

Cuba

223. Editorial Note

On January 6, 1964, spokesmen for Leyland Motors Ltd. in the United Kingdom and the Cuban Government in Havana announced the conclusion of a contract for the sale of 400 passenger buses and spare parts, for approximately \$11 million, to be delivered to Cuba over the course of the year on 5-year credit terms, with an option for Cuba to buy 1,000 more.

During a telephone conversation with McGeorge Bundy on January 7, President Johnson asked about British trade with Cuba and whether President Kennedy had objected to it in his meetings with the British Prime Minister. Bundy replied, "Well, I think you better say we raised it with them because they would be in position to say no formal objection was made, and the reason, as I say, was that they would have come back, O.K. you sell wheat [the United States had sold wheat to the Soviet Union in 1963], what the hell you talking about?" After a long pause, Johnson asked, "Well, what is the difference?" Bundy replied: "We maintain that Cuba should be isolated because it's exporting subversion. They would maintain that Cuba is no worse than the Soviet Union and that we greatly exaggerate this, and in their public, they'd be right. I mean that's their politics. The British man on the street thinks we've got a neurosis on Cuba. He's not like the German who's willing to play it our way." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, January 7, 1964, 12:16 p.m., Tape F64.03, Side B, PNO 6)

In a meeting the following day, Director of Central Intelligence McCone briefed the President on the status of Cuban economic developments, among a number of other subjects. He reviewed with the President Current Intelligence Memorandum SC No. 03151/64, dated January 8, which included the following report: "Cuban sugar and tobacco exports for more than a year have been building up a favorable hard currency surplus for Cuban trade with Western European countries and Japan. The current balance is probably near \$100 million, the highest level since 1960."

McCone also reviewed with the President reports of increasing Spanish exports, British and Dutch tire and bus parts sales, and Soviet arms shipments to Cuba. (Current Intelligence Memorandum No. 03151/64, January 8; Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, Box 6, Folder 7, DCI Mtgs with the Pres., Jan-Apr 1964)

224. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson¹

Washington, January 9, 1964.

SUBJECT

Sabotage against Castro

Three small-scale sabotage operations have been approved by the Special Group, but this recommendation is based on a routine continuation of broad policy guidance which I think you may wish to review. The three operations involved are:

- (1) a commando sabotage operation against a coastal warehouse and pier;
- (2) a sabotage attack against naval or patrol vessels in a harbor; and
- (3) a sabotage operation against a fuel barge proceeding in coastal waters.

All of these operations would have been approved three months ago, and indeed one of them is a rescheduling of an operation aborted because of high seas. While it is always hard to predict the noise level in these matters, these operations seem comparable to the small attack on a Cuban naval patrol which occurred in late December which Castro promptly blamed on you (in fact it was an operation approved before November 22 and not cancelled thereafter because it seemed to fall within the guidance you expressed in your first review of the Cuban problem).

The policy question now is this: If we continue these even small sabotage operations, Castro will certainly know it. Equally, if we call them off, he will know it, and so will the Russians. We thus have an opportunity to choose.

I doubt if this choice should be made on momentum alone.

I therefore recommend a Cabinet-level review of the whole principle of covert sabotage against Cuba. I know that Rusk has never liked it and that McNamara thinks it does very little good. McCone and the CIA are for it, and so are most of the middle-level officers dealing with the Castro problem. I myself consider the matter extremely evenly balanced, but before hearing full argument, my guess is that in your

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, 1/64-6/65. Secret; Eyes Only.

position I would stop sabotage attacks on the ground that they are illegal, ineffective, and damaging to our broader policy. I might then wish to make a little capital from this decision with the Soviet Union.

McG. B.²

² Printed from a copy that bears these typed initials.

225. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, January 18, 1964.

SUBJECT

Disarmament Meeting on 18 January 1964 at the White House

[Omitted here is discussion of a proposed Geneva Conference statement.]

2. The President entered the room shortly, accompanied by Bill Moyers and Jack Valenti. Others present were Rusk, McNamara, General Taylor, Dr. Seaborg, Adrian Fisher, and myself. Alexis Johnson was not present.

[Omitted here is further discussion of the Geneva Conference statement and Panama.]

c. The President then reverted to Cuba and said that he questioned seriously whether these sabotage efforts were the proper thing for the U.S. to be doing. He thought they were both hypocritical and ineffectual and while he understood the need for some of them to maintain the morale of internal dissidents to the Castro regime and to maintain the morale of Cuban exiles, he thought probably these considerations were outweighed by the hypocrisy of our seeking peace and talking peace and conducting this sort of activity on the side. Rusk said that he had never been in favor of this program and had the same doubts

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Subject Files, Job 80–B01676R, Memoranda Originated by General Carter. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by Lieutenant General Marshall S. Carter, Acting Director of CIA. The meeting was scheduled to begin at 3:15 p.m. The President joined the meeting in progress and left at 4:15 p.m. (Johnson Library, President's Daily Diary) A handwritten notation at the top of the first page reads: "Noted by DCI on 1 Feb 1964. WElder." Elder was Executive Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence.

the President did. McNamara said that he too had never been in favor of this program and questioned our participation. I stated that while this program was conducted by the CIA, every action taken had the full approval of the Special Group on which the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense were adequately represented and that the program was designed in part for the specific purpose of generating internal sabotage and dissidents with a view to creating as many problems as possible for Castro and with a view to getting an escalation of anti-Castro activities in Cuba, that over the long run any type of effort such as this was an irritant to Castro and that such action had some effect, even though slight, on the Cuban economy. I said that over the long run you could not expect the Castro regime to fall from these actions alone but that every little bit helped, and that we had noticed over the past four months a considerable increase in sabotage actions generated from internal Cuban elements over which we exercised no control. I said that I could not take exception to the fact that this policy was a hypocritical one in the light of a peace offensive although I did not feel we were trying to make peace with Castro. I also pointed out that sabotage activities in North Vietnam likewise had hypocritical aspects. At this point Mr. McNamara demurred and said North Vietnam was an entirely different matter but he gave no reasons therefor and this point was not developed further. General Taylor noted that in connection with sabotage operations they kept Castro constantly on the alert and kept his forces heavily occupied running hither and yon. The President noted that this was probably true but so little gain in it and generally seemed disaffected with sabotage efforts. Rusk pointed out that there was some value in maintaining some pressure of this type since to completely desist would eventually lead Castro to believe that he was immune from retaliation. The President then directed that he wanted a complete review of our Cuban policy and some new, imaginative thinking developed. I stated that this was presently heavily in train in all appropriate agencies of the Government, and Rusk and McNamara nodded their agreement. The President said he would want to meet as soon as people had drawn up their proposals. In connection with Cuba the President noted that he continued to desire the most drastic pressures on our Allies to insist upon their cooperation and assistance and compliance in our economic denial program against Cuba. He said that Segni and Erhard had both assured him we could count on the full cooperation of Italy and West Germany to cease any further Cuban trade. He said he wanted similar discussions prepared for him whenever he met these leaders and for our leaders to take the same line in any discussions they might have.

[Omitted here is discussion of South Vietnam and various political and policy matters.]

226. Paper Prepared in the U.S. Government¹

Washington, undated.

REVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAM OF COVERT ACTION AGAINST CUBA

I. The Current Situation in Cuba

During 1963 the situation in Cuba steadily worsened. The economy continued its decline and Castro was not able to halt the downward curve. Hurricane Flora intensified Cuba's economic problems. Disillusionment and apathy among the great majority of the population continued to grow, and enthusiasm was increasingly restricted to a hard core. As popular support waned, coercion and terror were employed more and more to maintain the regime's control. Castro's drive to convert Cuba into a standard communist prototype caused increasing disillusionment among his original followers. His stature in the eyes of many Cubans and Latin Americans suffered with the realization, in the aftermath of the October missile crisis, that Cuba had been a pawn and Castro a dupe of Soviet policy.

Despite extraordinary efforts, Castro has not been able to stop acts of defiance against his regime. Guerrilla activity, although scattered and uncoordinated, continues. Spontaneous acts of sabotage are common throughout the island. At great risk refugees still elude his security forces and sea patrols to escape from Cuba. In this atmosphere, externally mounted raids against Cuban targets have added to Castro's sense of frustration and helped sustain hope among the many Cubans disillusioned with his regime.

During 1963 Cuba's international situation seemed almost as bad as the domestic. Although chinks appeared in the wall, the U.S. policy of economic and diplomatic isolation of Cuba was holding up fairly well. Soviet-Cuban relations clearly were under strain. Castro scored no foreign policy victories to provide a much needed psychological boost. His major effort to stimulate Castro-type armed uprisings

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, 1/64–6/65. Secret; Sensitive. No drafting information appears on the paper, but an April 6 memorandum from Joseph W. Scott to U. Alexis Johnson indicates it was prepared by Desmond FitzGerald, Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Directorate of Plans, Central Intelligence Agency; John H. Crimmins, Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, Department of State; and Joseph Califano, Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for Cuban Affairs, in response to a request by McGeorge Bundy. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records) According to Scott's memorandum the paper was drafted on January 24.

throughout Latin America failed to disrupt the Venezuelan elections of December and netted a potentially embarrassing exposure that Cuba had shipped arms clandestinely to Venezuela. These internal and international trends and developments brought Cuba to a low point during 1963.

Within the past few weeks, however, five developments have given the Castro regime an important political-psychological lift. They are:

1. The realization in the Cuban Government that the continuing high sugar prices in the world market have enabled Cuba to expand its convertible currency reserves from about \$20 million to almost \$100 million during the year.

2. The Soviet-Cuban trade protocol for 1964, signed on January 11, and the Khrushchev assurances of January 22, demonstrated a Soviet willingness to maintain its aid and trade program at a very substantial level and to support Cuban sugar prices.² The protocol calls for Cuban-Soviet trade to increase by 22 per cent over 1963. Soviet exports, about 40 per cent of which will be on credit, will increase by at least 10 per cent.

3. The distinct possibility that the United States policy of economic and diplomatic isolation of Cuba may not be able to stand in the face of increasing pressures from Western countries to expand trade with Cuba, extending credit if necessary. The British bus deal, with payment spread over a five-year period, is an important political and psychological triumph for Castro. Its erosive effects on potential Cuban suppliers are already clear.

4. The recent rioting and violence in Panama, in which Castro had some hand, will inject new revolutionary fervor into Castroite activities. In addition, Panama and its aftermath will take the play away from the incident of the Venezuela arms cache.

5. The revolt in Zanzibar, in which Castro also had a hand, is bound to impress Latin America as well as other unstable areas with the length of Fidel's arm and the potency of his doctrine.

These recent developments have provided the upward political and psychological thrust Castro's regime badly needed. He now has a firmer base for his repeated claims that Cuba has survived the full brunt of a major United States effort to destroy the Cuban revolution, claims likely to impress many Latin Americans as well as Cubans. In addition, Castro now has the possibility of producing some tangible evidence that his regime can restore forward momentum in the economy. Consequently, the general position of the Castro regime is much improved over that of three or four months ago.

² Castro paid an unofficial visit to the Soviet Union January 13-22, at the end of which Khrushchev announced that the two nations had concluded a trade agreement that would guarantee Cuban income against fluctuations in world sugar prices.

II. Current U.S. Policy and Programs

The ultimate U.S. objective is the replacement of the present government in Cuba by one fully compatible with the goals of the United States.

To attain this objective, we are trying, by exerting maximum pressure through all means short of the use of military force, to create a degree of disorganization, uncertainty and discontent in Cuba which will (a) predispose elements in the military and other power centers of the regime to bring about the overthrow of the Castro/Communist group and the elimination of the Soviet presence in Cuba; (b) weaken the base for subversion in the Hemisphere; and (c) assist in convincing the Soviets that they are backing a losing and expensive horse.

In order to create the optimum situation just described, we have been carrying out a program of integrated, mutually reinforcing and mutually dependent courses of action. These comprise:

A. The economic, political and psychological isolation of Cuba from the free world

1. *Denial of free-world markets and sources of supply to Cuba:* We have undertaken a variety of overt and covert activities designed to reduce free-world trade with Cuba and, especially, to deny Cuba access to commodities critical to its economy. Proposals for expanding and intensifying these activities are now being presented. The execution of these additional measures depends basically on a decision to incur the considerable political costs and risks that are entailed.

2. *The reduction of free-world shipping in the Cuba trade:* We have maintained diplomatic pressure on free-world nations to reduce and eventually eliminate their ships in the Cuba trade. We have denied U.S. financed cargoes in U.S. ports to ships in the Cuba trade (NSAM 220, as amended).³ To the same general end, we have employed existing legislation, and the threat of additional legislation, restricting economic and military assistance to countries with ships in the Cuba trade.

3. *The reduction of free world, and the containment of Soviet Bloc, air service to Cuba:* We have maintained diplomatic pressures on free-world countries having, or wishing to establish, air service to Cuba. We are invoking recent legislation denying assistance to countries whose ships and aircraft carry commodities to and from Cuba. In addition, we have exerted diplomatic pressures on free-world countries to deny their facilities to Soviet Bloc and Cuban airlines serving or trying to serve Cuba, or harass such airlines.

³ National Security Action Memorandum No. 220 is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1961–1963, vol. XI, Document 277.

4. *The limitation of free-world diplomatic relations with Cuba:* As opportunity has offered, we have exerted pressure to persuade free-world countries to break diplomatic relations with Cuba or to prevent the establishment of such relations with Cuba.

5. *Efforts to undermine the Castro image abroad and to frustrate Cuban attempts to enhance that image:* By means of diplomatic, propaganda and covert measures we have endeavored to demonstrate the weakness, failures and betrayals of the Castro regime.

B. Defense against Castro-Communist Subversion

1. *Within Cuba:* As indicated above, all our efforts to bring about disorganization, uncertainty and discontent in Cuba are intended to weaken the Cuban base for Castro/Communist subversion.

2. *Outside Cuba:*

a. *Multilateral:* We have sought, through the OAS, to obtain general Latin American recognition of the seriousness of the subversive threat and approval of recommendations of measures to limit travel to and from Cuba, and the transfer of funds and propaganda. At the present time, we intend to expand and intensify this effort through actions to be taken by the OAS on the basis of the Venezuelan complaint against Cuba. Beyond the activities in the OAS, we have made special efforts with the Central American countries and Panama to have them tighten controls on the activities and movement of subversives, to develop inland and inshore surveillance capabilities, to create effective intelligence organizations and to establish a system of intelligence exchange.

b. *Bilateral:* Through training, material assistance and exchange of intelligence, we have worked to improve the internal security capabilities of individual countries.

c. *Unilateral:* In addition to multilateral and bilateral measures, we have continued to maintain our surface patrols in the vicinity of Cuba, to improve our own communications systems and to develop our own intelligence capabilities against subversive activities.

C. The reduction and eventual elimination of the Soviet military presence in Cuba

We have maintained diplomatic pressure on the Soviets to continue troop withdrawals and we have warned the Soviets that we will not tolerate the use of Soviet forces in Cuba to suppress popular uprising.

D. The collection of intelligence

We have maintained and improved our overt and covert collection of intelligence to meet not only U.S. strategic requirements but also operational requirements connected with our covert activities within

Cuba. We have maintained periodic high-level overflights supplemented on a few occasions by low-level flights. We have warned the Soviets and Cubans against interference with these flights.

E. Covert operations to weaken and undermine the Castro Regime

A detailed discussion of the covert elements of our program appears in Section III.

As stated above, all these courses of action interact and are interdependent. For example, our covert economic denial operations are designed to reinforce and be reinforced by our overt measures of economic pressure. Both types of activities directed against the economy are intended to aggravate existing economic difficulties and thus to increase the level of disaffection not only in the popular mass but particularly in the power centers of the regime. This disaffection enhances our ability to establish meaningful contact with figures in the military and other power centers and to develop intelligence sources. This disaffection is in turn intensified by the evidence of vulnerability to outside attacks provided by the success of covert sabotage and harassment activities. By the same token, the failure or elimination of one of these mutually supporting courses of action jeopardizes the others and thus compromises the entire program.

Through 1963, these courses of action were having a measurable positive impact. We are now confronted, however, by a series of developments, described in Section I, which threaten to arrest or even reverse our forward movement. The situation is particularly acute with respect to the maintenance of our economic pressures. This fact makes this review of our covert operations particularly timely and important.

III. Concept of the Covert Action Program

The CIA covert action program aims at maintaining all feasible pressures on Cuba and at creating and exploiting situations in Cuba calculated to stimulate dissident elements within the regime, particularly in the armed forces, to carry out a coup. The objective of the coup would be to remove the Castro/Communists from the regime and to eliminate the entire Soviet presence from Cuba. Recognizing that the U.S. is engaged in a race against time with Cuba and its Soviet ally to obstruct the consolidation of Castro's regime at home and to prevent him from achieving his ambitions in Latin America, we set the time frame for this program at about eighteen months from June 1963.

As originally conceived and approved in June 1963, the covert action program was based on the assumption that U.S. policy precludes a military invasion or a full blockade of Cuba which could lead to a confrontation with the Soviet Union. In addition, the covert action program was and is predicated on the thesis that its chance of success would depend heavily on a sustained and intensive effort in other sec-

tors, particularly the overt economic denial and political isolation programs, by all elements of the United States Government. Thus, the inter-action of the overt and covert effort against Cuba is regarded as a vital and irreplaceable factor if there is to be any hope of accomplishing the overall mission.

CIA's integrated covert action program consists of the following interdependent courses of action:

1. *Covert collection of intelligence* to meet U.S. national security requirements and to support current and planned covert operations. It should be noted that clandestine maritime operations are an integral part of intelligence collection.

2. *Propaganda actions to stimulate low-risk simple sabotage* and other forms of active and passive resistance against the regime.

3. *Economic denial actions* in support of government-wide overt official U.S. economic isolation measures.

4. *Exploitation and stimulation of disaffection in the Cuban armed forces and other power centers of the regime* to encourage these elements to carry out a coup against the Castro/Communist factions. CIA is identifying, contacting and attempting to establish channels of communication with these individuals.

5. *General sabotage and harassment* as an economic weapon and as a stimulus to internal resistance. As an economic weapon, it is designed to supplement and support the overall economic denial program by damaging economically important installations and to add to Castro's economic problems by forcing him to divert money, manpower and resources from economic to internal security activities. As a stimulus to resistance, sabotage and physical harassment operations provide visible and dramatic evidence of the existence and capability of organized resistance against the regime. To the extent that these operations are successful, they also demonstrate to the Cuban population and elite groups the vulnerability of the regime to militant action. It is recognized that no single act of sabotage by itself can materially affect the economy or stimulate resistance, but we believe that the cumulative psychological and political impact within Cuba of sustained sabotage operations is a necessary element in the accomplishment of our mission.

6. *Support of autonomous anti-Castro Cuban exile groups.* These operations are intended to provide a deniable activity, a means of supplementing and expanding our covert capability and a means of taking advantage of untapped political and resistance resources of the exile community. The program now includes two autonomous groups whose credibility as to autonomy is strengthened by the facts that:

They are led by men whose prominence and status in the Cuban exile community makes plausible their access to funds, equipment and manpower quite independent of the U.S.;

Both are based in the Caribbean area outside of U.S. territory;
Both have natural, willing allies in power in several Latin American countries;

Both are Cuban and employ Cuba nationals exclusively;

Every item of financial and logistic support has been handled in a manner as to provide maximum protection against proof of CIA or U.S. participation;

The initial aim of these operations is to strengthen the will to resist by increasing the tempo of subversion and sabotage largely maintained until now by CIA; the eventual aim is to take the fight from the coastline to the interior of Cuba;

The disadvantage of our autonomous operations is that it is necessary to accept a lower order of efficiency and control than would be considered acceptable in CIA-run operations.

Of the foregoing inter-locking courses of action, items (1) and (2) are in train and no policy problems regarding them are expected. Item (3) is the subject of another paper which is being presented for concurrent consideration. Item (4) is the essence of our program and is dependent for its success on the results of all other overt and covert courses of action. Item (5) has been the subject of continual review since the inception of the program and is the primary subject of this paper. Consideration of Item (6) (autonomous operations) should take place with a discussion of sabotage and harassment (Item 5). These latter two items are discussed in more detail in Section V below:

IV. The Sabotage Program in Retrospect

We know of at least 80 acts of internal sabotage and 60 armed clashes between Cuban security forces and insurgents since 1 June. Insurgency and sabotage inside Cuba are not part of a coordinated program; they are acts of individual or small group defiance. They are stimulated by many factors, and no one factor can be assigned entire credit. Sabotage incidents, which include a high proportion of sugar cane burnings, have a tendency to be seasonal, a fact which further obscures statistical analysis. Although it is true that from a low point in sabotage incidents during the summer of 1963 there was a heavy increase during the fall (following the commencement of our raiding activity), we believe that clearer light is shed on the effects of our harassment program by the statements of witnesses of varying points of view within Cuba and by the acts of the Cuban regime itself.

Since 1 August 1963, five sabotage raids have been attempted.⁴ All were successful. There was substantial damage to the target; all par-

⁴ Annex I contains a brief review of these operations. [Footnote in the source text. Annex I is attached but not printed.]

ticipants were safely recovered and the plausible deniability of the operations was not compromised.

The lack of proof of U.S. involvement did not prevent Castro from charging the CIA with responsibility. Indeed, almost every act of defiance against his regime has been credited to the Agency.

Castro's emotional reactions to real or rumored security threats point up his acute sensitivity to internal resistance and suggests that he feels his regime to be far from secure from external threats. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, has reacted to the sabotage raids with much less vigor and bluster than we anticipated. Their only sharp reaction, aside from the expected propaganda, followed a series of air raids during August and September sponsored by Cuban exile groups operating from Florida and for which the Agency had no responsibility. They did no real damage, but they did demonstrate that the Cuban air defense system could be breached, and they added substantially to the psychological impact of our first two raids.

[Here follows a detailed discussion of the results of the covert program.]

V. Impact of Cessation of Sabotage Operations

Because of the visible and dramatic nature of sabotage operations, their cessation would soon be noted by all interested parties to and observers of U.S./Cuban relations. The cessation of these raids, however disclaimable by the U.S. the raids themselves may be, would probably be interpreted in Latin America and certainly inside Cuba as a switch of U.S. policy from one of discreet encouragement and support of aggressive action against the Castro regime to one of "coexistence" and eventual accommodation with a Castro/Communist Cuba. Without constant and visible signs of offensive action against Cuba, a weakening process would be set in motion which could well lead the countries of Latin America to draw their own conclusions from these indicators and embark on accommodation policies of their own. Those governments in Latin America already threatened by Castroites in their own countries are likely to be subjected to even stronger domestic pressures.

As this belief spreads, Western European and other free world countries eager to trade with Cuba will come to feel that they may safely ignore and evade, to an even greater extent than they do now, U.S. appeals for the economic and political isolation of Cuba. An important additional economic effect would be the release into normal economic activity of manpower and funds now tied up in defense against raids.

Finally, and most important, this development in time is bound to have a severe demoralizing effect on the internal resistance against Castro. The Cuban exile community and particularly its militant and

articulate elements would be acutely sensitive to a cessation of raids and can be expected to react vociferously. Judging from past experience, we can expect a new surge of domestic political agitation on the part of the numerous Cuban exiles who have political connections within the U.S.

In the event that it is decided to terminate CIA-controlled sabotage and harassment operations, it cannot be assumed that the autonomous groups, despite the greater deniability of their actions, could take over entirely the mission of furnishing proof of visible resistance to Castro and inspiring internal elements to take the personal risks necessary to set a coup in motion. Autonomous groups are as yet untested in their capability to conduct successful sabotage and harassment operations on a sustained basis. It is unlikely that in the next months the autonomous groups will develop the ability to match CIA-controlled operations, either in quantity or quality.

If sabotage and harassment operations were to be terminated for the autonomous groups as well as for the Agency, its support to the autonomous groups must also be terminated completely as otherwise we would not be in a position to insure that they would discontinue raids and sabotage. Such termination would compound the effects of the cessation of our own raids, particularly in those areas in the Caribbean where the autonomous groups have been most active.

VI. The Residual Program

In the event it is decided to abandon the core of the covert program, we will be obliged to fall back on essentially overt courses of action which are already operating but which can be refined and intensified, provided the political risks and costs are judged acceptable and we receive adequate cooperation from our allies.

A. Action against free-world economic ties with Cuba

Because of the recent erosion of our efforts in this sector and the clear intention of the Cubans and Soviets to expand Cuban economic relations with the free world, a series of recommendations to intensify this course of action has been made and is now being presented. The basic issue in the recommendations is our ability and willingness to incur the political costs and risks that heightened economic pressure would involve. Even if the recommendations are adopted completely, we could have no real assurance that our attempts to curtail Cuban-free world economic ties would be successful. On the other hand, if the actions and commitments included in the recommendations are not adopted, it is a near certainty that, under present circumstances, our economic pressures will be reduced to ineffectiveness. In any case, it must be clearly recognized that no amount of economic pressure can by itself bring down the Castro government, at least as long as the So-

viets are prepared to subsidize the Cuban economy. The curtailment and disruption of Cuban economic ties with the free world can only contribute, and then only over time, to the creation of the optimum situation we are trying to develop. The effectiveness of this contribution would be at least sharply impaired by the relaxation of the pressure created by covert operations. Beyond these considerations, we can never have assurance that a foreign government cooperating in the economic program will not pull out and virtually collapse the program. Entire or even important reliance on economic pressure as a substitute for the covert program would be to deliver the fate of our policy into the uncertain hands of governments which do not share our convictions and sense of priority with respect to Cuba.

B. OAS Action

As a result of the Venezuelan charges against Cuba arising from the arms cache discovery, we have been considering a series of measures which we would seek in the OAS. It should be noted that the atmosphere for OAS adoption of strong measures has deteriorated as a result of the Panamanian crisis.

The measures which we have been studying include:

1. A break in diplomatic relations

The principal effects of this measure, which would mean action by five countries, including Brazil, Chile and Mexico, would be to provide rather dramatic evidence of Castro's isolation and to deny the Cuban regime subversive facilities offered by its remaining missions in Latin America. The measure would meet heavy resistance from Mexico, Chile and particularly Brazil.

2. A break in economic relations

Although this would have little practical effect economically, it would have some utility as a means of moral pressure on other free-world countries trading with Cuba.

3. A break in air and surface communications

Over time this would lead to a reduction in the Cuban ability to move subversives to and from Latin America. It would be useful as a means of moral pressure on other free-world countries having, or wishing to establish, air services with Cuba. On the negative side it would mean the temporary loss of intelligence facilities and would have an adverse effect on Cuban exile morale by closing an existing escape route for persons inside Cuba.

4. Approval for cooperative surveillance measures against movement of arms and men

The single most damaging OAS action to Castro would be an authorization for the use of force in connection with the movement of arms and men. The chances of getting a politically acceptable majority

for such use was estimated to be less than even before the events in Panama and the prospects have diminished since then. Such OAS action would almost certainly dramatize the Cuban issue domestically and internationally. At the present time, it appears that the surveillance system which might be authorized by the OAS would involve the use of force only in the territorial waters of the countries for which the offending shipments are destined. Thus the question of OAS authorization for the use of force on the high seas will not arise.

5. *Condemnation of the Castro regime*

This would be a *pro forma* action, with only limited psychological force.

6. *Reaffirmation of previous OAS measures on controlling Cuban-based and supported subversion*

This would be of value as a means of reinforcing a general effort in this sector (see C below). It is, however, a purely defensive measure.

In sum, this series of OAS measures would certainly be helpful and would constitute important multilateral progress. The actions, however, are primarily psychological and defensive.

C. *Increased efforts against subversion*

We can probably increase and expand our multilateral, bilateral and unilateral efforts to increase the ability of Latin America to resist subversion. Such efforts are purely defensive and external to Cuba. No certain results can be guaranteed. In any case, if the Cuban base were to be strengthened by the relaxation of covert pressures or by the weakening of economic pressures, we will be fighting against increasing odds.

D. *Increased psychological and propaganda efforts*

We can intensify our measures in this sector, including major policy declarations on Cuba by the President and other senior officers of the Government. The efficacy of such efforts is entirely dependent, however, upon the substance behind them. A propaganda offensive would be productive only if there were credible evidence that our words were being accompanied by successful actions in other sectors.

VII. Conclusion

The residual program set out above is substantially weaker than the present program. Accordingly, the prospects for attaining our ultimate objective of replacing the Castro/Communist regime, which have been by no means certain even under the present program, would be very measurably diminished under the residual program. The elimination of the core of the present covert program, especially if accompa-

nied by a rejection or failure of the proposed expanded means of economic pressure, would raise in sharp terms the question of the need to examine the two basic alternatives: the use of force or accommodation.

VIII. Recommendation

That the covert program be continued in at least its present form and scope.

227. Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to President Johnson¹

Washington, February 6, 1964.

SUBJECT

Free-World Economic Ties with Cuba

In response to NSAM 274 of December 20, 1963 (attached) which was issued as a result of the meeting on Cuba which you conducted on December 19,² the Department of State, with the collaboration of the Department of Commerce and the Central Intelligence Agency, has prepared the attached study on free-world economic ties with Cuba.

Discussion

1. *Organization of Study.*

The study is presented in two parts. Part One contains a summary view of current free-world economic relations with Cuba, a brief statement of our efforts to date to restrict and reduce those relations and the results of those efforts, a discussion of the prospects of success of additional efforts, and recommendations for further measures. Part Two contains individual papers setting out, in essentially the same format as Part One, the details of the economic relations between Cuba and the twelve free-world countries having the most important trade and transportation ties with the island.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Free World Economic Ties with Cuba. Secret.

² NSAM No. 274 was attached but is not printed. For text, see *Foreign Relations, 1961-1963*, vol. XI, Document 389. For an account of the December 19 meeting, see *ibid.*, Document 388.

2. *Principal Findings*

(a) *Current level of economic ties*: Fragmentary data for 1963 indicate that free-world trade with Cuba increased perhaps as much as \$50–75 million over 1962, to a total of \$250–\$320 million. The increase reflects larger free-world purchases of sugar at higher prices because of the world sugar shortage. There appears to have been little or no increase in free-world exports to Cuba. Calls by free-world vessels in Cuba fell 60 percent in 1963, with British and Lebanese ships now predominating. Aviation ties with Cuba were sharply reduced in 1963, with Spanish activity running counter to the general trend.

(b) *Mixed results of efforts to prevent Cuban acquisition of US-origin and critical commodities*: Very small amounts of US-origin goods have slipped through. Some significant critical commodities of non-US origin have been denied, but substantial amounts of such items have in spite of our efforts been supplied.

(c) *Prospects in aviation and shipping*: There is a reasonable chance for a modest decrease in free-world shipping in 1964. Aviation ties will probably be cut back, but the conclusion of a US–USSR aviation agreement will reduce our leverage.

(d) *Basic consideration affecting trade*: On the Cuban *earnings* aspect of the problem, the world-wide shortage of sugar and increased sugar prices make it impracticable at the present time to do much in the way of shutting off Cuban sales of sugar to free-world buyers.

