: It has been our experience that Cuban pilots do not have the capability of carrying out, with any degree of assured success, night air drops. Most of the deliveries attempted during the past year missed their marks and were either lost or fell into enemy hands. Consequently, if the need arises for extensive air deliveries of arms and supplies to guerrillas in the Cuban mountains, authority must be granted to employ American contract personnel as pilots and navigators in conjunction with Cuban crews. American contract personnel, but to a lesser degree, will also be needed for the successful execution of maritime operations (supply deliveries, infiltration and exfiltration of agents) and, if the need arises, for participation in raider-type sabotage operations.

5. Use of Bases in United States: Geographical reasons, supported by our experience, dictate the need for the use of United States maritime and air facilities for the staging of sabotage, in-exfiltration, supply, raider and propaganda operations. While we may have access to the Nicaraguan base for occasional air deliveries to Cuba, the distance is too great and the political hazards too uncertain for us to place our entire dependency on that one facility, especially if the guerrilla and resistance movements reach such proportions that almost daily re-supply operations are called for.

## **224. Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All Posts**

Washington, May 20, 1961, 5:38 p.m.

//Source: Department of State, Central Files, 737.00/5-2061. Official Use Only; Priority. Drafted in ARA by Hurwitch. Cleared in ARA, P, by Achilles, and by Goodwin at the White House.

1840. Castro in May 17 speech offered exchange for 500 bulldozers approximately 1200 prisoners captured during unsuccessful April 17 attempt by Cuban patriots liberate their country. Press reports today Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. Milton Eisenhower, and Walter P. Reuther cabled Castro they would assume responsibility raise funds from private non-governmental sources purchase 500 agricultural tractors. They said their proposal not response to demand for political ransom but made out of common humanity.

U.S. Government not sponsoring and in no way connected with this effort prominent American citizens. However for humanitarian reasons we sympathize with this initiative.

In response inquiries Missions may draw upon foregoing but are urged exercise caution and at this stage avoid any expression regarding probable outcome these negotiations. FYI. Castro has laid down number of conditions for exchange which this private group may find difficult to accept or fulfill./1/ End FYI.

/1/These conditions were outlined in a memorandum sent to Goodwin on May 20 by Department of State Executive Secretary Lucius D. Battle. Castro made the offer in a speech on May 17, and expanded on the conditions attached to the offer in a speech on May 19. Battle included extracts from the two speeches in his memorandum to Goodwin, and he summarized the conditions laid down by Castro as follows:

"1. Intermediaries such as the Red Cross are not necessary.

"2. At the rate that bulldozer tractors are delivered prisoners will be delivered to start with `the least important to the more important. . . Let the tractors come on the ferry and the groups of invaders will go on the ferry'.

"3. `The compensation must be made with all guarantees. And the equipment must be in perfect condition. They must have, for example, replacement parts, of course.'

"4. Manuel Artime (a member of the Revolutionary Council) is considered separately. He must be exchanged for Francisco Molina, a Cuban now facing trial in the United States for murder." (Ibid.)

Bowles

## **225. Memorandum for the Record**

Washington, May 24, 1961.

//Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/DDP Files: Job 67-01083R, Box 1, C.T. Barnes Chrono, Jan-Jul 1961. Secret; Eyes Only. Prepared by Tracy Barnes.

### **SUBJECT**

Discussion with Mr. Goodwin, 24 May 1961

Mr. Bissell and I discussed Cuba with Mr. Goodwin in his office on 24 May. It was agreed that his associate/1/ does not want to make any definitive decisions regarding action against Cuba prior to his return from his European trip (about 6 or 7 June) and is anxious during the next two weeks to restrict to a minimum activities which might cause disturbances or publicity. This latter desire is accentuated by the interest in having the tractor deal negotiations completed with as little interference as possible. With these premises in mind, it was agreed that the following activities would not, if undertaken, cause any difficulty or conflict.

/1/An apparent reference to Arthur Schlesinger.

1. Continuation of FI type activities, including efforts to maintain or reconstruct existing nets and to create new nets.
2. Training of radio operators, if done on a truly covert basis, i.e., individual by individual and preferably, though not necessarily, outside of the Miami area. In this connection, for the next two weeks, trainees should be those selected by CIA from its own contacts rather than acceptance of candidates from, e.g., MRP or the UR.
3. Taking steps to provide employment of selected Cuban pilots and ground crews.
4. Undertake negotiations with Somoza in an effort to achieve working relationships with him which might include a limited, cautious use of Puerto Cabezas. This will probably require at least the transfer of some B-26's to the GON and may in addition involve some training of Nicaraguan pilots. If Somoza insists on the latter, it should not be done by Americans but, perhaps, it could be worked out on contract with some company whose instructors might be Cubans.
5. Initiate no negotiations with the Council or other groups with respect to support of covert operations. If pressed, however, the position in each instance should be that the Council, or group in question, should produce a prospectus along the lines already given to the MRP showing what it is believed can be accomplished, what type of activities will be undertaken, extent of U.S. support required (both immediately and over a period of time) and proposed relationships both with the U.S. and the Council. No commitments are to be made under these prospectuses until proper internal U.S. approval is obtained from the 5412 Group.
6. Carry out necessary internal CIA reorganization with a view to preparing for the future and with particular emphasis on removing from dealings with the Cubans (especially in Miami) those individuals who were connected with the former project.

7. Obtain from the Council, presumably through Miro, a statement of what parts of the Council it is believed should be retained and an estimated budget for the continuation of same.

8. Put in as definitive form as possible plans for future covert activity including all aspects, i.e. FI, CA and PM. This will involve some decision as to what to do with Swan Island, particularly now that USIA has refused to accept it./2/

/2/Barnes sent a copy of this memorandum to Dulles on May 24, with a covering memorandum in which he stated: "Unless the Special Group decides to the contrary, the Agency proposes to undertake the activities listed on the attached and will submit to the Special Group additional recommendations for further activities as soon as they have been prepared." (Central Intelligence Agency, DDO/DDP Files: Job 67-01083R, Box 1, C.T. Barnes Chrono, Jan-Jul 1961)

C. Tracy Barnes/3/

/3/Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.