With these increased earnings, Cuba is now embarked on a major effort to acquire free-world goods, not only to meet present shortages but to provide the means for an upturn in its economy.

Our problem is thus not just reducing the present level but preventing such an upturn. However, this is going to be increasingly difficult as, with the increased foreign exchange reserves at its disposal, Cuba will be an increasingly attractive customer and, even where blocked from direct purchases from the free world, may be able indirectly to procure some goods through the Soviet Union. Also, of course, the Soviet Union can itself make up additional shortages in the Cuban economy, albeit at some additional cost to itself and with delays in delivery.

Thus, even if our efforts are fully successful the cutting off of free world sources of supply cannot be expected to have a decisive effect on the Cuban economy. As a whole, however, well-executed denial programs can seriously impair specific segments of the economy and should be able to prevent Cuba utilizing its increased sugar earnings to bring about any significant upturn. It is clear that, unless we make a major effort in this field, Cuba will increasingly be able to “normalize” its economic relations with other free-world countries and probably bring about an upturn in its economy.

(e) *Key importance of British:* The problems we have with the United Kingdom are representative of those we have with other free-world countries in that it is dependent on trade; needs Cuban sugar; does not share our assessment of the Cuban threat; and justifies its position by citing our own economic relations with the USSR. Because of their attitude, economic importance and special relationship with us, we need the cooperation of the British. The recent sale of buses has had and will have grave consequences for our denial program by undercutting our efforts with other countries.

(f) *The basic issue of political costs:* The effectiveness of our efforts to get the cooperation of any country depends on (1) the relative importance to the national interest of the objective of cutting off Cuban access to critical commodities and other objectives in the country; (2) the balance of negotiating advantage between the country and us; and (3) the degree of risk to other objectives we are prepared to accept in obtaining cooperation on Cuban trade. In short, how much political capital are we willing to expend?

(g) *Cooperation of American firms:* American firms have been cooperative and effective in putting pressure on associated foreign firms. While this technique might be expanded, it would involve problems of "extraterritoriality" with our Allies.

(h) *Improved intelligence reporting and investigation:* We have severe problems in obtaining timely intelligence in depth and in pursuing investigations because of the very nature of the trade in critical commodities and US-origin goods. Improvement in these sectors requires additional personnel, particularly if our present controls on American know-how are extended to all commodities produced with such know-how and destined for Cuba.

(i) *The fundamental question:* Our prospects for success in the economic conflict with Cuba ultimately depend on the priority to be assigned this effort—the results of which are at best uncertain—in the entire range of our relations with the free world.

Recommendation:

The recommendations on pages 20–22 of the study are feasible but will create frictions in our international relations. Failure to move on them will also pose problems.

Since carrying them out will involve several NSC agencies, I suggest that, before you move on them, you may wish to convene an NSC session to explore all the issues with the participating agencies, and particularly the political costs indicated in subparagraph (h) above.

George W. Ball

Attachment³

FREE WORLD ECONOMIC TIES WITH CUBA

V. Recommendations

(*Note:* Specific recommendations affecting individual countries are contained in the country tabs of Part Two of this study.)

1. That the President make known to all agencies of government that the restriction and reduction of free-world economic ties with Cuba is a basic national policy objective, and that conflicts between that objective and other policy objectives are to be decided in favor of the former whenever the national interest is not demonstrably jeopardized thereby, due regard being given to the need for judicious application of this principle.

2. That the President or the Secretary of State take an early opportunity to make a public declaration on Cuban policy, with special attention to the rationale of our policy on free-world economic ties with Cuba.

3. That the President and the Secretaries of the interested Departments make known privately to the leadership of the American business community our interest in their cooperation with their foreign associates in discouraging and preventing trade with Cuba, particularly in critical commodities, and that all levels of government make full use of this means of pressure on foreign firms.⁴

4. That diplomatic pressure at all levels be intensified on free-world countries maintaining economic ties with Cuba, with resort to Presidential intervention in the case of governments which present major problems.

5. That this pressure be based on a careful country-by-country evaluation of our bargaining position and be directed particularly against (a) trade in commodities we consider critical to the Cuban economy, and (b) long-term commitments for the purchase of Cuban sugar.

6. That a vigorous attempt, centered in Washington, be made to promote a multilateral agreement among countries trading with Cuba on restrictions acceptable to us on the sale of critical commodities to Cuba.

7. That the rationale of our economic policy toward Cuba be made known clearly in NATO forums and to Japan.

³ According to a January 14 memorandum from Mann to Ball, the study was prepared by the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs in collaboration with INR and the Bureau of Economic Affairs. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/LA Files: Lot 66 D 65, Cuba File) Printed here are pages 20–22 of the study.

⁴ A handwritten note in the margin next to this paragraph reads: "EUR objects."

8. That the resolutions restricting or breaking Latin American economic ties which may result from OAS action on the Venezuelan complaint against Cuba include an appeal suggesting similar action by other free-world governments.

9. That Latin American governments which are well disposed and which represent major markets for free-world countries trading with Cuba be used to discourage such trade.

10. That, in administering existing legislation affecting free-world economic ties with Cuba, we make clear to countries concerned that they must take the action required by the law and that Presidential waivers cannot be relied upon to exempt them from the requirement.

11. That the desirability and feasibility of additional legislation or Executive regulations aimed at countries and firms trading with Cuba be kept under continuous review, the spirit of Recommendation 1 being borne in mind.

12. That existing controls on United States know-how be extended to cover all commodities produced with such know-how and destined for Cuba.

13. That the question of the extension of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations to subsidiaries of American firms be carefully reviewed, within the spirit of Recommendation 1.

14. That covert activities directed against critical commodities destined for Cuba be intensified, with resort, if necessary, to carefully considered and controlled preclusive buying.

15. That it be made known discreetly through the press that we maintain careful records of the companies dealing with Cuba, suggesting without saying so that these records constitute a potential "blacklist."

16. That a group of responsible and qualified Cuban exile businessmen be formed to maintain pressure on firms trading with Cuba by indicating that such firms will have no future in a post-Castro Cuba.

17. That the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, as chairman of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Cuba, establish a working group to recommend measures that might be taken to reduce Cuban foreign exchange earnings from sugar when the current world shortage eases.

18. That steps be taken immediately to intensify intelligence collection, Foreign Service reporting, and Commerce investigative and enforcement actions with respect to free-world trade with Cuba.

19. That exceptions to existing personnel limitations be granted in connection with Recommendations 12 and 18.

228. Editorial Note

Shortly after noon on February 2, 1964, the U.S. Coast Guard observed four Cuban fishing vessels off East Key in the Dry Tortugas. When the vessels were ordered to anchor and stand by for boarding, they were found to be 1.5–1.9 miles offshore of East Key and thus within the territorial seas of the United States. Following consultation with Department of State officials, the Coast Guard seized the four Cuban fishing vessels, and the crews were detained in Key West. (Telegram 452 to Bern, February 3; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 33–4 CUBA–US) On February 3 Florida officials asked that the Cubans be turned over to them for possible prosecution under Florida law. According to telephone notes of a conversation of that same date between Assistant Secretary Mann and the President, Mann introduced the incident as a “little item” of interest, and the President’s only comment was: “Well, it doesn’t amount to much one way or the other, does it?” (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, February 3, 1964, 7:10 p.m. Tape F64.10, Side A, PNO 5)

On February 4 the United States and Cuba traded protests over this incident, with Czech Embassy Counselor Zantovsky delivering a protest on behalf of Cuba to John H. Crimmins, Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, and the Swiss Ambassador to Cuba, Emil Anton Stadelhofer, delivering a U.S. protest in Havana. The Cuban Government claimed that the vessels were operating in international and traditional fishing waters and demanded that the fishermen be released. The U.S. Government asserted that two of the captains of the fishing vessels admitted that they were fully aware of their presence in U.S. territorial waters and that Cuban vessels had not fished in the area of the Dry Tortugas during the preceding 5 years. Crimmins told Zantovsky that “the apparent deliberate nature of the violation” “disturbed and puzzled us.” (Memorandum of conversation, February 4; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 33–4 CUBA–US)

On February 6 Cuba cut off the water supply to the U.S. Naval base at Guantanamo Bay. That night President Johnson alerted his top national security officials to the problem and scheduled a working group meeting for the next morning (see Document 229). Shortly before the meeting was to begin, Johnson asked Secretary of Defense McNamara what he knew about the water cutoff. McNamara replied: “Well, the only thing I know is I don’t think we can do nothing here, Mr. President. I just don’t believe we can allow them to turn off the water, and make no response other than handling these [fishing] crews

through the courts and sending them back to Cuba. We have a whole series of options open to us, it seems to me that ought to be the function of this working group, within an hour, to lay it out for you so you can make your choice."

Johnson asked, "Is there much we can do? I thought we'd done nearly everything on Cuba?" McNamara replied that "there are many things we can do." He also advised the President how the Cuban water could be replaced by wells, evaporators, and by water from a set of tanks and from water tanker ships. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, February 7, 1964, 9 a.m., Tape F64.11, Side A, PNO 6) The portion of the conversation printed here was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

229. Notes on Meeting¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 9 a.m.

Secretary Rusk Presided

Those present—Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, George Ball, Attorney General Kennedy, General Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, Assistant Secretary Thomas Mann, Ralph Dungan, Ambassador Thompson, Jack Valenti, Bill Moyers, Bill Bundy, John McCone.

John McCone—Currently interrogating the seven juveniles on the boat. Have freed the juveniles but are still in custody of immigration authority.

Rusk—We ought to send the children back to Cuba now.

McCone—We are flying in a U-2 cover each day. No change in the photographs of two days ago.

Rusk—We have a stake in what we do with these fishing boats. We may set a precedence for our own boats in other waters. Suggests a stiff fine for the Captain plus seizure of the boat.

McNamara—In talking with Katzenbach, he favors leaving jurisdiction to Florida rather than the Federal courts.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Office of the President File, Panama. No classification marking. Drafted by Valenti. The meeting was held in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A note on the first page indicates that the President saw the notes.

McCone—Castro's broadcasts are mild not nearly so hysterical as was anticipated.

McGeorge Bundy—We ought to have a set of recommendations of what Florida can do. If we release all but the Captains, we will be in a stronger position.

Kennedy—Maybe it is better to release the Captains and keep the boats. This is the first time in five years Cuban boats have been in these waters.

Bundy—Do we want Castro to have his hand on our water? Should we ship in our own water?

McNamara—Yes, but it ought to be a voluntary thing and not something we do under pressure. It will cost us about \$2½ million a year to supply our own water. This will pose no problem for us.

McCone—I suggest that we go in now and cut the water pipes and say that we don't want Castro's water. We will supply our own water.

Rusk—That's an attractive idea. We need to reply on our own supply before Castro turns the water back on.

Bundy—That's good because if there is a desire on the part of Castro to escalate we cauterize that desire now.

Ball—Why not say that since the water company has failed to perform, we no longer have an obligation to hold to our contract. Therefore, we will supply our own water.

Rusk—Should we not take out some of our dependents quietly. Also, we ought to review the role of Cubans working on the base. We need to thin down the number of Cubans working on this base. If there is the slightest sign of sabotage, we must move very quickly to get rid of the Cubans.

McNamara—We can move dependents out quickly at any time. No need to do this now unless it is a military requirement or we want to put political pressure on Castro.

Bundy—If we begin to use our own water we ought to move deliberately in Florida.

Rusk—We don't accept the relationship between the boat arrest and turning off the water.

Kennedy—We don't know the motivation behind this.

Bundy—We know from interrogating the defectors that the Cubans were told to go to these waters to see if fish were running down there.

Unidentified Man—We are told that American boats were shrimping in these waters while the Cubans were fishing for red snapper.

McNamara—Should we have someone in charge of getting all the facts in this expedition and assessing it? We need to know the full de-

scription of what they are doing, what they had in their boats, and everything about them.

Ball—I assume that someone has made a study of all the harassments that Castro can make against us in Guantanamo Bay.

Mann—We should move now to deny them the \$5 million in foreign exchange. These Cuban employees would not be able to take this money back to Cuba.

Bundy—But if we use our own water and then deny them the foreign exchange, this is another move upward that we are making.

Mann—I disagree. I think it is important to show them that we are not going to stand meekly by. The American people are tired of being pushed around.

McNamara—I think we should try to enforce arms embargo in Venezuela to keep Castro from shipping arms there.

Mann—This takes time and our prestige in Latin America is too important to wait and to come back simply with a “we don’t need the water” is weak. We don’t have to turn off any employment unless of sabotage. We can let them buy food and clothing on the base.

McNamara—It seems to me that the breaking of the water contract is the first step. After that, we have a whole series of alternatives.

Rusk—We have very little left that we can do in the way of legal actions against Cuba. The Venezuela arms cache is one thing we can do. If they provoke this boat incident in order to escalate, we want to keep the monkey on their back. So let us make it clear that we are going to stay in Guantanamo Bay.

Mann—I firmly believe we want to take the foreign exchange step.

Rusk—Perhaps we should start cutting back on employment though not in the third generation employees.

McNamara—But we must keep in mind if they couldn’t use their foreign exchange, Castro will keep them out of the post himself.

Bundy—Our basic problem is that we have used up all of our possible legal moves.

McNamara—I still think that we need to move swiftly on the Venezuela arms embargo.

Rusk—It would be very helpful on that if we could first clear up the Panama situation. We couldn’t do much on the Venezuela problem until Panama quiets down. This is the worst possible time for bilateral action.

Mann—I think it is not wise to merely respond by using our own water. We want to do much more than that. The water shipped in is not good water anyway. We need to say to the world that Castro got the worst of the bargain.

Rusk—I think that we can take the nettle out of Castro’s hands by cutting the pipes. We could say “unless water is turned on in 24 hours we consider the contract broken and we will not be obligated.”

Ball—There is some virtue in keeping this a civil breach of contract.

Taylor—The Joint Chiefs are of the opinion that this is the first step in a series of moves. Therefore, we want to now make moves of our own to strengthen our military.

Kennedy—(In response to a request from Rusk for his opinion) People merely don’t understand the boat situation now. . . It is very confusing.

1. We need a clear statement of facts on the boats.
2. We need a clear statement on what are the legal facts.
3. We should release the men and handle this like a normal case—the way a regular case is handled.
4. Then when Castro turns on the water, we tell Castro we don’t want the water.

Rusk—Let us put together a general scenario of the full picture of this situation. The boat, the law, and the precedence. (There was general agreement to give Castro 24 hours to turn on the water, and if he didn’t, we would consider the contract breached and we would use our own water.)

Rusk—1. We should handle the boat, the Captains, and the seamen in accordance with legal procedures.

2. Unless we have assurance water will be turned on, we will consider the contract broken.

3. Difficulty is we have used up all of our unilateral initiatives. Request steps to take up the OAS in Venezuela arms situation.

4. There are other steps:

- a) Fire all Cuban employees
- b) Refuse to let the employees take dollars into Cuba. We would set up bloc accounts.

5. We merely need to know if the Cubans and the Russians have escalation in mind.

Taylor—There are three facts involved in military moves here:

1. Shipping
2. Armor from Fort Hood
3. Marines from Camp Pendleton

This kind of movement would alert the public and the world.

The President thinks that merely saying that we would use our own water is not at all a decisive and strong move. He wants this group

to go back and explore every possible move that we can make that is firm and decisive.²

Merely saying to the Cubans that we are going to use our own water is a mild slap on the wrist. He wants the Russian Ambassador informed so he can inform Khrushchev that Castro is an irrational man and we cannot long tolerate his actions. He also wants our allies informed.

The Attorney General left the meeting before it was over, and the President wants to get from him his recommendations.

The President wants every man in the room to spend the rest of this day in hard study in every possible action that is available to us, short of war.

He instructed this group to meet again at 4:00 p.m.

² The President joined the meeting at about 10:05 a.m., according to the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid.)

230. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Senator Richard Russell¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 11:17 a.m.

President: Dick?

Russell: Yes sir.

President: These folks, I met with them this morning, after they'd had the night to think it over, and they haven't got any ideas, or any plans, or any program or anything, except Bobby Kennedy says turn the seamen loose and hold the boats. They want to put out a little statement that we'd give them 24 hours to turn the water on, and if we didn't, we'd supply our own water. I told them to hell with that, that was too innocuous to say that we would. I wanted to give them a list of alternatives, and for them to work on them during the day, and talk to the Joint Chiefs, which they had had a meeting, but they were fuzzy, they didn't know what to do. They thought we ought to move some

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Senator Richard Russell, Tape F64.11, Side B, PNO 2. No classification marking. President Johnson placed the call. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

Marines from the west coast, and I told them to get back in that meeting. Then I told McNamara to call you this afternoon before our next meeting which will be at 4:30, about 3:00 to call you and go over with you the alternatives because I valued your judgment, and then your feel of the public pulse too, and the sentiment of the Congress and all of it wrapped up in one. And to exchange viewpoints with you, give you his viewpoint and get yours before he comes to the meeting. So he's got a little guts, he's the only one in the meeting that does, he and Tom Mann have a little.

Russell: I ain't as bent on bloodshed and warfare right now down there as some of the people probably are, Mr. President. Of course, I don't think we can afford just to take a cringing position.

President: No, what, we, best thing that I could suggest to them after they had met from 9 to 10 before I joined them. I suggested to them that they conceive every act that we could take and that we come back this afternoon and we say we had a contract with this company which has been nationalized by Castro that Castro has violated and in effect, cancelled, and therefore, we're going to make our base independent of Cuba. We're not, we can't rely on him for water, and we can't rely on him for anything else. We know that he's got 3,000 employees there and we're going to staff the thing ourselves, we're going to furnish our own water ourselves. And we're going to make this a base that's independent, and we not only intend to operate independently, but we intend to operate it period. And maybe anything else that they can think of that we could do. We go to searching ships, why that's an act of war, although we're trying to get Venezuela to ask us to come into their waters and inspect some of these shipments. We're trying to get the OAS to ask us to go in and do it, but that takes time and we can't do it today. And they're going to expect their government to react today. And my guess is the best reaction we can have today is to say that we're going to operate this base independent of him, we're going to furnish our own water. We're going to furnish our own people. We're going to cut him off about 7 or 8 million dollars a year in cash, that we're financing him. I told them to get ahold of Khrushchev and tell him that this man's playing a mighty dangerous game with his marbles. I told him to tell the British and tell the French that this is a serious matter with us and that they just want to keep siccing them on and egging them on, they're going to get our people in such shape that we're going to have a pretty difficult time operating with them. I told them let's not say in one hand we're going to cut down on our shipments to Castro and then ship him \$7 million a year ourselves in cash for his people, even though some of these people are good people. Let's just let them go on back to Cuba and find jobs over there. Let him feed them out of Russian money. Let's don't feed them ourselves and let them be taking this cash back every night. And I think those two steps—

Russell: The most important one of all is the manner in which that message will be relayed to Khrushchev. It should be made perfectly clear to him that this man is irrational and that there will be limits to our patience, and if he keeps on that we'll have no alternative but to take some very affirmative steps there. And that it would be very tragic if he were to support a man who would be doing things to us that he would not tolerate himself. Under the same conditions. So I hope they make that perfectly clear to him. Remind him of Hungary a little bit while they're talking to him.

President: Can you think of anything else that can be done? Does that appear to be enough to show them that we are firm and decisive, that we are going to supply our own water, that we are going to supply our own people, and we're getting rid of them?

Russell: I suppose so. There'll be some criticism of course.

President: Oh hell, *The New York Times*—

Russell: Oh, *The New York Times* will support you on that.

President: No, *The New York Times* don't want us to take a dime away from them. They think we ought to be feeding Cuba. So will *The Washington Post*.

Russell: No, I don't think they'll go that far.

President: Damn near it. They'll say you're being punitive, and you're penalizing these poor people. Now I don't think we ought to do it for that reason. I think the public reason ought to be that we've got to have our people and we got to be secure, and we got to be independent. And their people are not dependable if their water's not dependable.

Russell: There are about 2 or 3,000 of those people that live on our base there.

President: 500. And there're 3,000 that work.

Russell: Well, I'd make it perfectly clear, that those 500 if they wanted to sever their Cuban nationality, and not go back, that I'd keep them there, and they'd spend their money on the base.

President: Now can you think of anything else?

Russell: Not right now, no sir.

President: Does that appear to you to be enough?

Russell: Well—

President: We've got to be firm.

Russell: Not much more we can do. It's more in the way you say it and word it than anything else. It could be worded one way where it wouldn't sound like it'd be enough. It could be worded in another way and sound like it's a very firm statement. And I'm sure that your boys down there can do that.

President: What do you think we ought to tell them while we're waiting for these other things?

Russell: Tell them we're analyzing any steps that might be taken to fully protect American rights in the Guantanamo base.

President: Now you know they got them in that little 10 foot square cell down there and no bunks and all that kind of stuff. I told them I thought they ought to try to treat them decently and humanitarially, because I don't think that does us any good to have them locked up in a ten foot cell and giving them no food or no place to sleep. Stuff like that.

Russell: You mean with the ones that don't go back?

President: No, these 28 fishermen that Florida's got. I think it's a damn fool thing to pick them up. What they ought to have done, Coast Guard ought to tell them to get the hell out of here, and let them out instead of turning them over to Florida. They been fishing there up till the last few years, constantly, nobody bothered them.

Russell: It's too late now. You can't afford to turn them loose right now, look like you're surrendering to Castro's demands.

President: Yes, I think that's right. The only thing we got is we seize the ship and fine them \$500. I don't think it's good to try to starve them to death.

Russell: Oh no. No, I wouldn't do that. I'd treat them just like they treat their own prisoners.

President: Well, I guess they treat their own prisoners in Florida, I guess that way. They got no bunk in this county jail down there in this place in Florida, Key West. They've got no bunks in the cell.

Russell: Is that right?

President: Yeah. Hell, yes. They treat them like we treated drunks in Texas.

Russell: [laughter] Well I expect to hear from McNamara then this afternoon, Mr. President.

President: All right. Bye. Thank you.

231. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Senator Mike Mansfield¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 11:30 a.m.

President: These people in State and Defense met during the evening on this Guantanamo thing, we're going to meet again after lunch. They're trying to find out exactly what has happened. I wanted to get any reactions you might have to it before I went back to meet with them again.

Mansfield: Well, evidently it appears that they violated no international law, but a state law. It is my understanding that water is being rationed on a 3-hour-a-day basis there and that Castro has allowed the water to flow from the river for an hour each day, so we ought to have plenty. But here is a statement that I made this morning, if you have a minute or so.

"Mr. President, no matter how the Cuban Government may act, the Cuban fishermen are entitled to and will receive the same justice, the same impartial protection of domestic and international law as any other alien persons in similar circumstances. The fact that they are Cubans or that Cuba retaliates for their arrest is irrelevant insofar as the judicial processes of this nation are concerned. However the Cuban Government may regard the matter, there will not be any mixing of justice and water on our part. Insofar as the water supply is concerned, if the pretext of the arrest of the Cuban fishermen had not sufficed, the Havana government would have had no difficulty in creating another. It is obvious that Castro wants us out of Guantanamo, and it is obvious that he is not going to make it easier for us to stay. It is equally obvious that we have no intention of being pressured out. At this time the need is for cool water at the Guantanamo base, hot words on the floors of the Congress will not supply it. We have the technical means to supply the water for as long as it takes, and in whatever quantities it takes. I have every confidence that the President will see to it that we are not parched out of Guantanamo." And then Tommy Kuchel came in and supported it in effect.

President: That's good. That's a good statement.

Mansfield: This will save you \$14,000 a month, I understand, which you won't pay to Mr. Castro's government.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Mike Mansfield, Tape F64.11, Side B, PNO 3. No classification marking. The President placed the call. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

President: What, he's got a good many people working there too, and we probably ought to make, if he's not going to allow us to have water, we probably ought to try to make the whole base independent of him, and secure. We're going to think about that today, and probably issue a pretty strong statement later in the day that, namely that we're going to—he's breached a contract, that's his choice, that's a bad way to do, but he's done it, and therefore we're going to supply our own water, and supply our own personnel and operate our own base.

Mansfield: You mean all the Cubans, all of them would be off?

President: Well, except those that live on the base. So we could do that. We haven't decided to do it, that's a possibility, just declare the complete independence of it. So, we could do that now. I don't know what else we can do. You got any other thoughts?

Mansfield: Well, I would think that one thing which might be worth considering, this would call for very delicate handling, would be for the Florida courts just to release these people with an admonishment and send them home. We could afford to be big-hearted, but that's a state matter, and that could get you into trouble because of the feeling down there.

President: And it may look like we're being awfully soft. I think it ought to follow its normal course, whatever they do to them, and I think most of the time they fine a captain. It looks like from the information we have this is deliberate and—

Mansfield: If I get any ideas on the base of what you said, or any other, I'll pass them on.²

² In a February 7 memorandum to the President, Mansfield recommended that "we ought not be governed in this matter by any passions aroused by water shut off," that the United States should "avoid the appearance of a great nation bullying the weak by an over-display of power," and that "it should be stressed that if the dismissal of Cuban personnel at the base (apart from the water shut-off incident) is really necessary for security of the base, then the best way to do it would be in as restrained and as unthreatening way as possible." In conclusion, Mansfield advised the avoidance of "inadvertently strengthening Castro with his own people on what may be the mistaken assumption that displays of our anger and power will hasten his downfall." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Guantanamo, Water Crisis/Cuban Fishing Boats, 2/64)

232. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 12:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador David Ormsby Gore, British Embassy
The Under Secretary

I spoke this morning with Ambassador Ormsby Gore regarding the seizure of the Cuban shipping boats and the cutting off of the water supply at Guantanamo. I explained that the circumstances under which the boats invaded our territorial waters raised questions as to Cuban purposes. I pointed out that we might be at the outset of a deliberate Cuban policy of trying to drive us either into a dialogue or out of Guantanamo. I pointed out the possible relevance of Castro's trip to Russia and the pending problems in Panama.

I told the Ambassador that American public opinion was aroused and that Americans would be more than ever sensitive to actions by our friends that appeared to be assisting the Cubans—such as the British bus deal. I pointed out that Britain was being held responsible for breaking the line and that the French truck deal announced today appeared to the American public as a predictable result of the British action.

I explained that the imposition of economic sanctions against Cuba was the only weapon short of an act of war that could make the support of Castro's Cuba more costly to the Soviet Union, while at the same time creating conditions of economic stringency that might ultimately bring about the elimination of the Communist regime. It was very difficult for the American people to accept a situation in which their friends appeared to be frustrating such a possibility.

The Ambassador indicated that he was quite aware of our feelings on this matter. He said that, if the issue over Guantanamo should become tense, it might be possible—and he was speaking only for himself—that his Government could do something to stop the delivery of the buses. He would certainly take it up with his Government promptly.

He said that he had already warned the Prime Minister to be prepared for a full discussion of the matter next week, and he hoped that clarification might come out of that discussion.²

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 33-4 CUBA-US. Secret. Drafted by Ball on February 7 and approved in U the same day.

² See Document 241.

233. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 7, 1964.

SUBJECT

Cuban Fishing Vessels Affair

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR
Llewellyn E. Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large Department of State

I began the conversation by referring to articles which have appeared in the Soviet press accusing the United States of an act of piracy in connection with the seizure of some Cuban fishing boats. I pointed out that these articles stated that the boats were seized in international waters. I said that we were fully convinced and had good evidence that this was not the case. I said that when the boats were boarded, two of the Captains had said that they knew they were in United States waters and that one of the Captains had informed Havana by radio that he was in our national waters.

The Ambassador asked when this message was sent, and I said I understood that it was at the time the vessels were apprehended. I said that moreover it appeared that this was a deliberate provocation as members of the crew had stated that they had been given a special briefing in which they were told that they were going on an historic mission. The Ambassador asked if these statements were made by the defectors, and I said I thought they were. He said that sometimes defectors had a tendency to say things which they thought would make them more welcome and valuable. I said that the action we were taking was in accordance with regular procedure followed by all countries and that Castro's action in cutting off the water supply at Guantanamo was completely unjustified. The Ambassador inquired why we had not simply ordered the boats to leave our waters. He said that he understood that this was in fact our first action and that we had then turned them over to the State of Florida. He quoted from the *New York Times* editorial to the effect that Florida was making foreign policy for the United States. He said he understood that the boats had not violated any Federal law.

I replied that this was not the case, that they had violated Federal as well as International Law, but that at the moment no Federal penalty

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 33–4 CUBA–US. Secret. Drafted by Thompson and approved in S/AL on February 7. The meeting was held at the Soviet Embassy.

was provided for, although a bill was pending in Congress to do this. I said that another disturbing factor which made the Cuban action look like provocation was that the boats were fishing in an area where American boats were fishing and that their action had been observed by these vessels. I said that this also made it difficult for the Florida authorities not to carry out the provisions of Florida's laws.

I went on to say that as he doubtless knew, we considered that Castro was irresponsible and capable of dangerous actions. I said that this recent development took place against the background of a number of actions of interference by Castro in other countries of the Western Hemisphere and I mentioned specifically the arms cache which had been found in Venezuela and the fact that some of the mobs in Panama had been led by Panamanians trained in Cuba.

The Ambassador said that the Czech Consul had informed the Soviet Consul that the Cubans had not been engaged in fishing in our waters. He said that some of the Captains had admitted that they were in United States waters but had come there to find quiet water in which to rest. I said our information was that they were fishing, or at least some of them were, but that we were checking this information.

The Ambassador asked what we were going to do with the crews and the vessels. I said that I could not say for sure as we were still discussing the matter, but it was clear that the Captains would be tried in the Florida court. I said that I thought we would release the minor members of the crew at once and that it was possible that the other members of the crew would be released.

I concluded by pointing out that the Cuban situation was a delicate one and one which, if care were not exercised, could easily and quickly lead into a dangerous situation.

The Ambassador expressed appreciation for my visit and said he hoped we, on our side, would handle matters in a way which would not make the situation any worse.

234. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Senator Richard Russell¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 4:30 p.m.

President: Hello.

Russell: Yes sir.

President: Dick, we're going to meet again at 4:30.

Russell: That's right now.

President: Yeah. I wanted to talk to you before I went into the meeting. They're meeting downstairs. Now here's the—nobody wants to do much. They think that the first place these fishermen ought not even have been picked up, that it was a mistake. That they over the limits, but we ought to have told them to get on back home and not make a big incident out of it, because not anything to be gained from it, and we ought to let him show his hand, whether this is in concert with Khrushchev, and what all it means, before we act irrational. There's an opposing viewpoint, that's pretty well the viewpoint of Rusk and McCone, and I would say, Bobby Kennedy. He wants to turn everybody loose and let them go on home. McNamara feels like the sentiment in this country is such that we've got to do more than that, and that even though we would stand acquitted in the eyes of the world and maybe some of the liberal papers in this country, that we probably ought to do two things—declare the independence of that base by saying we're going to furnish our own water . . . and we don't want your damn water, and to hell with you. And number two, tell the people that are on there that they can pledge allegiance to us and live there, the 600. And the other 2500 to go on back and we're going to quit financing, we're going to operate the base independently so our country can be secure and so we operate it independently, and it's going to hurt you more by this action than hurts us, and we just don't need you people. Now that's his feeling, he's about the only one that feels that way. That's my feeling, I think we ought to wrap 'em up.

Russell: That's mine.

President: I think they'll say we're cruel, and these people been loyal to us for two or three generations, been working there, we just firing them outright without anything on their part, because Castro did

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Richard Russell, Tape F64.11, Side B, PNO 4. No classification marking. Johnson placed the call. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

this. USIA thinks it will get a good deal of sympathy from the rest of the nations, and—

Russell: Well, that's their professional attitude. These nations ain't as silly as we attribute them to be, as we seem to think they are. And while they're envious as hell of us, when they get down to where their self interest is involved and when we get hurt, their self interest is injured, they're not nearly as bad as everybody makes out like they are. This Panama thing will demonstrate that beyond any doubt, if our people will just sit tight, give them the facts, say here it is now, you've got a stake in this. Same thing is true here in Cuba, they don't want Castro to prosper, none of the leaders do, they're thousands of the little people who are Communist do, but they're not going to raise any hell about it. Khrushchev will blow up like hell. Comrade Mao Tse-tung will come in with a philippic of some kind, but the world as a whole will say well that's very logical position to take. You got to know that you can protect this, and Khrushchev pulled them out all at once, which he could do, if he'd stopped them all one morning, and you'd hadn't even had an hour's notice, you would need them, but now you're giving yourself the hour's notice. And you're preparing against the probability that he would do another asinine thing by simply declaring that no Cuban national can enter on the base. You've got to be ready for that. But I know—

President: What do you think? I don't like to see them so split, so divided State, Defense, CIA. What do you think the attitude of the country is, the Senate? Are they indignant about cutting this water off. I don't guess as many of them feel as strong as Goldwater does, but I guess a good many of them feel—

Russell: No, they don't. But there's a great many of them, they don't know exactly what they want done, Mr. President, because they don't know what can be done, but they want something done.

President: That's right, ain't much you can do, but this—That's right.

Russell: They don't know just exactly what to do. They're not in favor of any war, I don't think. I don't believe 10% of them would vote for that right now, under these circumstances. But they're just tired of Castro urinating on us and getting away with it. They don't like the smell of it any longer and they just want to sort of show that we are taking such steps as are within our power without involving the shedding of a lot of blood, that's my analysis of the sentiment in the Congress. And I think in the country, course it would be mighty easy to whip them up to where they'd be ready to go to war over it if you cut loose, and banded it up, instead of playing it in low key like is being done, but I approve of the low key play, but I think there's a latent feeling there, that it may not explode right now, but one of these days,

they are going to say, well we've just been a bunch of asses in this country, continually just back down and give away and say excuse me every time we come in collision with one of these little countries because they're small and particularly Communist countries. And when that valve blows, now somebody is going to get hurt. And nobody will know just when the boiler is ready to give on it, but there's a slowly increasing feeling in this country that we're not being as positive and as firm in our foreign relations as we should be, and that we just lean over backwards, that we're worried more about our image than we are about our substance, and that we're backing down. Now that feeling is in the country, just how far it's gotten, I don't know. A demagogue with any strength could blow it up. I don't know of anyone who's got enough strength to do it, people don't trust Goldwater's judgment, lot of them like his independence, and his—

President: You think a lot of people going to think you're hot-headed when you just fire a bunch of innocent humans.

Russell: I don't think so, I don't believe that even the *Times* and the *Post* could stir up 5% of the people about this. I would make it perfectly clear that this is regrettable, that our association with these people has been pleasant and mutually profitable over a period of years . . . but they were within the power of Castro and not in our power, and that we have to make this base independent, and we hope that in happier days, our pleasant relations with them could be renewed. I'd sure throw that in there, you'll get every one of them where he'd be a potential assassin to Castro. Yes, I'd certainly put it in there that way, that our relations with these people have been mutually pleasant and profitable, that Castro, he had control of them. He could stop them any morning, and not a one of them could come and we couldn't afford to be placed in that uncertain position. We had to rely on our resources.

President: If he's going to cut off our water, tomorrow he can cut off our people.

Russell: Pardon?

President: If today he can cut off our water, tomorrow he can cut off our people.

Russell: Sure, sure. He can stop them everyone at the gate, where not one could come in without a moment's notice. We just we can't operate that important establishment in the unpleasant atmosphere, and as regrettable as it is we'll have to make other arrangements for the time being, and hope that in better days when the Cuban people and the American people are permitted to fraternize as they have in the past, and as we are anxious to do today, that we hope to be able to renew this.

President: I'd planned. I think I'm going to make some kind of a statement on it, at least authorize the press to, after we have our meet-

ing this afternoon,² because I think they'll want to hear something after working all day.

Russell: I think you're going to have to say something.

President: Then I think I'm going home for the weekend. Do you see any reason why I shouldn't?

Russell: No, I do not.

President: I think there's every reason to kind of ignore him, go on and make your statement and then go on, not hang around to—

Russell: I agree, don't think there's any reason why you should.

President: Okay, goodbye.

² At a 6:35 news conference that evening, Press Secretary Pierre Salinger read a White House statement indicating that the President had instructed the Department of Defense to make the Guantanamo base self-sufficient. The statement cited that "the reckless and irresponsible conduct of the Cuban Government," remained a threat to peace and warned against "further provocations." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1964*, Book I, p. 273) See Document 235 for discussion regarding the statement.

235. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting at the White House 7 February 1964

1. At 5 p.m. the same group² plus Secretary Rusk, Mr. Ball, Mr. Nitze, Mr. Donald Wilson, USIA, and Mr. Theodore Sorensen met with the President. Mr. McCone commenced with a briefing of the facts which had been established as follows: First, Cuban public statements, press releases and broadcasts have in the last ten days featured the Guantanamo issue. Second, the Cuban ships were fishing in our territorial waters on February 2nd and there were fish aboard of the type caught in these waters. Third, there was no absolute evidence that the

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, Folder 7, DCI Meetings with the President, Jan-Apr 1964. Secret. Drafted by FitzGerald on February 8.

² No other record of the informal meeting that immediately preceded the 5 p.m. meeting at the White House has been found.

ships were dispatched or directed to national waters as against having been directed into traditional United States fishing grounds. Fourth, Cuban authorities *were* advised that the ships were in U.S. national waters at the time they were seized. Fifth, it should be noted that Castro's actions regarding the Guantanamo water supply took place four days after the ships were apprehended which raises some question as to whether Guantanamo was a part of the original plan.

2. Mac Bundy stated that the easiest part of the decision to be reached concerned the Florida legal problem. After hearing Meeker's briefing, the President agreed that the matter should be handled by the Florida courts as being in the nature of a first offense; that the crews would be released under temporary custody of Immigration and not fined; that the captains should be fined and that there should be no forfeiture of the vessels.

3. On the question of Guantanamo and measures to be taken in response to Castro's act, Mr. Bundy said that the choices had narrowed down to alternatives one and two as set forth in the proposed releases.³ The argument centered around the question of the Base employees and the lines were quite clearly drawn. The Secretary of Defense strongly favored the dismissal of employees on the ground that only by this act could the Base be made "secure." General Taylor on balance supported the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Nitze on close balance favored not dismissing the employees but did not re-state his position in the later stage of the argument. Secretary Rusk suggested a compromise which would put special emphasis on the dollar contribution to Castro made by the Base wages.

4. The Attorney General repeated his very strong objection to the dismissal of the Base employees on the grounds that (a) it was an over-reaction to Castro's move and (b) it hurt the wrong Cubans who by and large had been loyal Base employees, some for more than a generation. Mr. McCone also opposed the dismissal on these grounds plus the fact that other countries in which we have bases might fear a sim-

³ At 6:30 p.m. Johnson called Senator Russell to discuss the wording of the statement to be issued that evening and the differences between the President's advisers over two different alternatives and proposed releases. The President read virtually the entire statement to Russell and noted that Bundy, McCone, and Kennedy had disagreed with him and suggested an alternative statement which proposed that the President instruct the Department of Defense to make the Base "wholly sufficient in fresh water" and to prepare other measures to make it secure. Johnson said, "but to do nothing about it [the employees], you see, just to prepare." Russell said "I much prefer the first one, I think that the people will too." The President then said that Mann thought that the rest of the Hemisphere was watching "and if we get soft with them, we'll be soft with Panama and that everybody else will start kicking us in the pants cause they'll think they can." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of conversation between President Johnson and Richard Russell, Tape F64.12, Side A, PNO 1)

ilar action in the event of a disagreement with them. He also pointed out that our annual rental for Guantanamo is \$3,000. Without the economic benefits of the Base salaries, this rental figure will stand out and weaken our Guantanamo position. Mac Bundy stated that from the point of view of domestic reaction (which he said would be bad) there was little to choose between the two alternatives and that he favored alternative two.

5. The President clearly showed that he leaned toward alternative one, mainly on the ground of Base security. The argument went around again with Wilson voting for alternative two and the Secretary of State for alternative one with certain word changes. Mac Bundy at this point made a heated defense of alternative two.

6. Mr. Sorensen said that the course of the argument had indicated to him that neither alternative was adequate under the circumstances.

(7. Mr. McCone pointed out that a recent report had indicated that Cuban training in SAM operations has now entered a new phase wherein Cuban trainees are regularly passing target tracking information. It was agreed that, in view of the fact that this might presage early Cuban control of the SAM installations, there should be an early review of plans for military retaliation.)

8. The President chose alternative one.

Desmond FitzGerald
Chief, Special Affairs Staff

236. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 7:05 p.m.

President: What I'm worried about, there's one thing that worries me about the whole thing. I think they'll demonstrate and raise hell, and all that I'm prepared for, but the one thing that I thought was the word reduce, that doesn't mean anything to me. I would say discontinue, and I don't think it means a damn thing to say reduce,

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy, Tape F64.12, Side A, PNO 2. No classification marking. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

and I hope somebody doesn't pick that up and go picking at us. But if they do, I think that we've got to say that our intention is to get rid of the people who are under his control, who don't want to live on the base, and who are going to take their money and finance Castro.

Bundy: What we mean in other words is to make this program effective, but not to state it in a provocative way.

President: That's right, what we mean is to discontinue.

Bundy: Yep.

President: Get rid of these people, and because if Goldwater gets ahold of it, he'll say, why hell, he said he was going to reduce, he doesn't have to take but a half dozen of them, and that's a reduction.

Bundy: Yeah, I think that action will make a nonsense out of that. I don't think that's the way Bob's going to run it.

President: No, okay. You take care of it for me the best you can.

Bundy: I'll do the best I can, Sir.

237. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara¹

Washington, February 7, 1964, 7:18 p.m.

McNamara: Hello.

President: Bob.

McNamara: Yes, Mr. President.

President: I never did hear from General Taylor, did the Chiefs think that was all right?

McNamara: Well, he tried to call, he didn't get them all, but frankly they were for the hardest possible line. LeMay wanted to go in and bomb the place and Max told me on the way over, driving over this afternoon, that he felt the Chiefs would prefer alternative one, they hadn't actually seen it in that form, but that's what he thought they would prefer. When you asked him to call, he tried to call, he got one

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Robert McNamara, Tape F64.12, Side A, PNO 3. No classification marking. President Johnson placed the call. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

or two, he didn't get them all. But I think we can safely say they would prefer one or two. I didn't tell you at the meeting, because I didn't want to interject it in the conversation but I called Russell as you asked me to and he would prefer alternative one.

President: Yeah. I knew that. There was one thing that worries me. I think one is all right except for that word reduce.

McNamara: Well, I agree with you. I would have much preferred discontinue.

President: We probably just ought to put discontinue in regardless what they said. I just didn't want—Rusk had gone along with us and I didn't want to have a fight with him, but in doing it now—you reduce them or put them on that base, I mean discontinue them or put them on the base.

McNamara: Yeah. I'm sending people down there tonight. They'll get plans and bring it back here, then we'll get it moving on it.

President: Now do you think we're going to have some static with the press on this thing, you think some of our own crowd will be building it up.

McNamara: I don't think so. I don't think we will. I hope we don't have any.

President: Why don't you meet with some of the press tomorrow.

McNamara: I can do that.

President: I'd background them and have Taylor in there with you and tell them, give them a little the dangerous side if they continue, if this guy can cut you off, your water, he can cut you off your people, and you've got to have security at these bases, so that, so that they think we've done enough. Now my real concern, Bob, is that they're going to think we haven't done anything.

McNamara: Well, that was my concern, that's why I wanted to get away from two onto one. I agree with you. I think that's the real danger in this country.

President: But I couldn't understand McCone. He's pretty hard nosed, and I just couldn't find out where he was.

McNamara: I couldn't either. I just told somebody here that when I find myself being accused by McCone as over-reacting, I really begin to wonder.

President: Maybe we better go back to Ford. Will you take me with you.

President and McNamara: [laughter]

President: Goodbye, thank you. I'm going to leave now. I've lost a real good friend. I've got to go to a funeral. But I want you to take care of things while I'm gone.

McNamara: Dean² and I will both be here.

President: All right, okay.

McNamara: Thank you.

² The President called Rusk after talking with McNamara and urged Rusk to meet with the press and “your columnist folk” tomorrow to “go over this thing pretty carefully” so that they would think that “we had a stronger line than some of them” and yet were not “too provocative.” (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Dean Rusk, February 7, 1964, 7:26 p.m., Tape F64.12, Side A, PNO 4)

238. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Switzerland¹

Washington, February 8, 1964, 5:05 p.m.

2149. REPCU. Verbatim Text.

Request Stadelhofer present following note immediately to Foreign Office:

The United States Government has been informed through the Swiss Government of the note which was given the Swiss Ambassador in Havana at 11:15 AM on February 6 and which stated that as of 12:00 Noon of that same day the furnishing of water to the Naval Base at Guantanamo would be suspended and that the suspension would be maintained until the Cuban fishermen at present under detention in the United States were put at liberty.

As indicated in the note which the United States Government sent to the Government of Cuba through the Swiss Government on February 4, 1964,² the four Cuban fishing boats were apprehended within the territorial sea of the United States off East Key in the Dry Tortugas. Further confirmation of this fact is to be found in the testimony of two of the masters of the Cuban fishing boats—Jose Manuel Ventura of the *Cardenas* No. 14 and Manuel Gomez Barrios of the *Lambda* No.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 33-4 CUBA-US. Confidential. Drafted by Bowdler, approved by U. Alexis Johnson, and cleared by Crimmins, Mann, and Leonard Meeker, the Legal Advisor. Repeated to USUN New York and the Cuban Coordinators Miami Office.

² See Document 228.

8—who have admitted to United States Coast Guard officials that they were knowingly fishing in United States waters. Furthermore a monitored conversation between the *Lambda* No. 33 and the control station in Havana which took place at 2:25 p.m. on February 2 read as follows:

Havana: Where are you anchored?

Lambda 33: Well, we are east of Tortugas. Go ahead

Havana: International waters?

Lambda 33: Well no, this is national water, national water

Havana: I understand

From the foregoing it is clear that, first, the Cuban fishing vessels knew they were fishing inside the territorial sea of the United States and, second, that the Cuban authorities in Havana were also aware of this fact.

In the light of the clear violation of international law and of the laws of the United States represented by the illegal fishing of the Cuban vessels in US territorial waters, the Government of Cuba has no justification whatsoever for the arbitrary and irresponsible act of suspending water service to the Guantanamo Naval Base in direct violation of the existing contract between the water company and the Base which runs until 1969.

The Government of the United States protests in vigorous terms this totally unwarranted action and wishes to point out to the Government of Cuba that there can be no relationship whatsoever between measures taken by the Government of the United States against persons who have violated its laws and the unjustified suspension of water service to the Naval Base by the Cuban Government. Any effort to do so is entirely inadmissible to the Government of the United States. Thus the case of the Cuban nationals apprehended illegally fishing in United States territorial waters will proceed under the full guarantees for a fair trial by the State of Florida.

Rusk

239. Paper Prepared by Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, February 10, 1964.

FREE WORLD TRADE WITH CUBA—SOME
PRELIMINARY RUMINATIONS

1. Our objective is twofold. First, for obvious reasons, we want to cut down Free World export of critical commodities to Cuba. Second, we want to hold down or cut down the *level* of Free World trade with Cuba. This reduction of Free World/Cuban commercial contacts is consistent with our overall isolation policy. Also, it is probably important for other reasons that the level of Free World/Cuban trade (even in non-critical commodities) does not rise precipitously during 1964.

2. Probably the most effective way of achieving this dual objective is to bring about a situation whereby the American business community would not trade with anyone trading with Cuba. Cuba has only 6 million people and, as a result, a businessman, contemplating trade with Cuba, will think long and hard before he cuts himself off from the huge American market for the sake of the small Cuban market. If a couple Latin American countries joined the U.S. effort, the action would be even more effective. It is conceivable that such action, which is based on the self-interest motive of Free World traders, would make superfluous other steps in this field.

3. There appear to be three ways in which we can bring about the situation whereby the American business community would not trade with anyone in the Cuban trade. First, we could invoke the Trading with the Enemy Act to legally prohibit Americans from doing business with anyone who trades with Cuba. Second, we could make our desires known to the American business community and urge them to voluntarily cut off commercial dealings with persons trading with Cuba. Third, we could use a combination of the above two methods (e.g. We tell business leaders—"The Government is willing to take step X. Will you be willing to take step Y in order to close the circle?").

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Free World Trade, Vol. III, 12/63-5/65. Secret. Chase forwarded the paper to Bundy under cover of a February 10 memorandum, in which Chase wrote that Crimmins and other Cuban experts "intended to seriously explore the possibilities and problems involved in closing off the American market to Free World traders who deal with Cuba" using most likely the Trading with the Enemy Act. Chase informed Bundy that his "ruminations" were of a "preliminary nature" and he needed more facts.

4. Probably the most effective program would depend largely on the Trading with the Enemy Act, under which we could announce that we intend to blacklist any foreign firm which trades with Cuba after a certain date. If we take this route, we may have to or want to provide loopholes (which, reportedly, is possible). For example: (a) We would undoubtedly make an exception for those firms which export food and drugs to Cuba since our own traders are allowed to do this. (b) Until the world sugar situation loosens, we may want to make an exception for those firms which import Cuban sugar (however, they would pay for it in foreign exchange). (c) We may find that a relatively few Free World firms make up a large part of the Free World's trade with Cuba and that it is not worthwhile or effective to blacklist Free World firms which trade in small quantities of noncritical items.

5. Probably the biggest obstacles to the blacklisting action would be the reaction of Free World (particularly Western European) governments.

(a) Free World governments would certainly point to the violation of free trading principles (e.g. GATT and all that) and might conceivably retaliate against U.S. exporters. They would undoubtedly point out that they are forced into two-way Cuban trade involuntarily—because of the world-wide shortage of sugar.

(b) Our response to Free World governments could include such points as the following: *First*, while we also believe in the principles of free trade, there are overriding national security considerations in this case. Cuban actions in autumn, 1962 and Cuba's recent participation in fomenting subversion in Venezuela, Panama, and Zanzibar make it eminently clear that we are dealing with a particularly nasty, hostile power; the U.S. intends to treat Cuba as one. (It is true that there are other hostile powers which we do not attempt to isolate. Our actions are designed to fit the case and, inter alia, Cuba's unique geographic position makes an isolation policy an effective and appropriate response. As evidence of its impact, note how hard the Cubans and the Soviets are working to break it.) *Second*, we are certainly not taking our action precipitously. We have tried strenuously over the past few years to gain Free World cooperation through persuasion rather than sanction. *Third*, the sacrifice we are asking for, in real terms, is not great. For example, the *total* of Free World exports to Cuba, divided up between many countries and firms, only amounted to a little more than \$100 million in each of the last two years. Generally speaking, no one, except Cuba, is going to hurt very much, even if Cuban sugar is paid for in foreign exchange.

(c) There may be a variety of factors which may mitigate (at least privately) a vociferous response by affected Free World governments. *First*, by now, they are pretty accustomed to our "extreme" behavior

when it comes to Cuba. *Second*, we have been hounding Free World governments about the subject for a long time now; they will probably be only half-surprised when we finally do something decisive about it. *Third*, in real terms, no Free World country will suffer if it cuts itself off from Cuban trade. *Fourth*, Free World governments who sympathize with our objectives but who are unable to control their traders effectively, may secretly welcome action which takes the ball out of their hands.

6. Generally speaking, American business firms are unlikely to resist the proposed action. They would appear to lose little in concrete terms.

7. There are some arguments in favor of taking action quickly if we are going to take it. *First*, we might want to take advantage of the atmosphere generated by Venezuela, Panama, Zanzibar, and Guantánamo. *Second*, we might want to act before the OAS discusses Rio Treaty action against Cuba because of the arms cache discovery. We would then be in a good position to ask all or some of the OAR's to take similar measures (e.g. Venezuela). *Third*, there are indications that Free World/Cuban trade has hit bottom and is beginning to rise. The longer we wait, the more resistance we are likely to meet as vested interests increase along with the trade.

GC

240. Verbal Message From Cuban Prime Minister Castro to President Johnson¹

Havana, February 12, 1964.

1. Please tell President Johnson that I earnestly desire his election to the Presidency in November . . . though that appears assured. But if there is anything I can do to add to his majority (aside from retiring from politics), I shall be happy to cooperate. Seriously, I observe how the Republicans use Cuba as a weapon against the Democrats. So tell President Johnson to let me know what I can do, if anything. Naturally, I know that my offer of assistance would be of immense value to

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Contacts with Cuban Leaders, 5/63–4/65. The message was given to Lisa Howard of ABC News on February 12 in Havana.

the Republicans—so this would remain our secret. But if the President wishes to pass word to me he can do so through you [Lisa Howard].² He must know that he can trust you; and I know that I can trust you to relay a message accurately.

2. If the President feels it necessary during the campaign to make bellicose statements about Cuba or even to take some hostile action—if he will inform me, unofficially, that a specific action is required because of domestic political considerations, I shall understand and not take any serious retaliatory action.

3. Tell the President that I understand quite well how much political courage it took for President Kennedy to instruct you [Lisa Howard] and Ambassador Attwood to phone my aide in Havana for the purpose of commencing a dialogue toward a settlement of our differences. Ambassador Attwood suggested that I prepare an agenda for such talks³ and send the agenda to my U.N. Ambassador. That was on November 18th. The agenda was being prepared when word arrived that President Kennedy was assassinated. I hope that we can soon continue where Ambassador Attwood's phone conversation to Havana left off . . . though I'm aware that pre-electoral political considerations may delay this approach until after November.

4. Tell the President (and I cannot stress this too strongly) that I seriously hope that Cuba and the United States can eventually sit down in an atmosphere of good will and of mutual respect and negotiate our differences. I believe that there are *no* areas of contention between us that cannot be discussed and settled within a climate of mutual understanding. But first, of course, it is necessary to *discuss* our differences. I now believe that this hostility between Cuba and the United States is both unnatural and unnecessary—and it can be eliminated.

5. Tell the President he should not interpret my conciliatory attitude, my desire for discussions as a sign of weakness. Such an interpretation would be a serious miscalculation. We are not weak . . . the Revolution is strong . . . very strong. Nothing, absolutely nothing that the United States can do will destroy the Revolution. Yes, we are strong. And it is from this position of strength that we wish to resolve our differences with the United States and to live in peace with all the nations of the world.

6. Tell the President I realize fully the need for absolute secrecy, if he should decide to continue the Kennedy approach. I revealed nothing at that time . . . I have revealed nothing since . . . I would reveal nothing now.

² All brackets are in the source text.

³ See *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XI, Documents 378, 382, and 387.

241. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 12, 1964, 4:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

British Side

Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
R. A. Butler, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Sir Harold Caccia, Permanent Under Secretary, The Foreign Office
Sir David Ormsby Gore, British Ambassador
Sir Timothy Bligh, Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
Sir Burke Trend, Secretary to the Cabinet

U.S. Side

The President
The Secretary of State
Governor Harriman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
David K. E. Bruce, Ambassador to Great Britain
McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
William R. Tyler, Assistant Secretary, EUR
Richard I. Philips, Director, P/ON
Willis C. Armstrong, Director, BNA

The President asked the Secretary to speak about sanctions on Cuba. He said that he had gone into the matter thoroughly with the Prime Minister in the morning,² and that the Prime Minister was willing to help, but had problems of his own. The President emphasized that we understand the British position, and have our own problems in the situation.

The Secretary opened by saying that trade within the Western Hemisphere with Cuba is now down to a rather low level, and includes no industrial trade, primarily because the hemisphere is concerned over Castro subversion efforts. We want measures to make the industrial situation in Cuba grind to a halt. There has been a 60% reduction in free-world shipping to Cuba, but it is still very substantial. We are also concerned over means of transportation, electrical equipment, spare

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Secretary's Memoranda of Conversation: Lot 65 D 330, February, 1964. Secret. The memorandum is part I of VI. Drafted by Armstrong on February 12 and approved in the White House on February 24 and in S on February 27. Douglas-Home made an official visit to Washington February 12–13 and met with the President both days.

² Secretary Rusk met with Douglas-Home at the White House at 11 a.m. that morning. (Ibid.)

parts and mining equipment. There was a little discussion of the number of British ships in the trade, with general agreement that about one-third of free-world ships in the trade are British.³

The Secretary said that the matter of trade with Cuba had been discussed with the Japanese, who are buying some 300,000 tons of sugar from Cuba, but who are in return sending drugs and textiles, and as little electrical or industrial equipment as possible.

The Secretary went on to say this was not simply a trade matter but one of security of the hemisphere. He said the overflights are continuing, the SAMs are increasingly under Cuban control, arms are being shipped to Venezuela, and the US people can hit the government on a very touchy nerve. This can erode the strength of support in the US for the NATO relationship. Cuba and Peiping are both of such a nature that they can have this effect on American opinion. We believe that our NATO allies need to see this matter as a security problem. In general, our cooperation has been good. Trade control must be economic or it does not work. We have taken every step possible short of war, and we have applied pressure of all kinds. If additional steps are required, the only ones possible are likely to be acts of violence. We do not wish to think about this until we have explored all non-violent means.

The Prime Minister said he fully understood the political problems Cuba presented for the US. The British have tried to use economic sanctions in the past, and feel that they do not work. The British are not giving credit outside ordinary commercial coverage. The UK lives by trade and if the UK refused such transactions as the bus deal, the French would immediately take the business. If the government went to the House of Commons with a proposal to support the kind of measures the US is using, there would be severe criticism of the US and of the government for giving in to US opinion. If British firms trading with Cuba are in danger in terms of their US contacts, this is another matter, but government policy must be clear. Some ships are British by flag, but the owners live somewhere else, and are mostly Greek. The Prime Minister said that the British Government would get at the ship owners again, but as a government it could not cut off trade. Mr. Butler added that the government would take another look at the credit matter.

³ According to a January 24 memorandum of conversation among Rusk, Ball, and the British Ambassador, Ball said that "he felt it was necessary for the British to know that rightly or wrongly their sale of buses to Cuba was regarded in the United States as interference with a well-advertised U.S. policy." Rusk added that "It should be remembered that Bristol was also discussing a \$37 million contract with the United States. Companies were not going to trade both with the United States and Cuba." (Ibid., January, 1964)

The Secretary suggested the British might wish to look at their own attitude toward Venezuela, Mexico and other free countries in the vicinity of Cuba which are seriously concerned over Castro subversion. Perhaps the British could tell the Cubans that they could give government guarantees on exports only as long as Cuba is not injuring its neighbors who have good relations with the UK.

The Prime Minister said of course he realized the Cubans were up to various kinds of monkey business in Latin America but the Russians were up to monkey business throughout the world. He wondered if the US really thought that it was going to bring down Castro by economic pressure. Wouldn't he be more likely to tighten his belt and bear up heroically as a national leader. The Secretary responded by saying that if the Cuban economy was a shambles, Castro would not spend as much on ventures outside of Cuba. If Castro is not going to go away, and is to remain as a real threat, policies have to be devised to deal with this eventuality.

Mr. Bundy said that we did not engage in economic warfare with the Soviet Union. We sell wheat to the Soviet Union, which is of marginal importance to that large economy. The Cuban economy however is in bad shape, and will not last forever in terms of the internal stresses. We can't very well say that we know it won't work, even though making it work is difficult.

Mr. Butler said that British trade is very small, having fallen from an annual average of about £12 million to about £1.9 million. Mr. Bundy wondered if we could talk about things which are in specific short supply in Cuba.

The Secretary said that the people on the UK side should know that it is not Castro's beard, or his organization of Cuba, that we object to. What we do object to, and what are not negotiable, are (a) the military connection with Moscow and (b) the interference in the hemisphere. If Castro realizes this, and accepts it, he can perfectly well negotiate his way back into the hemisphere. The Prime Minister wondered if there was any possibility of Castro approaching the US to talk about it. The Secretary said there were once three schools of thought in Cuba, one favoring Moscow, one favoring Peiping and one Titoist. He said he had seen no significant evidence of an effort to rejoin the hemisphere. Ambassador Ormsby Gore wondered if the Titoist policy would be consistent with membership in the hemisphere. The Secretary said that a Titoist policy, meaning Tito at his best, would open up a different situation, but this might take some time.

The Prime Minister said the whole thing was extremely difficult. He said that his government might talk to firms, might indicate that they could lose US business. He promised further to watch the situation on credits, and he noted that export guarantees are a type of in-

surance. Mr. Bundy said they were about the same as we give on Soviet wheat sales. The Secretary wondered if British firms would trade without credit, and the Prime Minister said they would if Cuba paid cash. The President inquired concerning the trend of British trade with Cuba. Mr. Butler said that it had fallen to £1.9 million in 1963, but he conceded that it was now going up. He observed that US trade in 1963 was about £12 million. He wondered what accounted for this size. The Secretary said the biggest item was food and drugs connected with the prisoner exchange. Trade also included payment for water, and the wages of Cubans working at Guantanamo, and both of these were not being reduced. The Prime Minister returned to the problem of Castro's status in Cuba, wondering if Castro could be repudiated by the people. Mr. Bundy said the regime was not responsible to the people, but the ruling group might split, and control by other elements might be possible.

242. Paper Prepared in the Department of State¹

Washington, undated.

MEMORANDUM ON SOME BASIC ISSUES IN THE CUBAN PROBLEM REQUIRING POLICY DECISIONS

[Omitted here is section I on "OAS Action on Venezuelan Arms Cache."]

Counter-Measures Against Free-World Economic Ties with Cuba

During the past two months there have been major compromises of our efforts to reduce trade between the free world and Cuba. These breaches have made it clear that our present tactics of relying essentially on diplomatic persuasion are not adequate.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 1 CUBA-US. Secret. Drafted by Crimmins, Bowdler, and Charles R. Carlisle (ARA/CCA), and approved by Mann and Crimmins. The paper was attached to a February 19 memorandum from Johnson to Bundy in which Bundy stated that the paper was prepared "solely to serve as a basis of discussion" for a meeting of national security officials later that day at the White House including McCone, Kennedy, Johnson, Mann, Bundy, Ambassador Bunker, and General Maxwell Taylor. The meeting was held at 5 p.m., and was almost entirely devoted to a discussion of projected OAS action against Cuba; see *Foreign Relations, 1964-1968*, vol. XXXI, Document 3.

We confront a major policy decision. Should we:

1. quietly abandon our efforts against Cuba's trade with the free world and accept the probability of a significant increase in this trade with all its consequences?
2. adopt new tactics designed to bring our pressures more directly against the commercial interests of trading firms?
3. continue our present tactics, even though they are not adequate, because they may be an acceptable response to both domestic pressures to "do something" about Cuba and foreign pressures not to do too much?

If we decide to adopt new tactics, we have two major approaches open to us. We can employ either:

1. A proclaimed list barring U.S. citizens from any business or financial transactions with foreign firms trading with Cuba² and freezing the U.S. assets of such firms; or
2. A variety of partial measures, either singly or together, such as a denial of government contracts to traders with Cuba and private boycotts.

Although a significant amount of trade between Cuba and the free world would occur despite the establishment of a proclaimed list, the action would almost certainly be much more effective than any other measure or combination of measures we might employ. The fundamental question regarding a proclaimed list is whether we are prepared to endure the very real political costs that would result from its establishment and whether we would also be prepared to incur the risk of retaliation that might be directed against either United States commercial interests or the government itself.

Our problem is made more difficult by the probable necessity of a waiver for Spain under Section 620(a)(3) of the Foreign Assistance Act³

² According to the memorandum for the record of this February 19 meeting at 5 p.m., drafted on February 22, several of the participants felt that one stumbling block to the proclaimed list appeared to be an impossible hurdle, i.e., how could Free World firms be blacklisted while Soviet Bloc ones were not? On the one hand, the U.S. Government was pursuing measures designed to lessen tensions with the Soviet Bloc and to draw these countries closer to the West. On the other, if the blacklist procedures were not employed against the Bloc and Yugoslavia, then the United States would be open to the charge that it was punishing its friends but not the Communists. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, OAS Resolution (Arms Cache), Vol. II, Memos, 11/63-9/64)

³ Section 620(a)(3) of the Foreign Assistance Act of September 4, 1961 (PL 87-195), as amended by Public Law 87-872 on October 23, 1962, prohibited economic and military assistance to countries whose ships and aircraft transported merchandise to Cuba. The amended act authorized the President to waive the provisions penalizing such countries if he found it in the national interest to do so. President Johnson chose not to waive the act's provisions in the cases of Britain, France, and Yugoslavia, and in mid-February the Department of State announced that all assistance to them was terminated. The administration also suspended new aid commitments to Spain and Morocco, in the hope that they could be weaned from trade with Cuba.

because of the great importance of our bases there. The concession of the waiver will encourage Spanish-Cuban trade, but beyond that other free-world countries will exploit the waiver to justify their own economic activities toward Cuba. Furthermore, the waiver will be incongruent with and harmful to our attempts to obtain forward action from the OAS in the economic and anti-subversion sectors.

The prospect of the signing of a US-USSR civil aviation agreement poses another serious issue for our Cuban policies and illustrates, as in the case of the Spanish waiver, the sharp conflict between apparently irreconcilable major objectives. The policy choice we face is between:

1. The important broad interest to be served in our relations with the Soviet Union by the signature of the agreement; and
2. The serious damage to our attempts to maintain and strengthen the isolation of Cuba with respect not only to trade but also to the anti-subversion effort.

The choice is complicated by the negative effects of the conclusion of the agreement on our ability to obtain OAS action to sever air and sea transportation between the OAS countries and Cuba.

II. Counter-Measures Against Free-World Economic Ties with Cuba

A. Necessity to Consider New Measures Against Trade

It has become clear that the United States Government must either change its methods of restricting free-world trade with Cuba or accept the probability of a significant increase in this trade, with all its consequences. Our present tactics of relying essentially on diplomatic persuasion, reinforced by pressures on free-world firms trading with Cuba by their American associates and occasional small-scale preclusive purchases, have not prevented major breaches in our efforts to isolate Cuba. Key free-world governments have flatly refused to cooperate with our policy, even when approached at the highest level, and we are suffering successive losses. If we are to continue to try to arrest and turn back the trend in Cuban-free-world trade, we must turn our pressures more directly against the commercial interests of the trading firms, essentially making them choose between trade with Cuba or trade with the United States.

B. Possible Dimensions of Expanded Cuban Trade

In 1963 Cuban exports to the free world may have amounted to about \$190 million, while imports were probably about \$115 million, a total of around \$300 million. During the year Cuba also increased its foreign exchange holdings from about \$20 million to approximately \$75-100 million.

Assuming that, in 1964, we are unable to reduce Cuban trade and that:

1. Cuba maintains sugar exports to the free world at about 1.4 million metric tons;
2. Sugar prices average about 8 cents a pound;
3. Cuba exports about \$10 million worth of other commodities to the free world;
4. Cuba maintains foreign exchange holdings at about present levels;
5. Cuba finances imports from the free world out of current export earnings;
6. Credits extended by free world suppliers to Cuba cover only Cuba's net deficit on invisibles,

then:

Cuba's exports to and imports from the free world would each amount to about \$260 million, for a total of about \$520 million, an increase of nearly 75 percent over 1963.

Obviously, a decrease in sugar prices or Cuban inability to export as much as 1.4 million tons of sugar to the free world could lower the export earnings and perhaps the total trade figure. On the other hand, if free-world suppliers were willing to extend large-scale credits to Cuba, then Cuba's imports from and total trade with the free world could use above the \$260 million and \$520 million estimates.

With respect to the impact that any increase in free world-Cuban trade would have on the Cuban economy, much depends, of course, on how Cuba allocates its foreign exchange holdings and how wisely it employs the goods it does import. A conservative assessment, however, would have to assume increasing Cuban competence in such matters. Significantly increased imports of commodities critical to the Cuban economy could provide the crucial margin between a wallowing economy and one showing satisfactory growth.

[Omitted here is section C, a detailed discussion of U.S. alternatives concerning free world trade with Cuba, and section III, "Measures to Counter Castro-Communist Subversion."]

243. Paper Prepared by Gordon Chase of the National Security Council¹

Washington, February 26, 1964.

ECONOMIC ISOLATION POLICY—SUMMARY

A. Free World Shipping to Cuba

1. In 1962, Free World ships made a total of 932 trips to Cuba.
2. In 1963, Free World ships made 371 trips to Cuba. This represents roughly a 60% reduction from the 1962 level of Free World shipping to Cuba.
3. The prospects for further reduction in 1964 are fairly bright. In 1963, the Greeks, Lebanese, and British were the primary shippers. For all practical purposes, the Greeks have now left the trade. A Lebanese law is expected to become effective in mid-March which should eliminate many Lebanese ships during 1964. We have made very little headway with HMG, but a U.S. deal with the biggest shipper in the British trade (Mavroleon) is expected to result in a substantial reduction in the British ships by the end of 1964. Thus, the shipping figures in 1964 should be even lower than in 1963; this of course assumes that we can prevent other Free World ships from picking up the slack which we expect the Greeks, Lebanese, and Mavroleon to leave.

B. Free World Aviation to Cuba

1. In October 1962, Free World scheduled services to and from Cuba consisted of 20 flights per week, operated by four carriers. Also, there was a Cubana flight which operated between Mexico City and Havana, and a Canadian cargo service which operated once a week between Montreal and Havana. In addition, there were a number of Free World non-scheduled operations to Havana.
2. At present there is only one Free World scheduled service to Havana—Air Iberia operates between Madrid and Havana once a week. Cubana still operates its flights to Mexico and is now also operating, twice a month, to Madrid. The non-scheduled Canadian cargo run is still in operation. Other non-scheduled operations to Havana have been substantially reduced.
3. The prospects for 1964 appear fairly bright. At the least, we think we can hold the line. Hopefully, OAS action, because of the

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Free World Economic Ties with Cuba, 1964. Secret. Drafted by Chase and forwarded to Bundy attached to an "as you requested" covering memorandum of February 26.

Venezuelan arms cache discovery, will result in the cutting-off of the Havana/Mexico City air link. This will put another crimp in Castro's efforts to bring Latin Americans to Cuba for subversive training. (Other steps have already had a marked effect—in 1963, as compared to 1962, there was a 50% reduction in the number of Latin Americans who traveled to Cuba.)

C. Free World Trade with Cuba

1. In 1958, Cuba's total trade with the Free World amounted to \$1.5 billion. Of this, about \$1 billion was trade with the U.S., while about \$500 million was trade with other Free World countries.

2. In 1962, U.S. trade with Cuba was negligible while Free World trade with Cuba fell about 50% from 1958 levels to about \$200–\$250 million; exports to Cuba were roughly \$115 million while imports from Cuba were roughly \$120 million. Estimates indicate that when all the statistics are in, Free World trade with Cuba in 1963 will amount to roughly \$250–\$320 million; exports to Cuba are expected to remain the same at roughly \$115 million while imports are expected to jump to \$190 million. A table is attached which shows the primary Free World traders in 1962 and 1963.

3. The prospects for 1964 are not at all good. Assuming we generally continue on our present course, and take no further concrete steps to restrict trade (e.g. the drastic proclaimed list action), it is estimated that total Free World trade with Cuba could amount to roughly \$520 million, an increase of nearly 75% over 1963. This, of course, could vary. For example, if sugar prices drop below the estimated 8¢ per pound, then the value of Free World/Cuba trade in 1964 could be less than \$520 million. On the other hand, the value of Free World/Cuba trade in 1964 could be more than \$520 million if Free World countries extend large-scale credits to Cuba, or if the Bloc, anxious to break our isolation policy, decides to give foreign exchange to Cuba for purchases in the Free World.

GC

244. Editorial Note

President Johnson commented briefly on Cuban relations during a long telephone call that he placed to Senator Russell on February 26, 1964. He said, in part: "Tom Mann thinks we're stronger in the Hemisphere today than we were 90 days ago, because of what we've done in Panama and what we've done in Cuba. He thinks we're in worse shape than we've been in 20 years and that the Hemisphere is in a very dangerous position. But he thinks that these two little insignificant moves have let them know that 'don't tread on me.' And he thought they needed to know that pretty much."

Later in the conversation Johnson mentioned that Castro had talked during one of his interviews about wanting to turn the water back on at Guantanamo. Johnson summarized Castro's position as being "that he's not going to cause any real trouble and he wants Guantanamo, but he wants it peacefully." The President tied this to "when we fired 500 the first damned day, every one of them went to belly-aching to him that they lost their jobs."

In concluding about Cuba, Johnson said that Guantanamo had had "over 300 known subversives" and that he had "told the Admiral down there" that he would "try to do something about it." The President then said: "But I give up. Whenever I hit the Department of Defense or the Department of State, it's like a man trying to punch his way through a big thick mattress. You just can't do it. You hit it and the damned thing gives when you hit—the bed bounces back out." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Richard Russell, February 26, 1964, 12:10 p.m., Tape F64.14, Side B, PNO 1) The portions of the conversation printed here were prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume.

245. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, February 26, 1964.

SUBJECT

Discussion with the President at 1:00 o'clock, February 26th; No one was present

[Omitted here is discussion of Vietnam, Corona satellite coverage of the Soviet Union, and the surfacing of Oxcart aerial surveillance.]

5. I then referred to the Item [*1 line of source text not declassified*].² This item refers to the withdrawal of the Soviets from Cuba and the turning over of the SAM sites to them. I said there was a high probability that the SAM sites would be placed in the hands of the Cubans who would have absolute control over them. I said that other evidence convinced us there would be a continuing withdrawal of Soviets from Cuba, but not a total withdrawal; however we could not gauge the exact numbers. I said that this, in my opinion, represented probably the next important crisis that we would face because Castro in his rather amicable but long press conference had raised the question of our penetrating illegally Cuban air space. I therefore recommended that this subject be discussed with Secretaries of State and Defense; that they be ordered to prepare contingency plans for such a situation, otherwise we would be confronted with an emergency, all the lights in town would be on, and our course of action would have to evolve under an atmosphere of emergency. I pressed this point hard. The President asked if I had discussed it with McNamara and Rusk and I told him I had, on two occasions, but they seemed wholly preoccupied with the problem at hand and had never come to grips with this particular hypothetical but possible situation. The President gave me no satisfactory answer as to any action he would take. In fact, he seemed more preoccupied with the withdrawal of Soviets and the "numbers remaining" than he did with the issue I was confronting him with.

[Omitted here is discussion of Ghana and Nkrumah.]

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80–B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, 1 January–30 April 1964, Box 6, Folder 7. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone on February 27.

² Not printed. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Intelligence Briefings, 1/64–12/64)

246. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 2, 1964.

SUBJECT

Guantanamo—Reduction of Cuban Employees

1. A new batch of commuters were given notice last week. The picture now is roughly as follows:

- (a) 300 "undesirables" are gone.
- (b) 180 domestics have left the Base; 35 others have exiled themselves or have other jobs on the Base.
- (c) 265 "goodies" are gone; 225 "goodies" have exiled themselves.
- (d) In total, therefore, roughly 1000 commuters have either left the Base or have exiled themselves.
- (e) 1220 commuters remain to be handled. If and when we give notice to this group, we estimate that roughly 40% will exile themselves.

2. As you may recall, about ten days ago I told DOD that we wanted the commuter reduction gently pushed through to zero.

3. A DOD contact confidentially tells me that he is skeptical that DOD will continue the reduction without a high-level push from the White House—while the Navy prepared a reduction plan at our request, Secretary McNamara appears to be holding it up. He went on to say that the Secretary has taken personal charge of the matter and may not want to carry the reduction beyond 1000 commuters—a figure which the President and he apparently agreed upon originally, at the time of the water crisis. The Secretary may be under some pressure from the Navy which argues (a) that a further reduction of commuters highlights the erosion of our position in Guantanamo; (b) that the release of faithful employees is a tough moral, humanitarian problem, and gives Castro propaganda ammunition; and (c) that there is a practical difficulty in replacing them.

4. If the President and Secretary McNamara are on different wavelengths, you may want to bring up the issue at lunch on Tuesday.² To avoid speculation as to how the White House knows what it knows, you might bring the subject up (a) by noting the Guantanamo cable traffic which indicates that about 1000 commuters have been handled so far,

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Guantanamo General, Vol. I, 2/64–2/65. Confidential; Eyes Only.

² March 3. This paragraph is double lined in the left-hand margin and a notation in Chase's handwriting on page 1 reads "See p. 2," referring to paragraph 4. No other record of this Tuesday luncheon has been found.

and (b) by inquiring what the plans are with respect to the remaining 1200.³

5. While this is an evenly balanced case, I must say that I still favor the reduction to zero. As long as Castro can turn off or turn on the workers at will, the chances are better than even that, for one reason or another, he will tweak our nose in this respect before the year is out. And we will be faced with the same kind of head-line situation that we faced when he turned off the water.

GC

³ In an April 6 memorandum to Bundy, Chase stated that the “grapevine confidentially tells me that the President apparently gave Secretary McNamara the word on this one—i.e. that he wanted the Secretary to continue the reduction.” A notation in Bundy’s handwriting connected by an arrow to the word “McNamara” reads “correct.” (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Guantanamo General, Vol. I, 2/64–2/65)

247. Memorandum for Record¹

Washington, March 4, 1964, 6:15–7:25 p.m.

The following are additional notes on the discussion at the Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting with the President on March 4, 1964 on Cuba, Vietnam and various related subjects.

In the briefing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff discussed the operational plans on Cuba and pointed out the various time factors involved—72 hours—7 days—18 days—and the sizes of the forces available in each of these time elements.

The Chiefs emphasized that one of the factors is shipping and that the longest time element involves getting troops from Fort Hood to the East Coast and the Marines from the West Coast through the Canal and to the East Coast for reembarkation.

In this discussion, the Chiefs reviewed the actions of October 1962. Much questioning by the President concerned the strategy involved and the various possibilities.

As an end result of this, the President directed the Joint Chiefs to give him a list, made up by themselves, of everything they think

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of C.V. Clifton, Meetings with the President, Vol. 1. Top Secret; Very Sensitive. The meeting was held in the Cabinet Room. The time and place of the meeting are from the President’s Daily Diary. (Ibid.)

we can do that we are not now doing to put further pressure on Cuba.

In the discussion of Cuba there was mention of a joint resolution by Congress which would give the President a quasi-legal position for expanding the efforts. As he understood it, this joint resolution was to be based on an acknowledgment that the activities of Castro had taken on a new and different kind of threat to this hemisphere—not a security threat against the U.S. directly, but because of Castro's training of Cuban and Communist agitators and exporting them to other countries, he is posing a long-range threat to the stability and security of Latin America. On these grounds, he was posing a new threat which people around the world could recognize. Discussion of this resolution was not terminated precisely, but the Presidential reaction appeared to be included in his discussion and reaction to the proposal of a joint resolution by Congress concerning the war in South Vietnam.

The Cuban discussion also led to a discussion of a blockade and the difference between a quarantine which we held in October 1962 and a real blockade, including the halting of Russian shipping, and especially the stoppage of petroleum ships. It was indicated that the Joint Chiefs should discuss this possibility in conjunction with everything we can do that we are not doing.

[Omitted here is discussion of Vietnam. For a memorandum of conversation prepared by Maxwell Taylor, see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume I, Document 70.]

My concluding impression of this long discussion on Cuba and South Vietnam was that the President requested urgently that the Joint Chiefs give him their very best military advice in the form of two lists of action that could be taken—one for Cuba and one for the Southeast Asia area, and from what he had heard in the discussion, he was willing to accept their judgments, and, in a sense, was now setting out upon this course of activity which they had outlined verbally.

In turn, the President expected their 100% support of the actions agreed upon and a cessation (on the part of everyone) of forecasting and discussing in public what we intend to do. He emphasized this point with the comparison to the Normandy operation, pointing out how difficult and impossible it would have been for General Eisenhower to succeed if everything we were planning had been discussed by government officials, including State Department and military officials, before they even staged the landings.

C. V. Clifton²

*Major General, USA
Military Aide to the President*

² Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

248. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson¹

Washington, March 6, 1964.

We have one extremely (attached) interesting and disturbing intelligence report² to the effect that when Castro heard about the fishing boat incident, one of the things he thought of doing was to shoot down one of our U-2 planes in retaliation. This report underlines the fact that the surface-to-air missiles in Cuba are coming increasingly under Cuban and not Russian control, and that there is therefore a need to take measures to warn Castro and his Russian friends once more on the dangers of interference with our regular high-level surveillance. I therefore suggest that you may wish to sign the attached memorandum to the Secretary of State³ asking for a diplomatic scenario aimed at strengthening our position on this matter.⁴

McG. B.

Attachment

Memorandum From President Johnson to Secretary of State Rusk

Washington, March 6, 1964.

Recent intelligence reports indicate that Castro may have an itchy finger on the trigger of the surface-to-air missiles in Cuba. It seems to me very important that we take every possible step to warn both the Cubans and their Soviet friends of the risk involved in any interference with our high-level surveillance. I would be glad if the Department would promptly prepare a plan for appropriate, strong, high-level warnings on this point.

Lyndon B. Johnson

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. I, 1/64–1/65. Secret.

² Not attached. On March 4 McCone sent an intelligence report to Bundy, Rusk, and McNamara that reported that Castro, in his rage over the fishing vessels incident, considered firing a missile at a U-2 plane as it overflew Cuba, but instead cut off the water supply to Guantanamo. (Ibid., Intelligence, Vol. I, 11/63–11/64)

³ Not found attached; the attachment printed here is the memorandum the President signed on March 6. (Ibid., Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64–7/67)

⁴ Johnson signed the memorandum indicating his approval.

249. Letter From the Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division of the Central Intelligence Agency (FitzGerald) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 6, 1964.

Dear Mac:

Dick Helms and I are most appreciative of the opportunity you gave us this morning for a thorough discussion of the Agency's various operational problems in connection with Cuba. It was very helpful to us and has served to clarify to a great extent our own thinking on the future of our various operational programs. It might perhaps be well to set forth, in this informal fashion, a list of the various topics which we discussed together with the considerations that appear to me to apply.

In the first place, as you know very well, although the Agency appears as the proposer of most covert action programs at the Special Group and elsewhere, we do this only in response to what we understand to be policy requirements and have no interest in either commencing or perpetuating any programs which are not demanded by policy and which are not geared to the accomplishment of a specific objective. The interdependent program of actions which we proposed last spring and which was accepted in June² was based on three propositions which were accepted at the time: (a) that it was in the U.S. interest to get rid of Castro; (b) that, in attempting to do so, the U.S. did not wish either to employ overt force or to raise the international "noise level" to an unacceptable degree; and (c) that the ultimate objective of the program was not mass uprisings but to encourage disaffected elements within the military establishment and other power centers of the regime to carry out a coup.

The resulting program represented a maximum covert effort but only a minimum overall national effort which *could* result in overthrowing Castro. The percentage of chance of achieving this purpose was admittedly never too high even had the program proceeded on full blower. In fact the economic part of the program suffered a serious, if not fatal, reverse with the Leyland bus contract and subsequent moves by European suppliers to take advantage of Castro's improved cash position. The sabotage raids, built into the program as a sort of

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, 1/64-6/65. Secret; Eyes Only.

² For text of the proposed program of action, see *Foreign Relations, 1961-1963*, vol. XI, Document 346.

firing pin for internal unrest and to create the conditions for a coup, which was to be the main force leading to Castro's defeat, ran only from August to December and only five were actually conducted. The effectiveness of these five raids is certainly debatable; there are strong proponents on both sides of the argument. Regardless of how that debate might come out, however, five rather low-key raids followed by the present three-month hiatus, the latter clearly noted by pro- and anti-Castroites alike, adds up to a program of a much smaller dimension than originally envisioned which could not be expected to have had the desired detonating effect.

At the present time, as a result of a number of circumstances well known to you, Castro is in a strong upswing and the spirit of resistance within Cuba is at a very low point indeed. In my estimation, a covert program at this time designed to overthrow Castro is not realistic. Acceptance of risks and noise level of a greater magnitude than we had in mind in June would be needed to stand a chance in view of the developments since last June. This then raises the question of what should happen now to the various bits and pieces of the June program. I would like to mention these separately and refer to some of the considerations typical to each.

The sabotage raids are conducted by Cuban exile groups held and trained in Florida and entirely subject to our planning and control. There are three of these groups totaling approximately 50 men. To place them in position and recover them there requires an extensive maritime apparatus in Florida, which likewise serves intelligence agent infiltrations and exfiltrations. To maintain the raiding capability on a stand-by basis is expensive but, more importantly, the raiding groups themselves have a relatively short shelf life; if not employed their morale deteriorates and some of the members, usually the best motivated, drop out. Replacements can be acquired and trained but their caliber and morale is in large part determined by the morale of the exile community as a whole. We probably can retain the present raiding groups at roughly their current capabilities for another month or two, although the well-known Cuban volatility is capable of causing sudden and more rapid deterioration.

In short, we will need to know within a reasonable time whether we should continue to effect repairs to and keep in being our sabotage raiding apparatus. The dismemberment of these raiding teams could be accomplished without too much shock to the exile community. It would be noticed, but, if done carefully, particularly if it coincided with the commencement of "autonomous" operations, it should not cause undue repercussions and polemics against U.S. policy.

As you know, again as part of the June plan, we are supporting two "autonomous" exile groups headed respectively by Manuel Ar-

time and Manolo Ray. In both cases we have gone to maximum lengths to preserve the deniability of U.S. complicity in the operation. Artime, who now possesses the greater mechanical and paramilitary apparatus, has required a good deal of hand-feeding although still within the context of deniability. He will probably not be ready for his operations against Cuba before April or May of this year. He possesses most of his hardware and maritime equipment and has negotiated geographical and political bases in Central America. Manolo Ray has been handled on a much more independent basis. We have furnished him money and a certain amount of general advice. He does not possess the physical accoutrements that Artime has and is probably not as well equipped in terms of professional planning. Ray has a better political image inside Cuba among supporters of the revolution and has recently acquired, according to reports, some of the other leftwing exile activist groups such as Gutierrez Menoyo and his Second Front of the Escambray. He is said to be ready to move into Cuba on a clandestine basis late this spring. His first weapon will be sabotage inside Cuba, apparently not externally-mounted hit-and-run raids.

If U.S. policy should demand that the "autonomous" operations be suspended, we could of course cut off our support immediately. Artime and his group might or might not disintegrate at once. Manolo Ray almost certainly would continue. Both groups are based outside the United States and our only real leverage on them is through our financial support but withdrawal of this support would probably be fatal to their operations in time. A cutoff of this support, even though this support has been untraceable in a technical sense, would have a considerable impact within the exile community. U.S. support is rumored, especially in the case of Artime, and the collapse of the only remaining evidence of exile action against Castro would hit the exile community hard which is what it in turn would do to its favorite target, U.S. policy. The exile of today, however, appears to have lost much of his fervor and, in any case, does not seem to have the capacity for causing domestic trouble which he had a year or two ago. The Central American countries in which the exile bases exist would be greatly confused, although we have carefully never indicated to the governments of these countries any more than U.S. sympathy for the "autonomous" groups.

We have a capacity, which is increasing, to sabotage Cuban merchant ships calling at foreign ports. We are emphasizing in this program the more subtle forms of sabotage as against large explosions obviously stemming from agent-placed bombs and limpets. The Cuban merchant fleet, among the most badly run in the world, can be helped along to a measurable degree by this program.

On the economic warfare front, as you know, we have for many months conducted a covert denial program based on limited

capabilities directed at very narrow targets. The effectiveness of this program is dependent on the careful selection of items to be denied in terms of their critical value to a key element of the Cuban economy. Despite the virtual collapse of the U.S. overall economic denial program against Cuba, we still retain the capacity, using unofficial and covert methods, to hurt but obviously not to destroy certain bits of the Cuban economy. This effort can be complemented by carefully concealed contamination of lubricants and similar actions.

Our program to get in touch with and subvert members of the military establishment and other elite groups in Cuba continues. Its chance of success naturally rises and falls with the state of morale inside Cuba as influenced by the success or inactivity of our other programs and the U.S. posture in general.

Our intelligence program continues at full force. It will be affected by anti-Castro morale but we believe that we can offset the effects of further deterioration in this morale by increasingly tightened and efficient operations.

We are seeking your advice to know which of the above lines of actions we should continue, which we should try to retain as a shelf capability and which to abandon. (Of course, intelligence collection would continue.) As parts of an integrated national program designed to have at least a fighting chance to get rid of Castro, they seemed to us to make sense; as separate pieces they can serve to exert some braking effect on Castro's progress, but that is about all.

Sincerely,

Des

250. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 12, 1964.

SUBJECT

Cuba—Miscellaneous

1. *Warnings to Cubans and Russians about SAM's*

I refer to the President's memo to the Secretary (attached)² requesting that warnings be given to the Russians and Cubans to deter SAM firings at our U-2's over Cuba.

John Crimmins tells me that, a couple days ago, State completed a package for the President's approval.³ The Secretary signed off and intended to bring the matter up at the luncheon meeting with the President on Tuesday;⁴ reportedly, he did not do so because other people were present. The State paper recommends that we send a warning note to the Cubans only; we would send it through the Czech Embassy so that the Russians would be sure to see it. Tommy Thompson feels that we should not send a warning note directly to the Russians.

It is hard to comment without seeing the State package but my own preliminary view is that the general guiding principle in this case must be that we should do whatever is most likely to restrain the Cubans from shooting down a U-2. Castro scares me because I think he is a man who can regard a threat as credible but still disregard the consequences if his honor and emotion are involved; the upcoming OAS action may be just the sort of thing which will rile him next. On the other hand, when the Russians regard a threat as credible, they appear likely to act accordingly. In short, I believe that we are most likely to prevent a shoot-down if our note to Castro is buttressed by a good strong pitch from Khrushchev to Castro; Khrushchev, after all, has real leverage over Castro.

If Tommy Thompson's indirect approach to the Russians is most likely to result in a strong Khrushchev pitch to Castro, then I am for it. If, however, we are more likely to get the most effective Khrushchev

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64-7/67. Secret.

² See the attachment to Document 248. A notation in the upper left hand corner in Bundy's handwriting reads "GC. Ask them where this is?"

³ Document 251.

⁴ March 10; no other record of this meeting has been found.

pitch by sending a stiff note directly to the Russians, then other arguments, against sending a note to the Russians, should be very powerful to be over-riding. (Another consideration might be that we would want our position on a shoot-down to be clearly on the record vis-à-vis the USSR; especially, if one occurs.)

[Omitted here is a brief item on Morocco.]

GC

251. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rusk to President Johnson¹

Washington, March 15, 1964.

SUBJECT

Warning to Cubans and Soviets Against Interference with our Aerial Surveillance of Cuba

1. I recommend that the warning to the Cubans and Soviets against interfering with our overflights of Cuba, which you requested in your memorandum of March 6, 1964,² be done in the form of a note to the Cuban Government to be delivered through the Czech Ambassador in Washington. By using this method and channel we can be sure that the Soviets will also get the message without our incurring the disadvantage of making a special, direct approach to them on the subject. There is enclosed for your consideration and approval the text of a proposed note.³

2. I also recommend that as a further deterrent we get word to Castro through “black” channels that: (a) we have taken very careful note of his recent public statements on overflights, (b) we interpret these statements as a threat to shoot down our surveillance flights, and (c) we would like nothing better, and we are prepared to react immediately to such an eventuality.⁴

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64–7/67. Secret; Sensitive.

² See the attachment to Document 248.

³ Attached but not printed.

⁴ There is no indication on the memorandum that the President approved items 1 or 2.

Discussion:

The late President Kennedy and I on various occasions following the missile crisis made public statements indicating that in the absence of inspection on the ground we would maintain our surveillance flights over Cuba and that any interference with those flights would invite a dangerous situation. A compilation of these statements is enclosed.⁵

Last June the Cubans sent us a note protesting U.S. overflights⁶ and warning that: (1) Cuban gunners had orders to fire at any foreign war plane that makes low-altitude flights over Cuban territory, and (2) the Cuban Government was stepping up its preparations to shoot down any war plane that violated Cuban air space at any altitude. In our reply, sent to the Cubans through the Czechs, we reminded the Cuban Government of our publicly expressed position on the dangers of any interference with air surveillance and pointed out that our position remained unchanged. We considered sending the note through the Czechs tantamount to notifying the Soviets of our position. The text of our reply is enclosed.⁷

In recent months Fidel Castro has repeatedly alluded to violation of Cuban air space by U.S. aircraft. The most forthright of his statements was made in a press conference with foreign newsmen on February 6, 1964. Castro said: "The Government of Cuba has repeatedly warned the United States of the consequences which may result from violations of our air space. It must not be forgotten that this is an arbitrary action which may create problems and incidents."

The foregoing statement, made in the context of the fishing boat incident, gives us a good occasion for sending a warning to the Cubans on the overflights. Since in the next few days we plan to send a routine reply to the Cubans, via the Czech Ambassador, on their notes concerning various aspects of the fishing boat incident and Guantanamo, we would use the same occasion to deliver the warning note. By sending the note through the Czech Ambassador we can be sure that it will reach the Soviets. This will avoid our having to make a special, direct approach to the Soviets on this matter, which could be counterproductive in that the Soviets would feel compelled to respond and thus commit themselves more formally in ways they may otherwise desire to avoid.

Dean Rusk

⁵ Attached but not printed.

⁶ The text of this note is in the Microfiche Supplement to Volumes X, XI, and XII of *Foreign Relations, 1961-1963*.

⁷ Attached but not printed; see *Foreign Relations, 1961-1963*, vol. XI, Document 352.

252. Memorandum From Bromley Smith of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 17, 1964.

1. The State memorandum² is not fully responsive to the President's request, which was for "a plan for appropriate, strong, high-level warnings" on interference with our high-level surveillance over Cuba.³ There are several "open" circuits in Washington other than a State Department typewriter.

2. The warning should not be given in a note to the Cubans through the Czechs or even to the Russians.

a. A note calls for a reply from Castro which can only be unsatisfactory.

b. A note is a formal challenge in an area where we have been living under a tacit non-interference agreement. All the draft note does substantively is to remind Castro of this fact.

c. Castro's threats have been in public statements. We should not raise them to the formal level. Last June the Cubans sent us a note to which we replied. Should they do so again, we could make a formal reply.

3. The importance of non-interference of our surveillance is such that it should not be mixed up with the fishing boat and Guantanamo incidents. The State memorandum proposes the warning note be delivered along with routine replies to notes about these incidents.

4. The Russians should continue to be held responsible for Castro's conduct in connection with those aspects of the Cuba missile crisis which are still with us. Our surveillance arises out of Khrushchev's failure to get Castro to accept on-site inspection in Cuba. The fact that the Russians may be turning over "control" of the SAM sites to the Cubans does not relieve the Russians of their responsibility to ensure that these SAMs are not used against the U.S. reconnaissance planes. (It is inconceivable to me that the Russians would not retain ultimate control of these weapons by means of a "permissive link" device.)

5. Established channels used during the missile crisis should be used again to convey a strong, informal, direct warning, i.e., Tommy Thompson to the Russian Ambassador here. Castro's statement could be used as a peg on which to hang a reminder to the Russians that for

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64-7/67. Secret; Sensitive.

² Document 251.

³ See the attachment to Document 248.

us the surveillance of Cuba is an issue involving the USSR—that as the controlling power they are responsible for their satellites' use of the weapon.

6. If the Russians deny their responsibility for controlling Castro's use of the SAM sites, or acknowledge that they have no capability to control these weapons now that they are being operated by Cuba, we are in immediate need of some serious planning about how to get out of what would be an intolerable situation.

7. As to recommendation 2 of the State memorandum, i.e., getting word to Castro through "black" channels, I am at a complete loss to understand what purpose would be served. To tell Castro that we would like nothing better than to have him shoot down one of our surveillance flights so we could retaliate is to issue the kind of a challenge that even a rational Latin has difficulty turning down. The whole proposal should be dropped.

BKS

253. Memorandum From the Ambassador at Large (Thompson) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 19, 1964.

Alexis Johnson has discussed with me your views on notification to the Soviets of our attitude toward a possible Cuban shoot-down of a U-2 after the Cubans assume control of the SAM sites.

I feel sure that even an informal approach will prompt a reply from the Soviets and that they would be bound to state that the Cubans have every right to defend their sovereignty over their air space. The important thing, in my view, is that if the Cubans do shoot down a U-2, we will want to treat our retaliatory action as a purely United States/Cuban affair. This would be harder to do if we were on prior notice from the Soviets that they would support the Cubans in their defense of their sovereignty, which is a quite possible Soviet response to any direct approach on our part. I feel confident that before turning over the SAMs to the Cubans, the Soviets will have had some understanding with them

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64-7/67.

about their use. If the Cubans should shoot down a plane without prior agreement with the Soviets, I think it quite possible that the Soviets, while making fierce noises, would not, in fact, give the Cubans real support and would use the violation of their understanding as an excuse for not doing so.

T

254. Memorandum From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to President Johnson¹

JCSM–253–64

Washington, March 21, 1964.

SUBJECT

Possible Actions Against the Castro Government (C)

1. At your meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on March 4, 1964,² you directed them to concentrate their attention on possible ways of obtaining greater support from the Organization of American States (OAS) in carrying out a program directed at the eventual overthrow of the Castro government. Also, you asked that they examine additional ways of bringing pressure upon Castro beyond those presently authorized.

2. With regard to possible actions by the OAS, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the United States Government should seek the cooperation of the other OAS members in obtaining the complete isolation of Cuba from other American States. Further, the United States should, if possible, secure broad authority for a wide range of actions under Article 8 of the Rio Treaty, including the possible use of armed force against Cuba, should OAS members, individually or collectively, deem such action necessary to prevent further intervention and aggression by Castro. With these possible objectives for OAS action in mind, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have studied the text of the proposed OAS resolution which the United States has suggested that the Venezuelan Government propose for the consideration of the OAS member states. They consider that if such a resolution is adopted essentially in its present form, the United States Government will have

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba–U.S. Policy, Vol. II, 12/63–2/65, Box 29. Top Secret; Sensitive.

² See Document 247.

sufficient basis for action directed at the further isolation of Cuba and for military action against Castro in case of further aggression on his part. Hence, for the time being, they have nothing additional to suggest in this field.

3. With regard to measures designed to put additional pressure on Castro beyond those presently authorized, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend a resumption of the program (which is presently approved but on which no actions are currently being taken)³ involving the employment of covert assets to conduct interdependent operations, including the covert collection of intelligence, propaganda actions, economic denial actions, and externally mounted sabotage operations against Cuba. As this program unfolds, they would favor expanding and intensifying it while maintaining a continuing evaluation of the reactions of Castro, the communists, and the Free World. Concurrently, they favor the development and conduct of a hard-line propaganda campaign, integrated with the foregoing actions, to estrange the Castro regime from the Cuban people and the remainder of the Free World.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff continue to believe that the ultimate United States objective toward Cuba must be to establish a government in Cuba that is acceptable to the United States. However, they have difficulty identifying promising actions against Castro which have not been previously considered, and in some cases tried. It is a hard fact that little remains which offers promise of real effectiveness in removing Castro short of a blockade or an ascending scale of military action up to or including invasion. They will keep this problem under continuing review and advise you should any new and promising courses of action be uncovered.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Maxwell D. Taylor

Chairman

Joint Chiefs of Staff

³ This program was detailed in a CIA paper, June 8, 1963; see *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XI, Document 346.

255. Editorial Note

Under Secretary of State George W. Ball's speech on "United States Policy Toward Cuba" before the North Atlantic Council in Paris on March 23, 1964, was an important statement on U.S. policy toward Cuba during the Johnson Presidency. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 1 CUBA–US)

Ball said that the loss of Cuba to communism was a loss not just to the United States, with its long and particularly close ties to that country, but to all free nations, because it had created a beachhead of communism in a very vulnerable but important part of the world, Latin America. Ball stated that the United States regarded Cuba as a subversive threat, not a military one. He highlighted the aggressive and subversive nature of Castroism, the non-negotiability to the United States of Castro's political, economic, and military dependence on the Soviet Union and his subversive activities in Latin America, and the objectives of the U.S. and OAS economic denial programs. The latter, he said, were limited to lessening Castro's will and ability to export subversion and violence, convincing the Cuban and Latin American peoples that Castroism could not serve their interests and that communism had no future in the Western Hemisphere, and increasing the cost to the Soviet Union of maintaining a Communist outpost in Latin America. Ultimately, however, Ball said that Latin America would be rendered "immune to Communist infection only by an amelioration of the conditions—political, economic, and social—in which subversion flourishes. The United States and the free nations of Latin America have, therefore, through the Alliance for Progress, undertaken a major collective effort" to transform the structure and production of the region.

Ball explained how Cuba was "almost uniquely suited to a policy of economic denial," but that the program would "be effective only if generally supported by the Western Alliance." Ball said that the United States and its allies had developed a three-pronged program of common action to exploit Cuba's economic vulnerability by: 1) restricting the availability of Free World shipping to Cuba, 2) limiting the categories of goods available to Cuba, and 3) limiting governmental credit guarantees in connection with sales to Cuba. The importance of the latter action was emphasized by Ball. Noting that "a recent transaction was presumably made possible only by a positive government decision to guarantee the financing," he said:

"The primary question is not, therefore, whether governments should impose negative controls on exports to Cuba—as the United States does, for example. The central issue is whether member governments of the Western Alliance should take positive action to en-

courage such sales by assuming risks that commercial bankers are unwilling to take.

"To the people of the Western Hemisphere—including many of my countrymen—this element gives such transactions the appearance of a political act—and an act that has the effect of defeating the principal instrument short of war available against a regime that seriously menaces free governments in the Western Hemisphere."

In telegram Polto 1138 from Paris, March 23, Ambassador Finletter reported that Ball's presentation "drew so much support that UK decided best not to speak at all. Canada, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Greece and Turkey spoke out strongly in favor US policy." Finletter added that several "permanent representatives expressed view US case as just lucidly presented to NAC should be presented to European public badly informed on Cuba" and he concluded that "UK appears isolated in NAC on Cuba." (Ibid.)

In a meeting of the North Atlantic Council on April 15, reported in telegram Polto 1472 from Paris, April 15, British representative Shuckburgh read a statement under instructions in which he declared that the United Kingdom was "opposed in principle to economic warfare no matter what name is except in case like Berlin contingency planning." He added that the "UK does not agree that its trade policies should be custom tailored and designed to differentiate among Communist countries in accordance with conditions and behaviour of individual countries and with specific objectives towards each. This is fundamental difference." Shuckburgh noted that the "British are a trading people and trade is essence of their survival." In the case of Cuba, he said, British trade policy coincided with its political judgment, in that the "UK does not think that policy of economic denial is right or wise politically or likely to be effective." Among many other arguments, Shuckburgh stated that the UK questioned "whether there is direct relationship between Cuba's economic strength and her capacity for subversion." (Ibid.)

256. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson¹

Washington, March 24, 1964.

On March 6 we sent the Secretary of State a memorandum asking for a strong plan to warn "the Cubans and their Soviet friends" against any interference with our high-level surveillance in Cuba. The Department has now come back with a plan which is intelligent as far as it goes. In essence it is that we should send a diplomatic warning to the Cubans by way of the Czechs,² and follow this up by certain covert statements which will reach Cuban ears and show that we are entirely serious.

The Department thinks we should not go straight to the Russians, and after discussing the matter with Ambassador Thompson,³ I now find his arguments persuasive.

I do think that one further element is needed—and that is an appropriate public warning from you at some appropriate time—perhaps in answer to a question at an early press conference. If you agree, I will see to it that such a question comes up.⁴

McG. B.⁵

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. II, 3/64-7/67. Secret; Sensitive.

² The warning was issued on March 27 to Czech Ambassador Duda, who was given two diplomatic notes for Cuba, one of which concerned the overflights. Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert W. Adams emphasized to Duda that "we want to make sure that there is no misunderstanding about our continuing position on this matter." (Memorandum of conversation; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, PS 8-5, Gitmo Protests and Fishing Boat Incident) A copy of the protest note is *ibid.*, Central Files 1964-66, AV 15 Overflights Problem—Public Relations, 1964.

³ See Document 253.

⁴ The approved option is checked.

⁵ Printed from a copy that bears these typed initials.

257. Memorandum From the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs
(Crimmins) to the 5412 Special Group¹

Washington, March 30, 1964.

SUBJECT

Status Report on Autonomous Cuban Exile Groups

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the members of the Special Group as to the current state of operational readiness of the autonomous Cuban exile groups which receive U.S. Government support and to indicate what might be expected of these groups in the relatively near future.

2. As part of the covert program authorized in June 1963, CIA is providing financial and some technical support to two autonomous Cuban exile groups headed respectively by Manuel Ray and Manuel Artime. In our judgment, Artime and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Ray, now possess the hardware and maritime equipment as well as the geographical and political bases in Central America needed to launch independent infiltration and sabotage operations against Cuba. Both groups also appear to have reached a state of training and psychological readiness which could impel their leaders to launch operations against Cuba at almost any time and with little or no notice to the U.S. Government.²

3. The possibility of imminent unilateral operations on the part of the autonomous groups is brought to the attention of the Special Group at this time since it is related to the question of the future of CIA-controlled sabotage and harassment operations now under review by higher authority.³ It should be noted that if a policy decision is made

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Secret; Eyes Only.

² According to U. Alexis Johnson's notes on the April 2 Special Group meeting, FitzGerald said that "if we paid Artime, we could probably control to some degree" but that "We have no control over Ray." (Ibid.) In an April 7 memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, Califano wrote that although no decision was made on the future of the sabotage program at the April 2 Special Group meeting, "McGeorge Bundy indicated that he would call a meeting with higher authority this week [see Document 259] with the hope that definite policy lines could be determined for future covert activity against Castro." (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330 77 1 31, Cuba, Activity Against Castro)

³ At this point the following was crossed out: "This relationship was described in Part V of the memorandum entitled 'Review of Current Program of Covert Action Against Cuba,' dated 24 January 1964, submitted by the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs to the Special Group." The January 24 memorandum is in Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records.

to terminate sabotage and harassment operations for the autonomous groups as well as for CIA, it will be necessary to terminate support for the autonomous groups as CIA would not be in a position to insure that they would refrain from raids and sabotage even if so requested.⁴ In fact, it now appears likely that neither group will disintegrate at once upon notification of termination of U.S. subsidies. While withdrawal of U.S. financial aid and moral support would probably be fatal to their operations in time, they are likely to make strenuous efforts to find other sources of support. In so doing and in order to prove their viability to potential supporters, they would, in their desperation, probably feel compelled to launch one or more dramatic raids against Cuba.

⁴ Since the Special Group did not address this issue at its April 2 meeting, Crimmins asked that they have another look at the memorandum during the next weekly meeting. (Memorandum from INR Deputy Director for Coordination Joseph W. Scott to Johnson, April 6; *ibid.*)

258. Central Intelligence Agency Briefing Paper¹

SC No. 02971/64

Washington, April 7, 1964.

CUBA

I. We have seen no change since the beginning of the year in the size of the Soviet military establishment in Cuba, but the evidence continues to point to an imminent turn-over of the SA-2 surface-to-air missile system to the Cubans.

A. We believe there are still about 7,000 Soviet military personnel in Cuba, making allowances for as many as 2,000 more or less.

B. The majority—perhaps as much as 80 percent—can and probably will be withdrawn when the Cubans complete their SAM training later this month.

C. An advisory and technical assistance group of perhaps one or two thousand will probably remain for some time.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, Jan–Apr 1964, Box 6, Folder 7. Top Secret; [*codeword not declassified*]. Prepared for McCone to use at a White House meeting; see Document 259. McCone apparently did not use the document.

II. Cubans have been conducting comprehensive air defense drills throughout the island on an almost daily basis since early February. [3½ lines of source text not declassified]

A. Cubans have already assumed control over most early warning radar functions.

B. [3½ lines of source text not declassified]

C. Some of the more sophisticated radar and communications equipment we would not expect the Soviets to turn over has been removed from the SAM sites.

D. Air defense activity conducted wholly by Soviets has been declining steadily, and [5½ lines of source text not declassified].

III. Cuban naval and ground forces have been improving their combat capabilities with more intensive and more realistic training, organizational improvements, and [1 line of source text not declassified].

A. [2½ lines of source text not declassified]

B. Cuba apparently is going to draft about 25,000 men a year for the next three years, but with simultaneous discharges, the Cuban force level of about 100,000 probably will not increase much, at least at the outset.

1. Our photography, incidentally, has recently shown the enlargement of existing barracks, and the establishment and occupation of fairly extensive tent camps with field kitchens. This probably reflects preparations to receive the draftees.

IV. Our evidence is that there may be as many as 1,500 Cubans training in bloc countries at present, suggesting that Cuba may be expecting additional Soviet military equipment soon.

A. Last month Soviet ships carrying otherwise non-military cargos brought in another six of the fast P-4 Soviet motor torpedo boats—making 12 in all—and some extra surface-to-air missiles.

B. There have been three purely military cargos delivered to Cuba this year, and a fourth is on the way, probably carrying vehicles and spare parts. One of the earlier ships brought in 12 crated MIG jet fighters, probably as replacements, which are still sitting in their crates at San Antonio de los Banos.

V. Castro himself has recently been preoccupied with economic matters and with the re-trial of Marcos Rodriguez, an old-line Communist charged with having betrayed student conspirators to the Batista police. Castro steered the second trial to center the blame on Rodriguez personally, rather than the party, thereby heading off a possible purge of the old guard Communists and putting them further in his debt.

A. The immediate economic concern is the sugar harvest now under way. Indications are the 1964 crop will be no bigger than last year's 3.8 million tons—possibly less.

B. [1 line of source text not declassified] the crop is being adversely affected by labor shortages, by a somewhat lower sugar content in the cane, and by damage to the cane by the mechanical cane loaders.

C. In general, however, Cuban officials are cocky about their economic situation at present, and optimistic over prospects for improvement. You have probably read Che Guevara's gloating remarks at the UN Trade and Development Conference in Geneva. The Cubans are convinced they have, as they say, "broken the back" of our economic denial effort.

D. The Cubans had a balance of about \$100 million in convertible currency, largely from sugar sales, at the end of 1963. The sugar agreement Castro negotiated with the Soviet Union on his January visit makes them feel that sugar earnings will continue to increase. This confidence seems to be reflected in the credit ratings the Cubans are getting.

1. [4 lines of source text not declassified]

2. Against this background, Cuba is becoming a much more attractive market for non-bloc countries, so much so that the Cubans feel they may be in the driver's seat.

3. Japan used to be Castro's biggest single trading partner in the Free World, but last year both exports and imports fell off. Now the Cubans are telling Japanese firms that unless they trade with Cuba, Havana will feel compelled to switch the business it does in Japan to Western European firms.

259. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, April 7, 1964.

SUBJECT

Meeting at the White House 7 April 1964
Subject—Review of Covert Program directed against Cuba

PRESENT

The President
State Department: Secretary Rusk, Deputy Under Secretary Johnson, Assistant Secretary Mann, and The Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, Mr. Crimmins
Defense Department: Secretary McNamara and Deputy Secretary Vance

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80–B01285A, DCI Mtgs with the Pres., Jan–Apr 1964, Box 6, Folder 7. Secret.

JCS: General Maxwell Taylor
CIA: The Director, Messrs. Helms and FitzGerald
White House Staff: Messrs. Bundy and Dungan

1. Mr. Bundy presented to the meeting a memorandum² to guide discussion concerning the Cuban program against Cuba. Seven categories of activities were listed in this memorandum as follows:

- (1) Collection of intelligence.
- (2) Covert propaganda to encourage low risk forms of active and passive resistance.
- (3) Cooperation with other agencies in economic denial.
- (4) Attempts to identify and establish contact with potential dissident elements inside Cuba.
- (5) Indirect economic sabotage.
- (6) CIA-controlled sabotage raiding.
- (7) Autonomous operations.

2. Mr. Bundy's paper recommended continuation of the first five items listed and recommended discussion of the last two.

3. There was a brief discussion of item (5) during which various methods of economic sabotage were described. There was no disposition on the part of those present to interfere with this program.

4. With respect to sabotage raiding by CIA-controlled assets, Secretary Rusk said that two things presently militate against a resumption of the program: (a) the pending OAS matter with respect to the Venezuelan arms cache which may be strengthened by discovery of arms in Argentina as well as in Brazil, and (b) the prospective turnover of the SAM sites by the Russians to the Cubans in April or May. Secretary Rusk said that we would wish to maintain a clean hands posture while the OAS case is pending and that if the Cubans are to misuse the SAMs we would wish the onus to be fully on their backs. Secretary Rusk said that in addition he does not believe that hit-and-run raids are in any event very productive; that they have a high noise level and, furthermore, that he suspects the Cuban exiles who actually conduct the raids of possibly wishing to leave fingerprints pointing to U.S. involvement in order to increase that involvement. Mr. Bundy said that in the past he had been an advocate of sabotage operations, but in view of the history of the program since June, he had come to the conclusion that it is unlikely that an effective sabotage program will be conducted. In explanation he pointed out that the policymakers, each time for good reasons, had turned sabotage operations on and off to such an extent that a program of the type envisioned in the June paper simply does not, in the nature of things, appear feasible.

² Dated April 7. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, 1/64-6/65)

5. Mr. McCone called attention to the paper dated 8 June 1963³ which is the basis of the Agency's current program against Cuba. He quoted from the 8 June paper as follows:

Paragraph 2: "The ultimate objective of this policy would be to encourage dissident elements in the military and other power centers of the regime to bring about the eventual liquidation of the Castro/communist entourage and the elimination of the Soviet presence from Cuba."

With respect to the interdependence of the various courses of action comprising the program, he quoted from paragraph 5 of the paper as follows: "Unless all the components of this program are executed in tandem, the individual courses of action are almost certain to be of marginal value, even in terms of achieving relatively limited policy objectives. This is clearly a case where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

With respect to the sabotage program, he quoted from paragraph 6.E. as follows: "It must be recognized that no single act of sabotage by itself can materially affect the economy or stimulate significant resistance. However, it is our opinion that a well-planned series of sabotage efforts, properly executed, would in time produce the effect we seek."

Mr. McCone pointed out that five relatively low-key sabotage operations since June 1963 do not in effect constitute a test of the program and that the statements quoted from the 8 June paper remain valid. He said that there was a surge of anti-Castro sentiment during the fall of 1963, corresponding with the period during which the sabotage raids were conducted, but that resistance sentiment has now fallen into apathy. He said that the five items for which approval is recommended in Mr. Bundy's paper would not have the effect envisioned by the 8 June paper although they might have the effect of slowing down Castro's consolidation of his regime.

6. The Secretary of State said that part of our problem has to do with the Soviet Union which is now going through a crisis period, particularly with respect to the Sino-Soviet split. He said that he felt sure that were Ambassador Thompson present at the meeting he would indicate the danger of forcing Khrushchev to take a militant defensive attitude with respect to Cuba. Secretary Rusk said that should the Cubans shoot down a U-2, raid peaceful shipping off the coast or should there be a strong OAS resolution, the question of the conduct of sabotage raids could be reconsidered. (I do not think that I am in error in quoting the Secretary as equating a U-2 shootdown with a good OAS resolution as a basis for resuming raiding operations.)

7. Mr. Mann said that his attitude towards CIA-conducted raiding operations would depend upon getting a clear legal basis for action against Cuba out of the OAS. He said that he doubted that all

³ See *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XI, Document 346.

seven courses of action combined would result in the overthrow of Castro. He said that he leans away from CIA-conducted raids and towards autonomous operations. He said that at the present time, particularly in the light of the Brazilian events, favorable action by the OAS on proposed paragraph two of the resolution looks like a fifty-fifty chance. In reply to Secretary Rusk's query, I said that I believed that CIA-controlled raiding assets could be held together for another two months pending the resolution of the Secretary's two points (OAS and Cuban use of SAMs).

8. I briefed the President on the present status of autonomous operations, including the fact that Artime is planning to launch his operational program on the 12th of April. There was some discussion of these plans but no one appeared disposed to try to stop Artime. I said that Manolo Ray's plans were not as well known to us but that he had made it clear that he intended to move by May.

9. The Secretary of Defense said that it was his opinion that the covert program has no present chance of success in terms of upsetting Fidel Castro. He suggested that it might be useful, for reasons which had not been brought out at this meeting, and pointed out that the principal decision to be made was a broader one—presumably what the overall U.S. attitude should be with respect to Fidel Castro. He said that he felt that the present raiding assets should be held in being pending resolution of Secretary Rusk's two points but that in the meanwhile the fundamental question should be debated. Mr. Vance said that he agrees with the suggestion of continuing these assets in being but that he believes that the program, if permitted to go forward as planned, would at least have the advantage of hindering Castro in the consolidation of his power. He pointed out that the noise level of the raiding operations had not in fact been very high. He would advise resuming raiding operations following the resolution of Secretary Rusk's points. General Taylor said that the Joint Chiefs favor the program in its entirety, that they believe the program has never been given a fair test and that we should move forward with it in the interests of making Castro's life as hard as possible. Mr. Bundy said that the CIA covert program is the only matter to be resolved today, that the matter of our negotiations with the British on the economic program and sugar support would be ready for discussion next week.

10. Secretary Rusk recommended to the President that we keep the raiding assets in being for the next two months and that the question be discussed again following the resolution of OAS events and the Cuban use of the SAM sites.

11. The President accepted this recommendation.

Desmond FitzGerald

Chief

Western Hemisphere Division

Attachment

Washington, April 8, 1964.

Dictated by Mr. McCone:

McCone went on to say the real issue to be considered at the meeting and by the President was a question of whether we wished to implement the policy as outlined in the 8th June paper and also less specifically in the paper circulated in the meeting by Mr. Bundy, or abandon the basic objective of bringing about the liquidation of the Castro Communist entourage and the elimination of Communist presence in Cuba and thus rely on future events of an undisclosed nature which might accomplish this objective. Specifically McCone said that he could envisage such issues as extreme economic distress caused by sharp drop in sugar prices or other external factors arising which might cause Castro great pain and, ultimately, his downfall. In summing up his position McCone stated that the actions favorably looked upon, that is, intelligence gathering, propaganda, economic denial and surreptitious acts against Cuban ships all would have some effect but definitely would not accomplish the stated objectives.

260. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, April 9, 1964.

A meeting was held at 1015 on 9 April with Mr. Bundy, Desmond FitzGerald and Richard Helms to discuss the problem of independent action by Cuban emigre groups headed by Manuel Artime and Manolo Ray. The following points were made:

Mr. FitzGerald stated that he did not believe any verbal dissuasion had any chance of success with Artime in his determination to mount an operation from Central America.

Those present agreed that it was possible to block the operation by an air-sea search and by the use of U.S. Navy destroyer but that this was a drastic step.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. II, 1964, 1965. No classification marking. Drafted by Jessup.

Mr. Helms pointed out that this could write finis to use of Cuban emigre groups and would radiate considerable fallout elsewhere.

Mr. Bundy capsuled the problem by saying his worry was whether an Arttime attack would give the U.S. a hypocritical image when out of the other side of its mouth the U.S. was plumping for votes at the OAS to outlaw subversion and armed attack.

He further said that he wanted to be clear as to whether higher authority fully grasped the implications of the autonomous exile group activity as discussed at Tuesday's meeting.² *This he was going to check.*

Mr. Bundy felt it would be extremely useful to regularly publicize Castroite guerrilla activity both in Argentina (thus far played only by the *Christian Science Monitor*) and in Central America as a contrasting backdrop to possible Castro slurs against Cuban exile activity.

PJ

² See Document 259.

261. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 22, 1964.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador
David Henry, Deputy Director, SOV

After a discussion of the other subjects the Secretary raised the matter of Cuba. He said that the United States had hoped the Western Hemisphere could be protected against aggression from Cuba either by the original US-USSR agreement of October 1962 for ground inspection, which the USSR had been unable to persuade Castro to

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Secretary's Memoranda of Conversation: Lot 65 D 330, April 1964. Confidential. Drafted by the Deputy Director of the Office of Soviet Affairs, David Henry on April 22 and approved in S on May 2. The meeting took place in the Secretary's Office. The memorandum is part III of III; parts I and II concerned the site of the new Soviet Embassy building and Laos. (Ibid.)

accept, or by the establishment of a nuclear free zone in Latin America which would offer sufficient protection if it could contain some provision for following up on indications of violation. Unfortunately, neither of these had worked out. The basic point he wished to make to the Ambassador was that the United States has no desire to inflame the situation further. The United States overflights are as discreet as possible, but it is essential for the United States to maintain them so that we can tell our people and those of the other Hemisphere nations that there is no danger from Cuba. The overflights are also related to Castro's activities in the Hemisphere. Gromyko had said that these activities were more talk than action; but the United States has indications of actual Cuban subversive action in, for example, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, and most recently in Guatemala. The Secretary emphasized that he was mentioning these matters out of a desire to avoid a major crisis with Cuba. He hoped that the Soviet Government will caution Castro not to inflame the situation into a major crisis. The United States is not attempting to stir up a crisis over Cuba and he hoped Castro is in the same mood. He also hoped that some progress could be made toward a nuclear free zone in Latin America. He had the impression that the USSR would favor such a zone but that Castro opposed it.

The Ambassador in reply said that he would be frank. How could one convince a small country that it should allow the airplanes of a big country to overfly it? What self-respecting country could accept a note stating that overflights would continue? How can the United States have any right to overfly Cuba? The OAS has excluded Cuba, so how can the United States retain any rights from the OAS system and agreements? Cuba could not be a serious threat to the United States or the Western Hemisphere.

The Secretary replied that Castro knew he could live at peace with the other nations of the Hemisphere if he so desired, but on the contrary he had declared war against his neighbors. Therefore we must keep watch to assure against aggression. Cuba had mounted a real threat in Venezuela, and Guatemala, and was also involved in Panama. The basic point was that Castro was not trying to find a way to live at peace with his neighbors, but, the Secretary repeated, the United States is not looking for trouble over this issue.

In response to a question from Dobrynin the Secretary reminded him that the USSR had agreed to ground inspection of the missile sites in Cuba in October 1962. He added that the United States had been interested in a nuclear free zone in Latin America because such a zone would go far to meet the inspection problem. In response to a question the Secretary confirmed that the United States and other Western Hemisphere nations are still interested in the possibility of a nuclear free zone which would include all except the United States.

Dobrynin raised the question as to why Cuba had suddenly received so much attention during the last few days. There followed an exchange on this subject in which the Secretary emphasized the celebration in Cuba of the anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion while Dobrynin implied that the United States had itself generated the recent attention to Cuba.

Dobrynin then repeated that any self-respecting government would react against overflights of its territory and said the USSR could not support with Castro such a position (i.e., to urge him to accept the overflights).

The Secretary concluded the conversation by reiterating that Castro had an opportunity to live at peace with his neighbors but was not interested and that the United States wants no further crisis over "this wretched little man" and he trusted the USSR felt the same way.

262. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, April 29, 1964, 4:45 p.m.

SUBJECT

Discussion with President Johnson—Wednesday afternoon—29 Apr. 4:45 in his office

PRESENT

The President and Mr. McCone

[Omitted here is discussion of the National Security Council, DeGaulle, and intelligence matters.]

4. I mentioned to President Johnson that I had discussed with Eisenhower the possibility of a Cuban shooting down a U-2. That Eisenhower first responded by indicating that he thought, under such circumstances, the offending SAM sites should be "taken out." However, after considering the problem and reviewing a map, he expressed the opinion that perhaps it would be best to take out all the SAM sites, although Eisenhower did not go so far as to firmly recommend this action. President Johnson then asked my opinion. I stated I most certainly

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, Jan-Apr 1964, Box 6, Folder 7. Secret. Prepared by McCone on April 30.

would take out several SAM sites in the vicinity and possibly all of them. President Johnson retorted he agreed and in fact, he favored taking them all out, indicating that the public opinion, UN discussion, etc. would be just as valid on one as on all and therefore we might as well dispose of the problem in its totality.

I then told President Johnson it was unnecessary to have a U-2 shot down, that we could operate the ECM equipment, but this had been steadfastly opposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The President asked that I discuss this matter with McNamara and General Taylor.

Note: Subsequently I reviewed this question with McNamara and Taylor and McNamara was of the opinion that JCS was incorrect for technical reasons and the use of the ECM on the U-2 would not compromise the plan to use the ECM on the B-52.

McNamara stated that the subject was very technical and therefore it was agreed to convene a technical group from Defense (headed by Fubini) and CIA (headed by Wheelon) who could examine all facets of the problem and hence McNamara and I would be in a position to make a firm recommendation to the President and the Executive Committee at a meeting scheduled for 12:00 noon on Saturday, May 2nd.

[Omitted here is discussion of North Vietnam.]

263. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to President Johnson¹

Washington, May 1, 1964.

The following is the brief summary you requested of actions taken by the U.S. and U.K. to place economic pressure on Cuba. I am inclosing a detailed list to give you a more precise and complete picture of U.S. actions.²

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330, 69 A 7425, Cuba 381, May–July 1964. Secret.

² The President's request has not been found, but was evidently issued in order to prepare for a meeting with British Foreign Secretary Butler on May 4. Topol 1696 to Paris, May 4, reported that at this meeting the "question of British trade with Cuba, including credit guarantees, was raised by President and Secretary in vigorous terms" in private meetings with Butler. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 1 CUBA–US)

United States

- a. Prohibited unlicensed exports to Cuba except for non-subsidized foodstuffs and medical supplies. (Licenses are not normally granted.)
- b. Established embargo prohibiting import of goods of Cuban origin.
- c. Prohibited Americans from having financial transactions with Cuba and blocked Cuban assets in the U.S.
- d. Eliminated U.S. air and surface links with Cuba.
- e. Exerts bilateral and unilateral, official and unofficial pressure on foreign countries and firms to reduce trade with Cuba and cut air and surface links. For example, U.S. has terminated aid to countries which failed to take steps to stop ships and planes from participating in Cuban trade.³
- f. Reduced dollar flow through Guantanamo Naval Base by Cuban employee reductions and termination of retirement pay to Cuban Civil Service employees.

As a result of these actions, U.S. exports to Cuba fell from \$547 million in 1958 (\$223 million in 1960) to \$37 million in 1963 (of which \$36.4 million was for the Bay of Pigs prisoner exchange). Imports to the U.S. from Cuba fell from \$527 million in 1958 (\$357 million in 1960) to \$1 million or less in 1963.

United Kingdom

- a. Made minimal informal representations to shipowners discouraging further participation in Cuban trade.
- b. Discourages Cuban air operation to the U.K. and inspects Cuban aircraft upon landing on U.K. fields.
- c. Denies use of its Caribbean dependencies as air transit points.

U.K. exports to Cuba fell from \$26 million in 1958 (\$21 million in 1960) to \$6 million in 1963. U.K. imports from Cuba amounted to \$50 million in 1958 (\$22 million in 1960) and \$35 million in 1963.

Robert S. McNamara

³ A detailed 6-page summary of U.S. economic pressures and legislative actions against Cuba, attached but not printed, included the report that, under Section 620(a)(3) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, enacted December 16, 1963, "United States aid was terminated to countries which failed to take appropriate steps by February 14, 1964, to prevent their ships and aircraft from carrying all goods to or from Cuba. (UK, France, and Yugoslavia were denied aid; Morocco and Spain were considered to have taken 'appropriate steps.')

264. Special National Intelligence Estimate¹

SNIE 85–2–64

Washington, May 2, 1964.

LIKELIHOOD OF AN ATTEMPTED SHOOT-DOWN OF A U-2

The Problem

To estimate Cuban and Soviet intentions with regard to US overflights of Cuba.

1. When we last reviewed this general subject in December 1963, we estimated² that the Soviets would probably relinquish control of the SAM system in Cuba, perhaps shortly after the Cubans were able to operate the entire system. We further estimated that Castro might endeavor through diplomatic and propaganda means to force a political solution with regard to the overflights, beginning such a campaign even before final transfer of the system.

2. Castro is now engaged in a campaign of this sort; we believe that he still prefers to try to force the cessation of U-2 flights by political pressure at the UN and elsewhere. Because he expects to gain complete control of the SAM system within the next few weeks he hopes that, with Soviet support, his warnings will be taken seriously and the US compelled to abandon U-2 flights over Cuban territory.

3. The Soviets must for obvious reasons give strong political support to Castro, yet they almost certainly wish to avoid the major crisis which would follow a shoot-down. They could escape such a crisis by withholding control of the SAM system, and we do not rule this out despite the high political cost to the USSR. The US, however, can have no assurance that Khrushchev will take this way out. Indeed, we continue to estimate that the odds favor the complete turnover of controls to Cuban personnel. Moreover, the Soviets probably still hope to persuade the US to discontinue or modify the overflight program. Recent Soviet approaches to the US may have been designed to gain time and probe for a possible settlement. Probably also the Soviets will strongly urge Castro to try all possible political actions before shooting.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NIEs, 85, Cuba. Secret. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Agency. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on May 2.

² SNIE 85–4–63, dated December 18, 1963, "Soviet Transfer of the Surface to Air Missile System to Cuba." (Central Intelligence Agency, NIC Files, Job 79–R01012A, NIEs and SNIIEs)

4. If Castro obtains control of the SAM system and becomes convinced that agitation and pressures are ineffective, we believe that there will be a significant and, over time, growing chance that he will order a shoot-down. Indeed, he may believe that any US military reaction will be a limited one, and could even help his case by incensing world opinion. We think this general estimate is supported by his May Day speech.

5. There is, of course, a possibility of an unauthorized shoot-down attempt; in view of the importance to Castro of this matter we believe the chances of such an occurrence are small.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the estimate.]

265. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, May 2, 1964.

SUBJECT

Discussion at National Security Council meeting Saturday—2 May 1964

Note: the initial part of the meeting the President did not attend

PRESENT

The President, Rusk, Ball, Johnson, McNamara, Vance, LeMay (representing JCS), Bundy, Dillon, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and Thompson

Note: Several White House Staff members were present

1. McCone opened the meeting by discussing pages 1 through 3 of the attached May 1st memorandum reviewing actions taken by USIB²

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, May 1964, Box 6, Folder 8. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone on May 4. According to the President's Daily Diary the President joined the meeting in progress in the Cabinet Room at 10:40 a.m. (Johnson Library)

² Attached but not printed, this memorandum noted that there were continuing reports of offensive missiles in Cuba and that most of these reports had been disproved through the examination of concurrent photography. It noted that the vulnerable U-2 aircraft could be made less so if electronic countermeasures (ECM) were used, but that the "continued use of ECM would, in the opinion of experts, permit the early development of counter countermeasures and hence the value of the ECM equipment would rapidly deteriorate." Peripheral photographic reconnaissance "will not provide needed intelligence." The USIB stated that drones "would produce useful photography though not as good as the U-2," but that they were "vulnerable, more so than the U-2." The new CIA-developed high-altitude, high-speed Oxcart reconnaissance aircraft, later known as the SR-71 Blackbird, would "not be operational at the design speed of 3.2 Mach and 85,000 to 90,000 feet for another few months." The CORONA satellite system was judged to be "not sufficient to give us useful photography."

on the recommendation of COMOR on the 2nd of April and in the past few days, reaffirming the need for overflights but on a reduced scale and indicating that, except for a most unusual circumstance, two to three flights per week would meet COMOR requirements.

2. Thompson stated that his analysis of recent statements by Khrushchev and Castro indicated that there was a strain between the Soviets and Castro. It appeared to him that Castro is concerned that the relaxed tensions between the U.S. and the USSR exposed Cuba to actions by the U.S. which would not be seriously challenged by Khrushchev.

3. Rusk stated that he felt that the threat was not immediate.

4. McCone contributed the SNIE³ which was read carefully and all agreed with the conclusions.

5. There was some discussion in which there was complete agreement on the obvious necessity for continued overflights. Rusk stated that we cannot negotiate with Castro—this was out of the question. Castro will attempt to bring the issue to the Security Council or the General Assembly. He will receive considerable sympathy but he will not receive an affirmative vote in the Security Council and he could not get the two-thirds majority necessary to place the subject before the General Assembly.

6. Our tactic will be to throw the issue into the OAS, thus keeping it out of the UN and depending upon the October, 1962 resolution which calls for continuing aerial surveillance in the absence of on-site inspection. Rusk did not expect a blessing from the UN or the world at large, but he does not expect an adverse vote in any form.

7. The question arose as to reopening the UN offer for on-site inspection. McCone stated that much would depend on how this inspection was carried out. UN inspection has not been very satisfactory and that probably (though not assuredly) aerial photography would be necessary to complement on-site inspection.

8. Rusk said that their attorneys felt that if the issue was brought to the World Court, our case would not be good, however they could confuse it by concurrently putting forth a great many counter claims against Cuba such as ceding property, etc., etc.

9. I then turned to a discussion of the alternatives as covered in pages 4 through 7. I added a point made at USIB that a shutdown of a drone would not create an incident exactly paralleling the shutdown of a U-2 and also put forward the idea of drones. Also in the discussion I noted State Department's reservations, but not their dissent at USIB, on the question of the intensity of the overflight program.

³ Document 264.

10. My final recommendation was that the U-2 flights should be continued, the use of ECM's should be carefully considered and in the final analysis the compromise of ECM equipment was up to the JCS and the Secretary of Defense. Alternate means of aerial photography were not satisfactory; alternate intelligence assets would not suffice our needs; we could expect a continuing flow of human resource information concerning "missiles in Cuba", which must be checked out.

11. There was no disagreement with these recommendations.

12. The President then joined the meeting.

13. Rusk reviewed the discussions accurately, except in interpreting the SNIE he indicated to the President the Board was not concerned about the immediacy of an incident. I stated the Board could not be sure about this.

14. After some discussion, and inviting any dissents, the President decided that:

a. We should continue the U-2's overflights on the basis of two to three a week as determined by USIB;

b. He favored use of the ECM; he instructed McNamara and the Chiefs to review the subject on Monday;⁴ he felt the JCS' arguments were probably not valid and he wished them studied in the light of the morning discussion.

c. He called a meeting for 12:00 o'clock noon Tuesday to make a final decision on the use of ECM equipment.

15. During the meeting there was considerable discussion of the use of the Oxcart. I stated that it was my opinion (though I had not checked it out with our operators) that it could be used in a matter of weeks at about 2.2 Mach, 75,000 feet and several months later at 3.2 Mach and 85,000 or 90,000 feet, that its presence would be known because it would appear on the radar and the sonic boom would be audible, it would be more disturbing to people in Cuba than U-2's because they could not see the U-2 but they would hear the Oxcart, that because of the absence of the Tall King search radar I felt the SAMs with their Fan Song would not be effective on the U-2 because of their short reaction time. I pointed out the use of the Oxcart would compromise it as a reconnaissance vehicle. No decision was reached.

16. McNamara stated that if ECM equipment was used, he felt there would be a 95% or more possibility that the first U-2 that was attacked would survive and come home. He pointed and, and I confirmed, that this would create a new situation as it would demonstrate Castro's true intentions which were now only a matter of conjecture. McNamara asked that the Contingency Plan be amended to discuss courses of action under such a situation.

⁴ May 4.

17. McNamara then stated that while he does not agree with the Joint Chiefs on the seriousness of the compromise of ECM equipment, he is against using it now, suggests it be kept in readiness, and the question be reviewed from week to week.

18. The actions are as follows:

a. Study the operational capabilities of the Oxcart.

b. Study the vulnerability of the Oxcart.

Note: Both of the above to be discussed with JCS Monday afternoon in preparation for Tuesday's meeting.

c. Develop in detail the Agency position on ECM which varies from the SAG-JCS position.

d. Prepare to supply CIA planes equipped with ECM on short notice until the SAC planes are fully modified.

Note: In this discussion McNamara stated that ECM equipment similar to Systems 13–15 was aboard the Powers' plane and therefore known to the Soviets.

Action: I would like this explored because this question did not arise in the Powers' Hearings.⁵ I was very much surprised to hear that Powers had ECM equipment aboard and raised the question in my mind as to why he did not turn it on when he had received the warning. Also I raised the question as to why this matter, if true, was not brought out in the very extensive Hearings with Powers upon his return.

⁵ Francis Gary Powers' U-2 aircraft was shot down over the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960. After his release from captivity by the Soviets, he spoke about the U-2 incident at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 6, 1962.

266. Summary Record of the 530th National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, May 2, 1964, 10 a.m.

OVERFLIGHTS OF CUBA

The meeting began without the President. Mr. McCone distributed, and the group read, the attached SNIE 85–2–64, "Likelihood of an Attempted Shoot-down of a U-2."² The conclusion was that Castro prefers

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Meetings File, Vol. 2, Tab 2, May 2, 1964. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Drafted by Bromley Smith.

² Document 264.

to try to halt the U-2 flights by pressure at the UN and elsewhere, but, failing this, there is a significant, and, over time, a growing chance that he will try a shoot-down.

Secretary Rusk said we need to deal with four questions:

- (1) What is our intelligence requirement for aerial reconnaissance?
- (2) What do we think Castro will do to prevent our overflights?
- (3) What is the best way to meet our intelligence requirements?
- (4) Are there any additional political actions which we could take in the immediate future to reduce the risk that Castro will try to shoot down a U-2?

Director McCone, reading from a paper,³ made the following points in response to Secretary Rusk's request for the views of the intelligence community:

(1) Aerial photography is the only dependable evidence we have on the status of Soviet military equipment in Cuba. All alternatives to aerial photography have been carefully studied and all have been found wanting.

(2) The intelligence community has concluded that overflights must be continued but the number of missions can be reduced from the number now flown. Three flights per week are considered essential. There have been forty-two refugee reports about missiles in Cuba since January 1, 1964. In order to check on these reports, we must have aerial photography.

(3) Castro will probably take over control of the SAM sites and he probably will try to shoot down a U-2 at some time in the near future.

Secretary Rusk asked whether we had aerial photography which we had not read out. Mr. McCone replied that we did not. However, we have taken pictures of the same objects many times but we continue to have a requirement for current pictures in order to check on incoming refugee reports.

Mr. McGeorge Bundy said all agree that overflights are required. The number of flights could be reduced but this made little difference because the risk of a shoot-down remained approximately the same and the political cost of the overflight problem was not materially affected by the number of missions flown.

Secretary Rusk and Mr. McCone expressed the agreement of all those present that there is a requirement for from two to three flights per week—two certainly and an additional one if cloud cover or other operational problems make the third flight necessary.

Ambassador Thompson commented that overflights of Cuba create a strain on Soviet-Cuban relations. The Soviets, in their May Day slogans, had downgraded the Cuban problem. The Soviets believed,

³ See footnote 2, Document 265.

however, that because we had sent a note on overflights to the Cubans via the Czechs, we were taking a new initiative and launching a new move against Castro. They felt we had concluded that we had interpreted the climate of improving U.S.-Soviet relations to mean that we had a free hand to do what we wished to Castro as far as the USSR was concerned.

Secretary Rusk said Dobrynin had asked him directly⁴ why we had raised the problem of the overflights in a note in writing. He had left the impression that we could have handled this in another way, thereby avoiding making a direct issue of a problem which had not been causing concern for months.

Secretary Rusk recalled that during the missile crisis of October 1962 we had discussed a nuclear free zone in Latin America and on-site inspection in Cuba by the UN. These ideas had been accepted by Khrushchev but flatly rejected by Castro.

Ambassador Thompson pointed out that Castro, in his recent speech, had made clear that the overflights issue was not of a nature to lead to the possibility of nuclear war. However, the Ambassador believes the danger of a Cuban shoot-down of a U-2 will increase.

Secretary Rusk said that a shoot-down was not imminent. Assistant Secretary Mann also agreed with this view which is expressed in the SNIE. However, there is a strong possibility that Castro will raise this question in the UN.

Secretary Rusk then asked how we could best meet the agreed intelligence requirement. Mr. McCone said that the U-2 was vulnerable. If we equipped it with electronic countermeasures (ECM), its vulnerability would be greatly decreased, but countermeasures would be developed very rapidly, thereby reducing the effectiveness of existing ECM equipment. In addition, the use of ECM risks compromising the equipment in the event that an ECM-equipped U-2 were shot down. The Russians know about our system but they are not familiar with specific equipment which we have developed.

Secretary Rusk pointed out that if the Russians knew our ECM was on a U-2, they might try very hard to shoot one down.

Mr. Fubini, as the expert, answered a question as to whether the Powers plane had been equipped with ECM. He said the plane did have some ECM equipment which undoubtedly had been obtained by the Russians. Secretary McNamara added that all the Government's ECM experts are agreed that the Soviets have our ECM equipment or equipment similar to it. General LeMay noted that he believed the Soviets may have the idea of our system but they do not have specific knowledge of our equipment.

⁴ See Document 261.

Secretary McNamara pointed out that ECM is not on our major strike forces. If an ECM-equipped U-2 is shot at, the plane would be ordered to abort its mission and its chances of survival would be almost 100%. If the plane were shot at, we would then have a new confrontation requiring additional U.S. action. This particular situation is not included in the present contingency plan which is based on a U-2 having been shot down.

General LeMay said that the Cubans had the option of not shooting at the first mission of an ECM-equipped U-2. In a short time they would learn how to deal with the ECM equipment and then would be in a position to attack the U-2.

Secretary McNamara said that even after practice the Cubans would have only an approximate 20% chance of shooting down an ECM-equipped U-2. Deputy Secretary Vance commented that the chances of hitting a U-2 were much greater if it did not have ECM equipment.

Director McCone commented on the following alternative methods of fulfilling our intelligence requirements:

(1) *Peripheral photography*. This is useful for targets on the coast but it does not cover inland targets and will not provide the intelligence we require.

(2) *Drones*. They do not produce as good coverage as the U-2. They are more vulnerable. The shooting down of a drone would call for a different response by the U.S. because no pilot is involved.

(3) *Balloons*. These could operate at 90-100 thousand feet with good cameras and would be relatively invulnerable. However, they cannot be controlled without an elaborate setup which does not exist but which could be constructed. The coverage depends on the control of the balloons. Thus, the coverage is not as good as the U-2 and the American public, learning of this, could complain that we were not adequately covering the island. Secretary Rusk said that a balloon is different only because it is unmanned.

General LeMay, responding to Secretary Rusk's question, said the pilot of a U-2 cannot outmaneuver a SAM missile. To do so keeps the plane in the area a longer time, and, therefore, increases the risk. SAM missile guidance makes them lethal.

(4) *Oxcart*. This plane is not ready to fly at its peak capacity and will not be for several months. It is now able to fly mach 2.2 at 75 thousand feet. It could not be shot down but its presence would be detected. The propaganda difficulty would not be relieved because the plane makes a loud sonic boom which would be heard by many people on the ground. Secretary Rusk commented that we might use the Oxcart with its sonic boom and then ask Castro if he preferred that we go back to the silent U-2. This might be something to talk about.

(5) *Satellites*. Mr. McCone said the camera resolution is not good enough for our purposes. The weather is often difficult and cloud cover is a problem. As to specific targets, it is not possible to synchronize

the satellite so that specific targets would be covered by plan not by coincidence. There is the difficulty of the north and south orbit of present satellites. Only 5% of the island would be covered in a four-day orbit. There is a possibility of an east-west satellite orbit, but it would take at least nine months to establish tracking stations to make such an orbit possible. The expanse of an east-west orbit system would be considerable. In summary, there is no satisfactory alternative to the U-2.

In answer to a question, General LeMay said the B-58 could not do the job even with ECM. The plane is capable of a supersonic burst and the first mission would get through, but following missions would have great difficulty.

Secretary Rusk discussed political actions which might be taken:

(1) Negotiations on the overflight problem with Castro would be fruitless.

(2) The UN Security Council might be asked to vote against the overflights. We could probably prevent an adverse vote by telling Council members that the problem was being dealt with by the OAS. If we could persuade the Council that the OAS was seized of the problem, we could avoid an adverse vote but we could not possibly get a favorable vote.

(3) The General Assembly, which will not meet until Fall, could be kept from a 2/3 adverse vote. We would probably get more "yes" than "no" votes but many countries would abstain.

(4) We might revise the October 1962 proposals for on-site inspection in Cuba. The risk here is that the Cubans might accept and then we would have to give up overflights in return. Would a UN on-site inspection system meet our intelligence requirements? In October 1962 we answered this question in the negative.

Director McCone said he was not prepared to answer the question but he would look at it carefully. He personally doubted the value of a UN on-site inspection in Cuba.

(5) World Court. Secretary Rusk is not too sanguine about what we would do if Castro took us to the World Court in an effort to disprove our right to overfly Cuba. We could show that our authority for the overflights was given us by the OAS but is an OAS ruling binding on Cuba which refused to accept the OAS decision? We say it is, but the International Court of Justice might not say it is. One way to deal with an effort by Castro to use the World Court would be for us to offer to adjudicate all outstanding legal issues with Cuba. We could thus confuse the overflight issue by talking about the legality of the nationalization of American property in Cuba, etc. There is always the possibility that Cuba could formally withdraw from the OAS and denounce the treaty, thereby claiming that it was not bound by any OAS action. One action we could take would be to go again to the OAS to request a reaffirmation of the 1962 resolution.

Secretary Rusk concluded by saying that inevitably we must continue the U-2 flights. We should look again, perhaps at a later date, at the possibility of using Oxcart.

The President entered the meeting at 10:45. Secretary Rusk summarized the earlier discussion and Secretary McNamara summarized the conclusions, pro and con, of the use of ECM.

Mr. Bundy said that everyone agrees that overflights are necessary.

Secretary McNamara said the Joint Chiefs of Staff oppose the use of ECM on U-2s overflying Cuba because of the risk of reducing the effective implementation of our Single Integrated Operations Plan (SIOP). He said that he personally felt we could use the ECM and would have a 95% survival chance of escaping on the first shot if the U-2 immediately aborted. He did not recommend the use of ECM now because he did not think the Cubans were ready to attempt a shoot-down. He recommended that the use of ECM be reconsidered on the basis of a review each week of the risk of a Cuban effort to shoot down a U-2.

In response to a question, both Mr. McCone and General LeMay said that the ECM equipment could be put on the U-2 a very few hours after a decision to do so is made.

Secretary Rusk raised again the feasibility of using the A-11. Mr. McCone described the sonic boom problem with the A-11 which the U-2 does not have. When the A-11 is flying at maximum altitude and maximum speed, it is dubious whether the SAM missile could hit it. It might not even be seen by Cuban radar.

The President said we had no choice but to continue our overflights. However, we should take every precaution to avoid a U-2 being shot down. He asked that we explore again the use of ECM. He asked that the Joint Chiefs of Staff review their position and to weigh the use of the ECM against the possibility of a U-2 shoot-down and what would flow from that action. We will meet again Tuesday to discuss the matter further. A careful study of the use of the A-11 as an alternative would be available then. We must provide the required intelligence, but we must make every effort to increase the security of the overflight planes. We should get our information in a most secure way and make the overflights as secure as possible. In the meantime, we should continue our present program.

Secretary Rusk said we might consider a mix of overflight instruments such as U-2s, interspersed with the A-11.

Secretary McNamara, referring to the contingency plan in the event a U-2 is shot down, commented that the plan did not discuss what we would do if an ECM-equipped U-2 were shot at but not shot down.

Mr. Bundy said the contingency plan was available for the President's reading. It provided for military reaction under certain circumstances.

The President expressed an interest in the contingency plan, particularly in view of the fact that he had read in the press all about what

it was supposed to contain. He expressed his irritation that war plans leak to the press. He had gotten almost to a point where he hated to meet with Foreign Ministers because he read in the press the following day everything he had said to the Minister and some things he hadn't said. Only four people were present at a recent meeting, but reports of what went on appeared in the press. (This apparently referred to a conversation with Foreign Minister Butler.) We must tighten up security and put an end to such press leaks.

Bromley Smith⁵

⁵ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

267. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, May 5, 1964.

SUBJECT

Discussion at NSC Meeting—5 May 1964

IN ATTENDANCE

Rusk, Ball, Johnson, Thompson, McNamara, Vance, Taylor, Bundy, Dillon, Mann, Attorney General and McCone

1. McNamara reviewed the use of ECM equipment on the U-2's, stating that doing so would not compromise SIOP;² would give some protection initially but not over the long range; the Soviets know the principals of our ECM; ECM would not provide great protection to the U-2 but the degree of protection was open to question as it was obvious that ECM would not permit continued use of U-2's to meet intelligence requirements. JCS objects for a variety of reasons and General Taylor discussed this.

2. General Taylor stated that the JCS agree that the use would not compromise SIOP; pointed out 14 countries have SAMs and therefore

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, May 1964, Box 6, Folder 8. Secret; Eyes Only. According to the President's Daily Diary President Johnson joined the meeting in progress in the Cabinet Room at 12:25 p.m. and left at 12:55 p.m. (Johnson Library)

² Single Integrated Operations Plan; see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. X, Document 112.

compromise might be serious at some future time. Vulnerability was uncertain and was dependent upon the warhead, noting there were 100# and 500# warheads and that DIA had indicated 500# warheads were on the Cuban SAMs. (McCone said we had no intelligence on this.) Therefore JCS recommended against the use of ECM.

3. Rusk raised the question of whether a new pattern of flights crossing the island, rather than flying the axis of the island, would reduce exposure. McNamara said this could be done by increasing the number of flights and therefore the danger.

4. McNamara then advanced the idea of drones, stating they were awkward to use, of questionable reliability, limited in quantity, but raised an alternative intelligence means. ECM would make them less vulnerable but would compromise ECM.

5. I then stated that drones were limited in number, were only six of two types operational and three in the works; altitudes were 54,000' to 59,000' versus 64,000' to 72,000' for the U-2's; photography resolution equivalent to U-2 but area limited to 18-mile swath and 255 miles of linear coverage; that drones were vulnerable to MIG-21's; that they could be identified by contrails and therefore I had reservations concerning their effectiveness. McNamara agreed and after some discussion the drone question was pretty well dismissed. The same is true of balloons as it was felt they represented more serious operational problems than drones. The Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, expressed himself very positively against changing to drones as it would represent an unacceptable retreat.

6. We then turned to a discussion of the Oxcart. I stated that it was coming along well, giving the figures on the number of flights and the speeds but that all of our operational people, without exception, felt that we must not attempt to use it until it is completely debugged and this would take several months. Furthermore I said that at 2.2 Mach the Oxcart would possibly be vulnerable to SAMs though this was uncertain.

7. Secretary Dillon then asked what the ultimate value of the Oxcart was. I stated that when fully operational it probably would be quite invulnerable except under miraculous circumstances.

8. Thompson spoke the political situation, feeling that Khrushchev and Castro would be restrained during this year, recognizing our internal political situation.

9. The President entered and Rusk and McNamara reviewed the conversations. The President commented that we were right back where we started.

10. Rusk raised the question of UN on-site inspection. I agreed that properly planned and executed on-site inspection would be somewhat more dependable than in October 1962 because of our knowledge of the island gained through extensive photography.

11. McNamara then recommended that we operate for a week with U-2's at the rate of 2 to 3 flights a week on the assumption that Castro will not take offensive action. In the meantime we create ECM capability but not use it; finally we expedite our drone capability to give us an option but that we emphatically deny any intent to use them. McNamara noted some leaks about drones out of the Pentagon which disturbed him.

12. The President inquired about expediting the Oxcart. I took the position we would do all we could to push the development and debug the vehicle but said that we were working against unexplored frontiers of aviation; that many felt unexpected problems were arising—some of which we can answer rapidly, but many have to be answered by methods of “cut and try”; and that the problem in hand would not lend itself to a “crash” program.

13. There was no discussion of the Contingency Plan.³
[Omitted here is discussion of Laos.]

³ According to a May 1 memorandum from Califano to Bromley Smith, the Contingency Plan was a DOD–State Paper entitled “U-2 Flights, Cuba—Contingency Plans,” which developed a series of actions to be considered by the United States in advance of and after the shoot down or attempted shoot down of a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft over Cuba. The Contingency Plan is attached to Califano's memorandum. (Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80–B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, May 1964, Box 6, Folder 8)

268. Summary Record of 531st National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, May 5, 1964, noon.

LAOS AND OVERFLIGHTS OF CUBA

The meeting began without the President. Secretary Rusk asked Secretary McNamara to review the problem of the use of electronic countermeasures (ECM) on U-2s overflying Cuba.

Secretary McNamara said that the use of ECM in the U-2 would not, in his opinion, seriously compromise implementation of SIOP.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Meeting File, Vol. 2, Tab 3, May 5, 1964. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Drafted by Bromley Smith.

Some experts believe the survivability of U.S. bombers over the USSR will be reduced if ECM is used over Cuba. This is very hard to evaluate. However, the use of ECM on U-2s over Cuba will not provide great protection for the planes flying regularly over Cuba. The protection will be limited to the first plane flying over. It would not be sufficient to protect U-2s on a regular flight basis. After the first flight there would be a 90% chance of a successful shootdown if the Cubans made a determined attack on the plane.

General Taylor said that the use of ECM would not have a serious effect on the implementation of SIOP. However, some fourteen countries now have Soviet SAM systems. To use ECM in Cuba would undoubtedly result in the transmittal to these other countries of the methods of dealing with the ECM. In addition, there may come a time when we have a critical need to look at a SAM-defended site. If we use the ECM now, we would throw away the one free ride which we would like to have in reserve in case of critical need. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommends against the use of ECM because it will not protect continued overflights, plus the fact that its use will risk compromising the ECM equipment.

Secretary McNamara said that flight plans could be made which expose a U-2 to attack from fewer SAM sites. He did not recommend that this course of action be followed.

The discussion then turned to the use of drones. Secretary McNamara said the use of drones would be an awkward way of meeting our intelligence requirements. We had never operated drones to this extent. There are numerous operational problems limiting the capability of drones. We have enough drones now so that within ninety days we could carry out our full reconnaissance requirements, but for the next ninety days we could obtain only 75% of our requirements. These estimates excluded enemy action against the drones. With existing drones encountering enemy action we could probably carry on for several weeks, operating at the 59,000 to 54,000 foot level.

Director McCone said he had trouble with the suggestion that we rely on drones to meet our aerial reconnaissance requirements. Only two drones are operational now at 50,000 feet. Two more will be operational in the next fifteen days at this height. The U-2 operates at 64,000 to 68,000 feet. This difference in altitude is important because the drones flying at the lower level will have contrails. Thus, they are more detectable and more vulnerable. In addition, there is considerable difference in the width of ground photographed—18 vs. 30 nautical miles. The drones have a 255 linear mile limit, which is considerably less than the U-2s. There is a loss of track accuracy of plus or minus five miles, or approximately an eighteen-mile swath.

Secretary McNamara said he agreed with Mr. McCone's evaluation of the difference between the U-2s and drones, but, even so, we

could carry out our required intelligence mission by using drones. The cost would be about \$80,000 per drone mission or about \$150,000 per U–2 equivalent. It is true that the drones will cost more and are less predictable. If there is enemy action against the drones, they would be able to carry out their mission for a period varying from two to six weeks.

Mr. Bundy asked whether Secretary McNamara was thinking of a course which would run Castro out of weapons. Secretary McNamara said he was. For example, we might use nonphotographic drones which would be less costly to lose.

Mr. McCone said the idea of running Castro out of SAM missiles would depend on whether he used MIG–21s against the drones. Secretary McNamara replied that great pilot skill is required if a MIG actually shoots down a drone.

Secretary McNamara said that the possibility of our using drones was leaking to the press. This disturbed him greatly and he had instructed his press officers to deny flatly that any consideration is being given to the substitution of drones for U–2s.

Under Secretary Ball made the point that if it became known to the Cubans that we were flying drones, Castro would undoubtedly attack them. Mr. Bundy said that he agreed that the Cubans would act much more promptly against a drone than against piloted planes. Secretary McNamara commented that we would have to respond to the shooting down of drones at some point, particularly if it later became possible for us to fly thirty drones per month.

Mr. McCone said the intelligence community's best estimate was that Castro had in Cuba 500 missiles for his SAMs. General Taylor said that the Cubans would not really know whether we were flying drones or piloted U–2s. Secretary McNamara pointed out, however, that if the Cubans knocked out drone after drone, we would have to make some response.

With respect to balloons, Secretary McNamara said these had many of the disadvantages of drones, but operational difficulties with them were much higher.

Secretary Rusk asked whether, if we made the maximum use of peripheral photography, our overflights requirement would be reduced. Mr. McCone said not significantly.

Secretary Rusk asked whether, if the Cubans took their case to the United Nations and said they were prepared to accept UN on-site inspection as soon as we gave up our overflights, would we find this acceptable? Mr. McCone replied that on-site inspection can now be made much more dependable than was the case in October 1962 because we now have many aerial photographs of the island. The information we have received from these photographs will not decay seriously over time.

Alexis Johnson recalled that the 1962 inspection plan had called for overflights by UN planes in addition to on-site inspection. We could re-

new this proposal and insist on the UN-operated reconnaissance system. Mr. Bundy said he believed this put us in a very strong position. He thought that we could sell our European allies on such a proposal. He said that it was important, however, to make clear the difference between the kind of intelligence we wanted about specific targets for use in the event of an invasion and the kind of information which we need to reassure that strategic missiles were not being introduced into Cuba.

Secretary Rusk asked if we could use a combination of means of aerial reconnaissance. He agreed that if the Cubans heard that we were replacing U-2s with drones they would certainly try to shoot down the drones.

Secretary McNamara repeated his view that if word gets around that we are using drones, the Cubans would say that we are weakening our position. The Attorney General agreed that if the word got around that we were no longer flying U-2s, but using drones, the effect on public opinion would indeed be serious. He expressed his view forcefully.

Secretary Rusk asked what was the status of the proposal to use the A-11 plane. Mr. McCone replied that the A-11 was not ready for use. It has been operated successfully but not yet at the maximum speed it is apparently able to reach. It is coming along very well, indeed, but it would be most dangerous to use the A-11 now. The A-11 is vulnerable to flameout and to other operational difficulties. Several additional months are needed for testing to ensure that the plane is fully operational. For example, he said the early versions of the A-11 had to come down to 35,000 feet in order to relight their engines after a flameout. A way around this limitation had been found, but each plane had to be modified to include the new equipment making possible the relighting of the engines without the descent. He said we are on the very far frontier of knowledge and there are many problems remaining. Those who had operated the planes were unanimous in agreeing that it would be reckless to use them over Cuba without further testing. Secretary McNamara said everyone was unanimous in opposing the use of the A-11 for at least several months. Secretary Rusk said that if the Cubans learned an A-11 was flying over they would make every effort to shoot it down.

With respect to the vulnerability of the A-11, Mr. McCone said the plane would be much less vulnerable when it was fully ready. There were many imponderables in trying to decide whether the plane could be shot down. He concluded that it was theoretically possible to shoot down an A-11 if everything used against it worked perfectly, i.e., a perfectly trained crew and a perfect SAM site operation. He reminded the group that although the A-11 cannot be seen, its sonic boom can be heard clearly. Therefore, from Castro's point of view, the use of the A-11 would be more objectionable than the U-2.

Ambassador Thompson commented that it was doubtful that Castro would contemplate early action against an overflying plane. He said the Soviets were very conscious of the timing in relation to the elections in the U.S. The Russians would object to the Cubans taking the case to the UN because our insistence on overflights would reveal that we think the Russians are capable of sending strategic missiles back to Cuba.

Mr. Alexis Johnson pointed out that while Castro might not push his case in the UN, the Secretary General undoubtedly would ask for our informal views on Castro's letter to the Secretary General. Secretary Rusk replied that if this happened we could remind the Secretary General of our 1962 offer and say that we were prepared to negotiate on the basis of Castro accepting on-site inspection and UN aerial reconnaissance. Mr. Alexis Johnson replied that we had some time in which to work this out. He felt we had several months.

The President joined the group and Secretaries Rusk and McNamara summarized the earlier discussion.

As to compromising the ECM, Secretary McNamara said he doubted its use would result in making more difficult the implementation of the SIOP. He said that ECM did not ensure survival of the U-2, but that the first plane flown with ECM had a very high chance of escaping. This percentage dropped sharply after the first flight. He asked General Taylor to summarize the Joint Chiefs of Staff views on ECM. General Taylor repeated his earlier comments.

With respect to drones, Secretary McNamara estimated that even with enemy action, we would be able to carry on a continuous program of drone flights for one to twelve weeks, but if Castro fired on the drones, we would obviously have a major political problem.

With respect to the A-11, Mr. McCone summarized his view that the plane was not now ready for use.

The President said, "This gets you back to where you were." Secretary McNamara replied, "Yes." Secretary Rusk said that was true, with one addition. We could engage in a political holding action with the UN Secretary General. There are ways to keep the ball in play, but we expect nothing to come of these moves.

The President asked how serious Castro was when he made statements about preventing overflights. Secretary Rusk replied that over time he undoubtedly was serious. However, there are things we can do to reduce the risk of a shoot-down but we cannot back away in the face of Castro's threats.

The President asked if one of our planes is shot down, do we take out the SAM sites? Mr. Bundy replied that the contingency called for taking out one or more SAM sites.

Secretary McNamara recommended that we proceed on the assumption that for the next week there will be no attack on our U-2s.

We should continue the flights of the U-2s. The Defense Department will look again at the proposals to use an ECM-equipped U-2 and to use drones. The production of drones will be immediately increased, but a flat denial will be made to any press queries about whether consideration is being given to the use of drones.

The question was asked whether the readiness of the Oxcart could be speeded up. Secretary Dillon asked what could be done in an allout effort to increase the readiness of the Oxcart. Mr. McCone replied that the operators were working as fast as they could on dealing with each problem as it arises. He said he would keep the pressure on but he did not think that a crash program should be undertaken. He cited again the case of modifying the planes in order to make it possible for the pilot to relight the engine at maximum altitude in the event of a flameout.

Secretary Rusk asked whether we should read anything into the timing of the public release by Castro of the discovery of the arms cache off the Cuban coast. Assistant Secretary Mann said we knew of their discovery of this cache on April 20th and they had waited several days before making their discovery public.

[Omitted here is a discussion of Laos.]

Bromley Smith²

² Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

269. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, May 14, 1964.

SUBJECT

Special Group—Cuba

1. Continued exile raids² are going to make it tougher to keep the lid on Cuba between now and November. This is just the sort of thing that evokes a highly emotional response from Castro. As things stand, he seems convinced that we are tied into the raids—as indeed we are.

2. There seem to be two things we can do.

(a) We can make a real effort to stop the raids. While CIA says that this can't be done, I wonder if that's true. For example, the cessation of assistance and pressure on countries like Nicaragua to cease providing facilities might do the trick.

This step is a drastic one and could lead to angry charges (in the U.S. and elsewhere) that we are lending positive support to Castro. It is probably a step we would not want to take unless it became clear that these exile raids, which we can't control, were propelling us to the brink.

(b) We can cut off all our ties with these exile groups (e.g. money, equipment, intelligence information). The exile grapevine is a sensitive one and the word will get around that we are really not involved. Hopefully, this word will get to Fidel and he will keep his eye focussed on the exiles rather than on us (specifically, a U-2). In sum, at a minimum, we might want to be impregnable to the charge that we are connected in any way with these exile activities.

3. This strikes me as an urgent problem which we should grapple with now. Moreover, there may be a good deal of support in town in favor of doing something. My talks at State indicate that Alexis John-

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. I, 11/63-7/65. Secret; Eyes Only.

² On May 13 one of Artime's commando groups struck the Port of Pilon in southern Oriente province, damaging warehouses and, according to an official Cuban announcement, destroying approximately 70,000 tons of sugar. The CIA was advised that Artime planned another raid on two radar installations in Cuba for early June.

son, Tom Mann, and John Crimmins are also unhappy about the present trend of events.³

4. You may want to initiate a discussion of this matter⁴ at the Special Group meeting today.⁵

GC

³ A notation in Chase's handwriting in the left margin next to this sentence reads: "This may or may not be still true as of 6/4/64."

⁴ A notation in Chase's handwriting at the bottom of the memorandum reads: "P.S. Also, we might want to consider making a distinction between types of raids. Externally-mounted noisy ones (e.g. Artime) are bad. Internal quiet ones are more tolerable."

⁵ The Special Group postponed decisions about the autonomous exile groups until June; see Document 270.

270. Memorandum From Albert E. Carter of the Office for Coordination, Bureau of Intelligence and Research to the Director of the Bureau (Hughes) and the Deputy Director (Denney)¹

Washington, June 4, 1964.

SUBJECT

ARA—Agency Meeting of June 3, 1964

PARTICIPANTS

ARA—Mr. Mann, Mr. Crimmins, Mr. Pryce

CIA—Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Herbert, Mr. Cheever, Mr. Bolton

INR/DDC—Mr. Carter

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meetings, June 1964. Secret.

Cuba

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the attached CIA-prepared paper entitled “A Reappraisal of Autonomous Operations.”²

Mann read the paper and commented with regard to “II Current Status” at the top of page 5 that he was not sure it was accurate to say he had “argued and suggested.” He said he had simply “raised the question.”³ FitzGerald remarked it was a draft paper that would not be used “outside this room.” Mann said it was not an important point.

Crimmins liked the paper. FitzGerald said it was one-sided, but that “the more we worked on it the more one-sided it became.” Mann thought if we cut off aid the Cubans could blackmail us and it could get out.

Crimmins then said that before proceeding with this discussion he would like to fill Mann in on the apprehension of Manolo Ray by the British in the Bahamas. He said Ray and party were picked up on Anguila Key Monday afternoon.⁴ They were discovered by the British on a normal patrol. Ray tried to get away, but the British pursued and picked him up. A U.S. Coast Guard plane assisted, said Crimmins, “as is usual in such cases.” Crimmins explained that Ray was not using his own name, but that his identity was evidently now known. He said there were three Americans in the party, including a *Life* photographer and a girl radio operator.

Crimmins thought that being picked up ten days after he was supposed to be in Cuba would make a laughingstock of Ray. He saw it as a “sticky” public relations problem for us also.

In response to a question from Mann, Crimmins explained that we collaborate with the British in matters of this nature “for many reasons”, particularly since August 1963 when Castro’s forces kidnapped a group of Cuban exiles from Anguila Key.

² Attached but not printed. This June 3 paper drafted by FitzGerald included a review of the history of the autonomous exile groups program, the consequences of terminating U.S. support for them, and conclusions. The main conclusion was that “The cessation of autonomous commando operations—the only remaining external sabotage activity since unilateral CIA operations of this type were stood down in January 1964—would effectively kill the remaining chances of carrying out the objectives of the Integrated Covert Action Program initiated in June 1963. While the cost would be high, it might well be worth the sacrifice if the U.S. is prepared for armed intervention in Cuba and if the OAS will unequivocally support it.” (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. II, 1964–65)

³ In a June 16 memorandum to Bundy, Chase stated that FitzGerald’s reappraisal “was apparently instigated by Tom Mann’s expressed feeling that if we mean what we say under the warning paragraph of the OAS resolution (subversion is aggression), we should keep our hands clean and cease support of autonomous exile operations.” (Ibid.)

⁴ June 1.

Crimmins said in the present case the British want to take the position they cooperated with us, but that the fact is we were cooperating with them in their waters at their request.

He said there was a precedent for the present case in that another group of Cuban exiles was picked up on Anguila Key by the British a few months ago, tried, fined \$210 each, given suspended sentences of 90 days and deported to the U.S.

Crimmins said when we capture such groups we simply seize their equipment and set them free.

Mann thought we might quietly suggest to the British they do about what we do in cases like this. He thought we might tell them they were heading into a hornet's nest, that they had a hero.

It was explained that the group was due in Nassau at 1:30 June 3 (the day of the meeting) and that they would undoubtedly be tried, as were the others. It was decided that "without really twisting their arm" the British would be asked to low key the matter as much as possible. Mann suggested Crimmins talk with Alex Johnson about how to handle this aspect of the matter.

FitzGerald said a related development was that weapons "from a West Coast carriage factory" made for Ray had been traced by U.S. officials to a basement in Miami which is now under surveillance. Included in these, said FitzGerald, is a special "assassination" weapon.

FitzGerald also reported that Artime will put to sea Friday (June 5) for two operations in Oriente province, one east and the other west of Santiago. FitzGerald seemed to think these operations would be more "cream puff" in nature than the Pilon raid. It was his understanding that they would not involve landings.

At this point Mann's next appointment was announced and there was no time to return to a discussion of the autonomous operations paper. Mann said he would study the memorandum and probably arrange a special meeting to discuss it.

271. Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann)¹

Washington, June 11, 1964, 7:05 p.m.

[Omitted here is discussion of Brazil, Mexico, and other Latin American countries.]

President: What are our danger spots?

Mann: Well, that's the—

President: Chile election?

Mann: That's the biggest one, I would say, with the fact of the Communist element in it.

President: And the Dominican—

Mann: The overflights over Cuba.

President: What in the world can we do to minimize that? We can't go around them. We can't circle the island. We got to go over it. And—

Mann: I think we'll get, I'm hoping we'll get some good resolutions, which would be very helpful on the domestic front, and also of real value to us.

President: Is trade going up much between the British and the Cubans?

Mann: Well, it has in terms of British exports to Cuba, and French exports.

President: They told me when they were here that they'd been 55 million, they'd cut them to five, but they'd be up on account of the buses. Now what, how much are they up to?

Mann: Well, what really happened, I don't have the figures in my head, but I know it's up quite a bit, Mr. President, because they've been buying all this sugar, and they've got these, Cuba's got the convertible currencies to buy anything they want. I think it's about two hundred million dollars a year that Castro made last year, and we expect him to make about the same this year as a result of the increased price of sugar. Now sugar prices are dropping, this is a very temporary phenomenon, sugar prices are dropping and he's just, he's not going to have the money to buy this kind of stuff much longer. So I don't think

¹ Source: Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of telephone conversation between President Johnson and Thomas Mann, Tape 64.31, Side B, PNO 5. Secret. This transcript was prepared in the Office of the Historian specifically for this volume. The full transcript of this conversation is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XXXI, Document 16.

that the prognosis, the medium and long term prognosis, is bad. It's good.

President: You getting any reports of the things inside Cuba? What's happening?

Mann: Well, not really anything new that—

President: Is there any dissatisfaction?

Mann: Yes, we figure about 25 percent of the people—the job holders, the office holders, especially the young people in the country who are better off than they ever were before—are totally in favor of Castro. We think he can count on about 25 to 30 percent of the people. We think there are about 25 to 30 percent of the people who are opposed to him, and the middle ground there, the 40 to 50 percent, are just sort of apathetic. And that's the way it's been for the last year or so, and there isn't much change in that, because his hard core of support is built around the people who hold jobs.

President: Would you say that our economic isolation policy has been a complete failure?

Mann: No, sir. I think it's been largely successful. I—

President: How? When the French and British are all trading with him?

Mann: Well, he's had these dollars and they've sold him some things, and that's hurt us. But on the, if—The alternative would be to let the bars down and let them extend credits and that sort of thing. And we've been very successful in keeping this limited to a number of isolated transactions. And this is a hell of lot better than taking him into our bosom.

President: How are we going to get rid of him?

Mann: It's going to take some time.

President: Well—

Mann: I think it's going to have to come from—I really don't think that, unless somebody kills Castro, or he dies, or the army is split in the very top command where they turn on him, the army especially, that the people themselves can get rid of him. As long as that army is loyal to him, he's going to be there until he dies. And when he dies, nobody knows what's going to happen, because he's got the same power to mesmerize people that Hitler had, and we doubt that anybody else has got, can project this same kind of image. The only other way to knock him off would be to go in there with force from the outside, and this could happen, either as a result of our reactions to his shooting at our planes that are doing this photographic stuff, or as a result of collective action which we're working on in this Venezuelan thing, whereby he tries again what he did in Venezuela, and if at that time you decide you want authority, the legal basis to go in, and you

want to go in, I think we could get it. The main objective we hope to get out of this meeting is to say that subversion, communist subversion, is an aggression which is not an armed attack within the meaning of article six of the Rio Treaty, get them to accept that, so that if we have another act of subversion, we'll have a good legal basis of going to the OAS and saying now you agreed that this was the law, and here are the facts, and this is what we ought to do. Because the biggest problem, as you know, that we had in the Bay of Pigs, was this doubt on the part of the lawyers and others that we had any right in international law to do anything, and we hope to clear that up considerably.

President: So that for the subversion by importing arms to other countries to be considered aggression, that would justify our moving.

Mann: That's what we—if he does it again. But we would have to go to the OAS and prove the facts. They didn't want to give us a blank check.

President: Well, you've got a statement there,² say I ought to say at a press conference that I don't intend to invade Cuba, just as Kennedy didn't.

Mann: Well, sir, if I were you, I wouldn't make a statement like that, because who can tell what's going to happen tomorrow? Suppose he shoots tomorrow and—

President: Well they say Khrushchev is saying that he hadn't seen us repeat Kennedy's pledge and we ought to do it.

Mann: Well, I would send, I wouldn't make a public statement, I'd have the Secretary of State say that if he behaves himself, doesn't commit any aggressive acts against other Republics, and doesn't shoot at any of our planes, or doesn't give us cause to do anything, that everything's going to be all right in terms of war and peace.

President: You tell, in the morning you call Mac Bundy, he's not here, but you call him, and tell him I was talking to you last night, and you'd like to know what he'd propose to say in that statement and then you tell him why you don't think it ought to be done.³

Mann: All right.

[Omitted here is discussion of Uruguay, Argentina, and Venezuela.]

² The President was evidently referring to a June 2 memorandum from Bundy to him that advocated that a "no invasion" statement be made at a press conference. Bundy suggested that the Soviets "might find it easier to keep Castro under control if you were to reaffirm our intent not to launch an invasion of Cuba unless the Cubans forced it on us." Bundy included the text of a proposed statement. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Memos to the President, McGeorge Bundy, Vol. 5, 1964–1965)

³ See Document 272.

272. Memorandum From the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, June 12, 1964.

SUBJECT

Possible Statement by the President on Cuba

I understand from Tom Mann² that the President is considering the desirability of volunteering a press statement reiterating our position with respect to a military invasion of Cuba. Tom and I have thoroughly considered the matter, and for the reasons set forth below do not recommend that such a statement be made. However, if nevertheless the President desires to make a statement, we would recommend the following text, which has been carefully drawn from and conforms to the statements President Kennedy made in late 1962 and 1963:³

"As President Kennedy pointed out on several occasions, we do not intend to launch a military invasion of Cuba or to begin a war against Cuba. Should, however, Cuba again become a military threat to us or its neighbors, or should it carry out aggressive acts against us or other countries of the Hemisphere, then we would have an entirely different situation. Thus, peace in the Caribbean depends on the actions of the Cuban Government. This was the position of the Kennedy Administration; it is the position of this Administration."

While the foregoing covers the two situations that might lead to armed conflict, introduction of offensive missiles, or an act of aggression against any American republic, the statement is of necessity ambiguous as to whether the phrase "aggressive acts" includes acts of the

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA. Confidential.

² See Document 271.

³ See *Foreign Relations, 1961-1963*, vol. XI, Document 95, for the "assurances against the invasion of Cuba" that Kennedy gave Khrushchev in telegram 1015 to Moscow, October 27, 1962. The White House simultaneously released the text to the press. At his news conference on November 20, 1962, President Kennedy stated that "for our part, if all offensive weapons systems are removed from Cuba and kept out of the hemisphere in the future, under adequate verification and safeguards, and if Cuba is not used for the export of aggressive Communist purposes, there will be peace in the Caribbean. And as I said in September, 'we shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this hemisphere.'" Asked to "be a bit more specific on the scope of your no-invasion pledge" to Khrushchev, Kennedy replied that "I think if you re-read the statement you will see the position of the Government on that matter." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy, 1962*, pp. 831 and 832)

kind that recently took place in Venezuela. We will be on much sounder ground with respect to acts of this kind after we obtain agreement on the Venezuela resolution in the OAS.

However, the basic difficulty we see is that now to take the initiative in raising the issue of the “no invasion pledge,” at a time when it is not being pressed either by the Soviets⁴ or domestically, inevitably raises problems on one or both sides. To the degree that any statement appears to Khrushchev to be less than the Kennedy statements it requires a response on his part, and to the degree that any statement appears to be more than the domestic understanding of President Kennedy’s statements it raises domestic questions of the degree to which the Administration is prepared to “co-exist” with Castro.⁵

U. Alexis Johnson⁶

⁴ In a June 16 memorandum to Rusk, Mann wrote: “There are rumors already current in Latin America and in the United States that the United States and Russia have reached some kind of accommodation on Cuba.” While Mann said that he thought this was “not an accurate description of our policy,” he argued that a “no invasion” pledge would “give currency” to the “notion of coexistence.” Mann also stated that a “no invasion” pledge “might cloud our legal right to retaliate against Castro” for shooting down a U-2 plane since Russia had already advanced the legal argument “that Castro would not be guilty of an ‘aggressive act’ as he was only defending Cuban air space.” (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/LA Files: Lot 66 D 65, Cuba File)

⁵ The President did not make a “no invasion” pledge.

⁶ Printed from a copy that indicates Johnson signed the original.

**273. Memorandum From the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs,
Bureau of Inter-American Affairs (Crimmins) to the Deputy
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson)¹**

Washington, June 18, 1964.

SUBJECT

Continued Assistance to Manuel Ray’s JURE as “Autonomous Group”

I understand that the Special Group at its meeting today will explore the question of the desirability of continuing the support of

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, June 18, 1964. Secret; Sensitive.

Cuban exile "autonomous groups". I understand further that there will probably be no decision taken at this meeting.²

Pending this basic decision, we have an immediate problem with respect to Manuel Ray and his organization, JURE. Ray wants three things from us: (a) an immediate special grant of funds (over and above the funds he received at the beginning of this month) to recoup his losses from the recent fiasco; (b) intercession with law enforcement agencies in Puerto Rico to relax the very strict surveillance they maintain over his principal vessel so that it can leave Puerto Rico for Costa Rica; and (c) intercession with the Dominican Government to give him a base and, possibly, broadcasting facilities in the Dominican Republic.

The question is: Should we meet any of these requests in view of Ray's recent performance?

Ray has been guilty of violations of the rules of "autonomy", of major errors in judgment, and of lack of success. He has mounted his operation from and maintained his bases in US territory; he has informed Tad Szulc of the *New York Times*, apparently in detail, of US support for him; he has used Szulc as a channel for making requests for further support from US officials; he has carried out his projected operations ineptly and carelessly; and he has failed in a humiliating and noisy way.

These are grievous mistakes. Some, perhaps, can be mitigated by a plea of extenuating circumstances, but taken together they could easily justify our washing our hands of Ray and his group. There are, however, cogent reasons, in my opinion, for giving Ray another chance.

The basic argument in favor of continuing support for him is the fact that his strategic concept of political operations provides at least some hope for loosening up the situation within Cuba. As you know, his plans call for infiltration of small groups into Cuba (no hit-and-run attacks from the outside) with the object of beginning small-scale propaganda operations in urban and suburban areas, validated and reinforced by occasional sabotage. The idea is to raise a symbol of organized, coherent and gradually expanding resistance to Castro and to attract disaffected elements of the regime and of the mass by establishing the beginning of an alternative to the regime. Ray's political platform, which is certainly left of center, and an echo of the original

² In a June 18 memorandum updating his May 14 memorandum to Bundy (Document 269) Chase included a few additional points for the Special Group meeting. He added the options of searching harder for an alternative to the U-2 and encouraging the exile groups to make internally-mounted rather than the externally-mounted raids that he had proposed in his May 14 memorandum. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. II, 1964-1965)

promises of the revolution, probably has greater potential for appealing to sectors of the power structure than that of any other group available to us. His proclamation of May 20 (copy attached)³ was, in my view, a very effective piece of political propaganda.

As it is with all exile groups, it is impossible to assess the accuracy of Ray's claims to support in being within Cuba. Probably the most that can be said is that, given his role in the revolution, his reasonably important post in the early days of the Castro regime, and his general political beliefs, his claims have more plausibility than those of others. A prickly personality, Ray should not be viewed as having the leadership qualities of Fidel nor should his movement be expected to sweep the island. Probably the most that we can prudently and realistically expect from a successful effort by Ray is a gradual loosening up of the internal structure. On the other hand, even if he gets inside and begins to work, it is entirely possible that he will lay a massive egg. We simply cannot be sure.

Basically, however, his strategic political concept has merit; it is his execution which has been miserable.

The Agency reports that JURE people say that they have learned bitter lessons from the June 1 fiasco⁴ and that they will not repeat them. It is entirely possible that they have been shocked into realizing the necessity for greater care and for abiding by the rules of engagement. Their pleas for our intercession with the Dominican Government stem from their knowledge that we have meant what we said when we stipulated that US territory cannot be used as a base of operations. This has been borne in upon them with special force because they claim that a significant, if not major, part of their operational problems was caused by their inability to employ US-based equipment which was under strict surveillance.

With respect to Ray's revelations to the newspaperman, there is now no way for him to correct that blunder. No amount of references to the general lack of discretion of the Cuban exile or to similar (but lesser) breaches of security by the other "autonomous" leader can justify it. The only small comfort that can be drawn in the area of security is that the Anguila Key fiasco improved the general cover for US support of JURE. Among the press in general, in fact, Arttime, because of his history, is much oftener credited with US support than Ray. Unfortunately, Szulc is more influential and may be more ready to use his information than most. It should be noted that, if we were to intercede with the Dominicans in Ray's behalf, his establishment in the Do-

³ Attached but not printed.

⁴ Regarding this episode, see Document 270.

minican Republic would tend to confirm to Szulc Ray's account to him and the hollowness of our insistence that we have not supported him.

Taking all these factors into account, I recommend that we meet Ray's first two requests immediately, *provided* that:

1. He agree to cease completely the use of US territory for mounting operations;
2. He agree to keep his mouth shut, to keep away from Szulc, and be prepared to deny totally any statements on US support attributed to him by Szulc; and
3. He be made to understand that if these conditions are violated all assistance will be cut off forthwith, and in the case of a violation of the first condition, all his equipment in the United States will be seized.

Regarding intercession with the Dominican authorities, we should take no action pending the basic decision on policy toward autonomous groups in general.⁵ If it is decided to continue support for such groups, I recommend that we do intercede but that we limit ourselves to having the appropriate officer of the Embassy (Ambassador or DCM) repeat to the President of the Triumvirate the standard formula (in effect, Ray is a respectable and dedicated Cuban exile leader) which CAS already has used in reply to an inquiry from Reid Cabral. Ray himself should, of course, make the specific request to the Dominican authorities.

⁵ According to Johnson's Notes on the June 18 303 Committee Meeting, it was decided to tell Ray that we "agreed with him that he should operate from outside the US. He must establish a base outside, and then we will help him as we have undertaken to do. We will help him get his boat out." Johnson also noted that "On Artime, we shall continue as we are now doing." As for rumors of assassination plots against Castro and selected Cuban leaders, McCone and McGeorge Bundy were to inform Attorney General Kennedy to use U.S. law enforcement agencies to prevent such plans. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, June 18, 1964) McCone sent Bundy an August 19 memorandum reviewing the FBI's investigation of reported exile assassination plans. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Exile Activities, Vol. I, 11/63-7/65)

274. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 1, 1964, 10 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting of President Francisco J. Orlich of Costa Rica with the Secretary
Part II—Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

U.S.

The Secretary

Assistant Secretary Thomas C. Mann

Ambassador Raymond L. Telles

Mr. Oliver L. Sause, Director, Office of Central American Affairs

Costa Rica

Francisco J. Orlich, President of Costa Rica

Daniel Oduber, Foreign Minister of Costa Rica

Mario Quiros, Minister of Presidency

Gonzalo Facio, Ambassador of Costa Rica

Eduardo Lizano, Economic Advisor

Fidel Tristan, Dean of the School of Economics

The Secretary said that he wanted to repeat to President Orlich the firm pledge of the Government of the United States to assist in any feasible way if Costa Rica were threatened by Castro Communism. U.S. help might take the form of cooperation in mounting coastal patrols and surveillance of arms shipments, cooperation between military forces or any other means appropriate to the occasion. It was firm U.S. policy to keep Castro in Cuba and to make it clear that any effort by him to subvert or to threaten other countries would encounter a prompt reaction.

President Orlich said he was providing some help to Cuban exile leaders.

The Secretary said the U.S. was trying to ensure that no Cuban exile activities originated on U.S. soil. Hit-and-run raids are not very effective since most of the work to overthrow Castro will have to be done inside Cuba. The introduction of people into Cuba is becoming more difficult. Cuban police work is very professional, thanks to Soviet training.

President Orlich asked about the possible whereabouts of new guerrilla activities. The Secretary said this was difficult to judge. He

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 15–1 Costa Rica. Secret. Drafted by Oliver L. Sause, Director of the Office of Central American Affairs and approved in S on July 14. Part I of the memorandum of conversation on “Economic Assistance,” is *ibid.*

was concerned about arms being smuggled from Panama to Colombia and from Bolivia to Argentina. The Secretary said that control of arms traffic required a great deal of careful organization.

The Secretary then discussed on the impact of the defection of Fidel Castro's sister, Juana. He indicated he was very much interested in her remarks regarding the use of Cuban embassies as centers of subversion. Ambassador Facio recalled that when he had visited Cuba in March 1959 in the company of President Orlich and Jose Figueres, Castro's sister apologized for the sharp exchanges which took place at that time between Figueres and Castro and remarked to the Costa Rican group that she greatly feared communist penetration of the July 26 movement.

There was general agreement that the increasing number of Soviet trained students from Central America and other areas represented a threat. It was noted that the Costa Rican Government has tried by publicizing names of those taking such training to cut down the flow. The Secretary asked if the Government of Costa Rica had lists of all those who had been trained by communists, and urged that the Government continue to keep an eye on them after their return.

The Secretary then referred to the forthcoming OAS Foreign Minister's meeting in Washington and said that while it appeared there would be sufficient votes on the present version of the Venezuelan resolution, he would appreciate continued Costa Rican efforts to try to influence the two or three nations still opposed to action. President Orlich and Foreign Minister Oduber said that they would continue their efforts. There was also general agreement that the resolutions should not be further watered down. The Secretary said that the recommendations by nations of the hemisphere to nations outside the hemisphere that they cut off commercial relations with Cuba, if approved, would have a very significant impact on European nations now trading with Cuba. The volume of their trade with Cuba is small. They would probably think twice about continuing Cuban trade if it were in any way to jeopardize their much greater trade with the rest of Latin America.

275. Central Intelligence Agency Memorandum¹

No. 1601/64

Washington, July 2, 1964.

Summary

The appeal of Castro's revolution is wearing thinner, but Castro himself retains firm control over the instruments of power. We believe that there will be further erosion of popular support for his regime over the next year or two. Unless he dies or is otherwise removed from the scene, however, we think the chances of an overthrow of the regime or of a major uprising against it during this period will remain slim.

STAYING POWER OF THE CASTRO REGIME

1. The regime's economic performance—still dismal after five and a half years of trying—has resulted in a continuing loss of popular backing. Living conditions are depressed; rationing has become a way of life; and the administration and management continue to be both inept and high-handed. In short, the regime has failed to deliver the economic benefits that it promised, and the consequences of this failure are increasingly felt by most of the Cuban population. Moreover, we expect little, if any, increase in overall economic output during the rest of 1964 or in 1965. Indeed shortages of foodstuffs and consumer goods are likely to become even more pronounced.²

2. We estimate Cuban sugar production in 1964 at about 3.8 million metric tons—the same as the 1963 crop, which was the smallest in 18 years. Cuban export earnings this year, however, while slightly below those of 1960 and 1961, will be substantially better than in 1962 and 1963 because of the abnormally high prices at which most of the 1964 crop was sold on future contracts during 1963.

3. Recent sharp declines in sugar futures make Cuban prospects for foreign exchange earnings much less promising for 1965, and probably for 1966 as well. World spot prices, which had hit a peak of 13 cents a pound a little more than a year ago and were still as high as 12 cents last November, now are not much above five cents; sugar futures for 1965 are running at 4.5 to 4.6 cents. Assuming that sales to non-bloc

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Vol. I, 11/63–11/64. Secret; No Foreign Dissem.

² It is worth noting that the Cuban economic plan for 1964 calls for only a 1.3 per cent increase over 1963 in the total amount of food available for consumption. Even if this target is achieved—and the Cubans have not often met plan goals in the past—this would mean a small decline in *per capita consumption*, since the population is almost certainly increasing at a substantially greater rate. [Footnote in the source text.]

purchasers are made at about these levels, the Castro regime would not only have to expand sugar production by about 20 percent next year to earn as much in 1965 as this year; it would also have to sell the entire increase to the bloc at the six-cent price specified for Soviet purchases in the long-term Soviet-Cuban sugar agreement. Such an expansion of production would be possible, but unlikely. The regime's program of canefield expansion—carried out at the expense of other crops—may permit a modest expansion in the 1965 sugar crop, but we believe there is no more than a remote chance that the 1965 harvest will be large enough to produce export earnings significantly above those of this year.

4. Meanwhile, Castro is pressing ahead with his program of socialization, relying increasingly on methods of compulsion and repression in carrying it out. The Cuban leaders are applying some measures borrowed from the Soviet bloc without successfully adapting them to Cuban characteristics; they are not putting enough cha-cha-cha in a system [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] likes to refer to as "Marxism cha-cha-cha." The three government actions undertaken during the past year which have produced the strongest adverse reactions among large segments of the population have been the Second Agrarian Reform law (expropriating virtually all farms over 165 acres), the Work Norm and Wage Classification law (aimed at forcing an increase in worker productivity), and the Obligatory Military Service law (creating a disciplinary institution to handle uncooperative youth and to provide cheap forced-labor brigades, as well as to maintain the strength of the military services).

5. Castro has not been able to put an end to internal anti-regime activity. Small guerrilla bands continue to operate in the mountainous areas of Las Villas, Camaguey, and Oriente provinces. Covert and "accidental" sabotage by workers has been a factor in low productivity rates. The regime seems particularly concerned that an expansion of guerrilla activities in conjunction with a successful landing by Cuban exiles could trigger some kind of local revolt. We do not believe that the present capabilities of the exiles justify this fear, but we do think the fear is real. Indeed, it was almost certainly the primary reason for the extensive Cuban military alert and mobilization that took place in May.

6. The very fact that the regime is nervous and has moved during recent weeks to arrest and deal ruthlessly with small numbers of suspected agents and other opponents has probably increased its short-term security. The large and increasing number of potential opponents of the regime within the country has never had much opportunity to organize for any unified action. The elaborate internal security machinery which now exists makes such organizational activity even more difficult and dangerous.

7. Castro's Cuba has taken on the character of a police state. The national intelligence and security organization, the Department of State Security, with an estimated personnel strength of several thousand, maintains units throughout the country and has apparently been effective in infiltrating and exposing counter-revolutionary groups. It works closely with the huge and ubiquitous organization of volunteer informants—the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution. These informants appear to be active in almost every block of every Cuban city and claim the Committee has a membership of almost a million and a half. In addition to spying and reporting on their neighbors, they distribute food rationing cards, hand out propaganda, and organize “voluntary work” groups. A parallel informants' role among the youth, particularly among students, is carried out by the Union of Young Communists.

[Omitted here is discussion of Cuban police and security organizations.]

11. We doubt that contingencies like those mentioned above will develop in the next year or two, unless Castro dies or is otherwise removed from office. He has demonstrated a remarkable ability to preserve a workable degree of unity among the disparate groups involved in the regime, and he has been able to make the great bulk of the population accept—however grudgingly or resignedly—the socialization and regimentation measures of the revolution. All this may change, and in these or other ways Castro's power position in Cuba may be undermined, but the process would be likely to take some years.

276. Memorandum From Robert M. Sayre of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, July 7, 1964.

Castro's *New York Times* interview² was discussed rather fully at the ARA Staff Meeting today. Tom Mann asked John Crimmins to do

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. III, 5/64–10/64. Confidential.

² In a July 5 interview with correspondent Richard Eder, Castro said that although Cuba reserved the right to shoot down U.S. U-2 overflights, he remained convinced that the matter could be settled peacefully. Castro also intimated that Cuba was disposed to begin negotiating its differences with the United States. (*New York Times*, July 6, 1964)

a paper for the Secretary addressed primarily to the Castro proposal that Cuba would call off its subversion if we would stop our support for Cuban exile raids.³ He is concerned that it may have appeal to the uninformed and believes we should have clear the rationale for our position. He regards this as especially important for the MFM⁴ because he believes that the Castro interview was timed with the MFM in mind. Castro also had other objectives in mind, of course. I would summarize the points in our rationale as follows:

(1) Castro has treaty obligations not to engage in subversive activities—Havana Convention of 1928, OAS and UN Charter, Non-Intervention Convention of 1936, etc. For our part, we are already doing all we can to stop exile raids from U.S. soil because we do not intend to let exiles make our foreign policy.

(2) We cannot accept Castro's promise that he will stop his subversion. In the very same interview he said he would continue moral support to Castro/Communist groups in Latin America. His whole record is one of broken promises and duplicity. We do not believe a Communist will renounce the world revolution. The Soviet Union promised in 1933 to discontinue subversive activities.

(3) Castro has domestic problems. He seems to recognize finally that Cuba cannot grow and prosper while he is fighting with Cuba's traditional friend, the United States. This is further evidence that inter-American policy on Castro has been effective.

(4) We continue to believe as Thomas Jefferson did that people have a right to change their government if it no longer represents them. Castro argued this himself when he was fighting to overthrow Batista. Cuban patriots have a right to overthrow a dictatorship. Even those Latin American countries which oppose collective action by the OAS assert the right of the Cuban people to depose Castro by revolution if he will not permit elections. So far as we are concerned Cuban patriots may exercise their inherent right so long as they do not involve the U.S.

RMS

³ No such paper has been found. However, telegram 61 to all posts, July 9, included the rationale in points 1-4 of this memorandum and suggested that posts use this response in discussing the U.S. Government attitude toward the Castro interview with host governments and media. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 15-1 CUBA)

⁴ Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held at the Pan American Union in Washington in July 1964; see Document 279.

277. National Security Action Memorandum No. 311¹

Washington, July 10, 1964.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Review of the problem of assurance against any missile crisis in Cuba

The President has requested that a careful study be made of all aspects of the problem of maintaining adequate assurance against an attempted reintroduction of offensive missiles into Cuba. He requests that this study be undertaken by representatives of the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence, with the State Department representative as chairman.

This inquiry should assess such questions as (1) the probability and prospect of a renewed Soviet attempt to introduce missiles, (2) the different levels of assurance which might be achieved by various means of obtaining information, (3) the possibility that an increase or decrease in tension with Cuba might change the urgency of the problem or the availability of various means of information, (4) the various kinds of risk which various means of assurance involve, and (5) prospective changes in the "state of the art" of different methods of surveillance.

It is expected that this group will work closely with the United States Intelligence Board, with government agencies involved in research and development, and with those responsible for policy planning. It is requested also that the chairman of the group maintain liaison with my office, through Mr. Peter Jessup and with me directly, as he thinks appropriate.

It is not expected that this review group should reach final recommendations, but rather that it should examine all aspects of this question and prepare a report showing as clearly as possible the various courses, with their premises and consequences, which may be available to the U.S. in the future. After a preliminary survey the chairman and I will agree on a completion date for this study.

McGeorge Bundy

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330 69 A 7425, Cuba (Sensitive) 1964, 000.1. Top Secret.

278. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to Secretary of State Rusk¹

Washington, July 14, 1964.

SUBJECT

Recognition of Cuban Government-in-Exile

We have consistently maintained the position that it is not in the US interest to recognize a Cuban government-in-exile. The most formal public expression of our views was made by Assistant Secretary Martin in testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees on May 22, 1963. He gave the following reasons for our stand:

1. Recognition of a government-in-exile would give those in Cuba who are struggling against communism, or who might be disposed to turn against the regime, the idea that they are being disregarded and that they will have no role to play in determining how Cuba will be governed.

A fundamental premise of our policy is that the Cuban people themselves will decide how they will achieve and organize their freedom and that those now within Cuba must have the major share of that responsibility.

2. The problem of finding a government capable of uniting a majority of the exiles is a most difficult, if not impossible task.

3. Our consistent policy has been to recognize governments-in-exile only when they have direct constitutional connection with the last constituted government of the country, usually when they have actually exercised power in the country just prior to being forced out.

4. We still recognize the Castro regime as the Cuban Government (although we have broken diplomatic relations) and as such, responsible for its international obligations, including the protection of US citizens and the recognition of our rights under the Guantanamo Treaty. To recognize a government-in-exile might put those rights in legal jeopardy.

In addition to these publicly stated reasons, the following other considerations are pertinent:

1. There is a better than even chance that a government-in-exile would fall under the control of old-line, discredited Cuban politicians

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/LA Files: Lot 66 D 65, Cuba File. Secret. Drafted by Bowdler and cleared by Assistant Legal Adviser for Inter-American Affairs Marjorie M. Whiteman.

who constitute a numerous, aggressive and often well-financed element of the Cuban exile community. Such figures have very little, if any, support within Cuba. Our experiences in the 1961–1962 period with the Cuban Revolutionary Council—the nearest thing to a government-in-exile—are a poor augury for relations with an even more formal body.

2. If an acceptable alternative to Castro should arise within Cuba as a result of internal developments and should establish itself physically in some form as a provisional government, our ability to recognize it would be made much more difficult if we were already in relations with a government-in-exile.

3. A government-in-exile would claim Cuba's seat in the OAS. We would have to support its being seated. There are Latin American Governments, such as Mexico and Chile, which would not recognize the exile government and oppose its participation in the OAS. This would place serious strains on the inter-American system. The exile government would probably also try to obtain representation in world bodies. Few, if any, of our Western European allies would recognize the government or support its replacement of Castro representatives in these organizations. This could prove highly embarrassing to us.

4. Recognition of a government-in-exile would put great pressure on the US Government to support its efforts to take military action against the Castro regime.

Other than preventing Castro from bringing suit in the United States and claiming sovereign immunity in connection therewith, about the only advantage to be derived from recognition of a Cuban exile government would be to remove the legal obstacles to giving exile groups financial and material support for their activities against the Castro regime. Given the preponderant strength of Castro's military forces in relation to what the exile government could muster, our decision to support the exiles would only make sense in the context of a broader determination on our part to take direct action against the Castro regime.

In my opinion the foregoing considerations very clearly add up to our maintaining, in the absence of a clear decision to move directly against the present regime, the negative stand on recognition of a Cuban government-in-exile.

279. Editorial Note

On July 26, 1964, at the conclusion of the Ninth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of American States, held at the Pan American Union in Washington, the Ministers signed a Final Act in response to Venezuela's complaint of December 3, 1963, against Cuba, after the latter was found to have positioned an arms cache in the territory of the former. The Foreign Ministers found that the Government of Cuba had directed and sponsored subversion against Venezuela and that such subversion was an act of intervention and aggression. Among other things, it adopted the following measures:

1. "That the governments of the American states not maintain diplomatic or consular relations with the Government of Cuba;
2. That the governments of the American states suspend all their trade, whether direct or indirect, with Cuba, except in foodstuffs, medicines, and medical equipment that may be sent to Cuba for humanitarian reasons; and
3. That the governments of the American states suspend all sea transportation between their countries and Cuba, except for such transportation as may be necessary for reasons of humanitarian nature."

The vote in favor of this resolution was 15 to 4 (Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay). Circular airgram CA-1051 to all Latin American posts, July 28, transmitted the full text of the Final Act. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA) An account of the history of the arms cache incident and the OAS resolution is in *Foreign Relations, 1964-1969*, volume XXXI, Documents 1 ff.

280. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, July 28, 1964.

SUBJECT

Notes on Luncheon Meeting attended by the President, Secretary McNamara, Secretary Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, Mr. McCone, in the President's private dining room Tuesday—28 July 1964

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, DCI Meetings with the President, May-Oct 1964, Box 6, Folder 9. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone on July 29.

[Omitted here is discussion of Japan air routes and Vietnam.]

3. I reported on the withdrawals from Cuba following the substance of the attached memorandum. I specifically stated that we could not say positively that surface-to-air missiles had been turned over to the Cubans; there was no way to know whether or not the Soviets “kept a finger on the trigger”. I said that I believed that Khrushchev did not want a confrontation with the United States, that he knew such a confrontation would be created by a shootdown of the U-2 and that I would be very surprised if he felt sufficiently confident in Castro’s ability and veracity to turn these weapons over to him unrestricted with all of the consequences if Castro should use them in an emotional fit of anger. I said that intelligence could not reveal the true situation, other than this we felt that all military units have been withdrawn from Cuba, that all equipment was now in Cuban hands, that the communications systems except for one Navy link were operated by the Cubans, and that the 1500 to 2500 remaining Soviets were military advisors.

[Omitted here is discussion of the MLF, the Chinese nuclear danger, and domestic politics.]

Attachment

Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency²

Washington, July 28, 1964.

SUBJECT

Soviet Military Personnel Withdrawals from Cuba

1. Since the missile crisis of 1962, some 20,000 Soviet military personnel have left Cuba in four major withdrawal periods, the peaks of which occurred in November 1962, March 1963, November 1963, and June 1964. About 5,000 personnel were withdrawn during each of these periods, the most recent period extending from early May to the present during which time 14 Soviet passenger ships sailed between Cuba and the USSR.

2. At the end of 1963, as the result of an examination of the probable number of Soviet military personnel believed to have been withdrawn from Cuba since the estimated high of 22,500 troops in October 1962 and of the probable Soviet personnel strength in each of the

² Top Secret; Dinar.

weapon systems remaining on the island, we estimated that as many as seven thousand Soviet servicemen remained.

3. Since that estimate was made, twenty Soviet passenger ships have called at Cuban ports, 14 of them in the last three months. Few military passengers were on the ships calling between January and April, and military personnel departures were probably offset by arrivals. Extra ships were scheduled beginning in May, however, and at least 5,000 Soviet military personnel along with a few dependents, agricultural technicians, and Cuban students departed Cuba for the USSR. No more than 800 passengers are known to have arrived in Cuba on these 14 ships, and almost all of these were Cubans who arrived on the last two ships.

4. We believe that the last major withdrawal of Soviet military personnel has now been completed, and that only about 2,000 Soviet military technicians and advisors remain on the island. All Soviet communications links within Cuba (except for one naval link which will probably terminate operations this week) have been deactivated or turned over to the Cubans, and Cuban forces have apparently assumed full control over the operation of all Soviet weapons remaining on the island. No Soviet operational or combat units are known to be on the island.

[Omitted here is a discussion of specific ship movements and photographic reconnaissance flights.]

281. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 85-64

Washington, August 5, 1964.

SITUATION AND PROSPECTS IN CUBA

The Problem

To assess the Cuban situation and the outlook over the next year or two.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NIEs, 85, Cuba. Secret; Controlled Dissem. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Agency. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on August 5.

Conclusions

A. Though the downward trend of the Cuban economy seems to have slowed and perhaps levelled off, we believe the economic situation will be stagnant over the next two years. Inept management and low labor morale will persist. Living levels are likely to become slightly lower, and shortages of foodstuffs, housing and many types of consumer goods will continue. Slight gains in industry are likely, but these will probably be offset by some decline in the agricultural sector. (Paras. 3–7, 9–13, 17–19)

B. Export earnings in 1965 and 1966 are likely to be below 1964 levels, because of lower sugar prices and poor prospects for substantially larger production of sugar and other export commodities. The value of total trade with the Free World can be expected to decline during the period. We believe that the Soviets and other Communist countries will provide sufficient credit assistance to prevent a seriously damaging drop in total imports. In these circumstances, Cuba's heavy economic dependence on the Communist world will continue. (Paras. 8, 14–16)

C. Depressed levels of consumption, the imposition of work norms, and forced labor and security duties will tend to narrow the regime's popular support. However, the huge security apparatus will almost certainly prevent popular dissatisfaction from bringing down the regime. We think it likely that a number of military officers have lost sympathy with certain of its policies, but we doubt that there is military disaffection on a scale sufficient to threaten Castro. Major deterioration in the internal situation or serious difficulties within the government could alter the picture, but would be unlikely to undermine Castro's power position in less than several years. We believe his death would lead, in fairly short order, to a power struggle of unpredictable outcome. (Paras. 20–36)

D. The Cuban armed forces are much the best-equipped in Latin America and, except for Brazil, the largest. Their capabilities have continued to improve, chiefly as a result of the delivery of additional weapons from the USSR and Cuban acquisition of weapon systems formerly under Soviet control. The compulsory military service program, introduced last November, will probably cause an initial drop in the level of training and efficiency, but will permit improved selectivity of recruits for the active forces, and will eventually produce a much larger trained reserve. (Paras. 37–43)

E. There are almost certainly no Russian combat units still in Cuba. Upon completion of current withdrawals, a Soviet MAAG-type presence, mostly technical and maintenance personnel, of about 2,000 will probably remain so long as the Cuban armed forces remain dependent on the USSR for technical and material support to maintain their complex Soviet equipment. (Paras. 44–45)

F. During the period of this estimate, the Soviets are highly unlikely to reintroduce strategic weapons into Cuba, though they have the technical capability to do so clandestinely. They might use Cuba for support of their submarines, but so long as they calculate that the risk would be high, they would not push such a venture very far. (Paras. 46–47)

G. The Cuba-Soviet relationship remains intact, although frictions have continued. Castro, though willing to lean to the side of the Soviets in the Sino-Soviet dispute, has refused to join in any formal condemnation of Peiping. He is concerned lest a further improvement in US-Soviet relations leave his regime more isolated and exposed. Though the Soviets almost certainly consider Castro to be erratic and undependable, they have little choice but to continue to support him. (Paras. 48–52)

H. The most explosive question in Soviet-Cuban relations, as well as between Castro and the US, is the continuation of U-2 overflights. Castro and Khrushchev have conducted a program of warnings, threats, and compromise suggestions to induce the US to desist. It is almost certain that Cuba now has full control over the SAM system—and consequently the capability to shoot down a U-2. Thus we believe that the Soviets can only give advice, backed up by their political and economic leverage, though we cannot wholly exclude the possibility that they have retained some sort of physical restraint on an actual firing. Nevertheless, we believe that Castro does not intend to force the issue until after the US elections, when he will seek UN action. If this fails, there is considerable danger that he would order a shootdown, calculating that the US would not retaliate in force or that, if it did, the resulting hue and cry would end the overflights. An impulsive reaction by Castro or even an unauthorized shootdown is always possible. (Paras. 44, 53–56)

I. Castro has a serious interest in improving relations with the US, as a means of reducing the pressures on his regime. He probably also considers that his recent gestures are useful to build a record of Cuban reasonableness and flexibility in preparation for Cuba's appeal to the UN on the U-2 issue. He will probably make further overtures from time to time, but there is little chance that he will accede at any early date to the conditions the US has stated. (Paras. 57–58)

J. Castro's efforts to foment revolution in Latin America have suffered setbacks during the past year. He is probably somewhat less sanguine about the chances for quick success. Nevertheless, he will almost certainly continue to provide aid and subversive training to potential revolutionaries. He may press for early aggressive action by some Castroist groups, even though their immediate chances seem poor, hoping that their repression would eventually produce conditions more favorable for exploitation. (Paras. 59–62)

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the estimate.]

282. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, August 26, 1964.

SUBJECT

Trouble before November—Free World Trade with Cuba

1. Present statistics indicate that Free World exports to Cuba in 1964 will show an increase of roughly 80% over the 1963 figures. So far the domestic press has not focussed on this issue but there are indicators that our good luck will not hold out much longer. State tells me that there are reporters in town who are beginning to snoop around for current statistics on Free World trade with Cuba, which are unclassified and which are available at Commerce or at the IMF. Eventually, we should probably expect the Republicans to use the figures to point up the Administration's "ineffective isolation policy, etc., etc." (We may also get some heat on specific trade deals that are consummated—e.g. a UK/Cuba deal for \$4.5 million of locomotives is coming down the road which we can't stop.)

2. State continues to work hard on the problem of keeping down trade with Cuba and has several strings left in its bow. *First*, the Secretary, in the near future, will be calling in the Ambassadors of the trading nations² to emphasize the results of the recent OAS meeting and to once again request cooperation. *Second*, State is encouraging other OAR's to call in the Ambassadors of the trading nations to make a pitch similar to the Secretary's. *Third*, ARA is pushing ahead with its paper recommending (a) the denial of U.S. Government contracts to firms trading with Cuba, and (b) the enlisting of some OAR cooperation in applying similar measures; this paper will probably hit the Secretary's desk in the next few days.

These measures, if implemented, may or may not be effective in reducing trade with Cuba over the long term. Over the short term (between now and November) they will help only marginally in making the 1964 statistics more tolerable than they now appear to be.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Free World Trade, Vol. III, 12/63-5/65. Secret.

² In an August 27 memorandum to Rusk, Acting Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Robert W. Adams suggested that the Secretary use the talking papers prepared for each of the countries involved in trading with Cuba in his upcoming talks with the Ambassadors (see Document 285). (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/LA Files: Lot 66 D 65, Cuba File)

3. Our public position is important in counteracting a possible Republican charge that "the 1964 trade statistics indicate that the isolation policy is a hoax." Our reply to such a charge, among other things, might contain the following elements.

(a) We should try to keep the statistics in the context of Free World trade with Cuba since 1960. They look better that way.

(b) We should emphasize the positive aspects of our efforts in the isolation dimension (e.g. breaking of diplomatic relations).

(c) We should make it clear that, while we are not 100% effective, our efforts have obviously been successful and have had a considerable impact on Cuba's economy; if we continue our efforts, the prospects for improvement in the Cuban economy are poor. Also, we might background that while our failures are well known (e.g. British bus deal), many of our successes cannot be made public.

(d) We should make it clear that we and the other OAR's have not given up and are continuing to exert pressure on the pertinent trading nations. We might point out that the job is not an easy one since we are, of course, dealing with sovereign nations whose interests are often not the same as ours.

GC

283. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to the Ambassador at Large (Thompson)¹

Washington, August 27, 1964.

SUBJECT

Cuban Exile Activities

I have no strong feelings about the immigration status of Cuban exiles taking part in anti-Castro activities outside United States' territories. And I understand the political risks in rocking the boat at this time.

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Secret; Sensitive. A handwritten note by Thompson on the memorandum reads: "Mr. Jessup informed of gist 8/27/64."

After the first of the year I do believe, however, that we should have another look at whether our interests are served by Cuban exile activities based in other American republics. I have in mind two principal questions:

First, I question whether the activities of the Cuban exiles do any real harm to the Castro regime and specifically whether the assertion that these activities are a morale builder for the anti-Castro Cubans inside Cuba is still valid. Rather I think we may now have reached the point where these activities are on balance helpful to Castro by giving him a pretext for appealing to the patriotism of the Cubans and presenting himself as the defender of Cuban sovereignty against the Colossus of the North.

In the second place, I find that United States policy is astride two horses each veering off in different directions. In the Foreign Ministers' Meeting we took the position that the subversive activities in Venezuela amounted to Cuban aggression. It will become increasingly difficult to maintain this line and at the same time try to downplay the importance of extra legal activities directed against Castro and designed to bring about his overthrow.

I don't have any final opinions about these two questions. I only say we should have a careful look at them in the not-too-distant future.

284. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, September 4, 1964, 3:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Ambassador Sergio Fenoaltea, Italian Embassy
Mr. Hugh G. Appling

The Secretary said that he wished again to raise the matter of Cuba, since there were two new elements in the situation. The first was the

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 2 CUBA. Confidential. Drafted by Appling, and approved in S on September 18. The meeting was held in the Secretary's office.

meeting of the Ministers of the OAS in July and the second was the decline of Cuba's credit rating. World sugar prices had come down from abnormal levels, Cuban production was down, and the Government of Cuba had to recognize that it had overreached its capabilities. The OAS Ministers, concerned at continuing Cuban interference in their internal affairs, were inclined to go even further than the decisions they did take and our role in the meeting to some extent had been to restrain them from extreme measures. Feelings were very strong in the hemisphere and it was hoped that friends would help with the problem. The resolution which was adopted nearly exhausted peaceful remedies and the hemisphere was determined that Castro must stop his troublemaking. We wanted to see these peaceful means effective. They could not be effective without general participation and we looked to others to help in avoiding opportunities for Cuba to escape from pressure.

The Secretary said he did not wish to suggest that Italy had not been helpful. We noted that Italian trade with Cuba was small and Italian imports were down but exports were up. We also appreciated Italian support in NAC and FIAT's responsiveness to our concern about their Cuban deal. Furthermore, Italian shipping companies had been helpful in assuring that their ships would be out of Cuba trade by the end of the year. The Secretary said that we might at some future time take up the matter again in NATO and wanted the Ambassador to have this background for the information of his Government.

The Secretary said there were two aspects of the problem which were not negotiable. The first was the presence of the Soviet military in Cuba and the second was Cuban interference in the affairs of other countries. There had recently been substantial reduction in the number of Soviet forces there. We believed that something in the neighborhood of two thousand remain. These were largely technicians and advisers and did not appear to be organized into units. Two thousand was still too many. We had no evidence at all that the Cubans were changing their policy to end interference in other countries. They were active and in close contact with the Soviets. Their providing of agents and funds to create unrest continued. With the termination of diplomatic relations, the misuse of their embassies was decreasing. The Ambassador said that he had heard that the United States preferred that some Soviet troops remain in Cuba as a moderating influence. The Secretary said that this was a misinterpretation. We had only expressed our concern that, after Soviet withdrawal, sophisticated arms would remain in Cuban hands and that they might use them irresponsibly. He concluded that the Soviet presence in Cuba cuts across a hundred and fifty years of history and that stability could not be achieved as long as it continued.

The Ambassador said that he would report the Secretary's remarks faithfully. The Ambassador referred to the elections in Chile. He and the Secretary agreed on the importance which Frei's victory could have as a rebuff to Castro who had made an enormous effort in support of Allende.

The Ambassador remarked that some countries lacked legal means of enforcing restrictions on trade with Cuba. He asked whether we envisaged some sort of collective NATO action. The Secretary said we did not have such collective action in mind now and that the means and problems would be different in every country. One tool generally available to governments was the possibility of refusing to guarantee credits for trade with Cuba.

285. Editorial Note

Secretary Rusk scheduled a series of meetings with Ambassadors from Italy, Canada, Spain, United Kingdom, France, Lebanon, Japan, Portugal, Belgium, Sweden, Netherlands, and West Germany to discuss the results of the Meeting of OAS Foreign Ministers on Cuba, with special reference to the question of trade. The Italian Ambassador was the first one seen (Document 284), followed by the Spanish Ambassador (Document 286) and the Canadian Ambassador on September 9, and the others later in the month. Memoranda of conversation for most of these meetings are in the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964–66, POL 2 CUBA.

In his meetings with the French Ambassador on September 10, Rusk again mentioned the OAS meeting on Cuba and its trade resolutions. The Ambassador responded that French trade with Cuba was insignificant. The Secretary then mentioned reports that a French deal seemed to be in progress with Benoto for earth moving equipment and "that French trade with Cuba was up significantly this year." (Memorandum of conversation, September 10; *ibid.*, POL 1 CUBA)

In his meeting with the Belgian Ambassador on September 15, Rusk mentioned "the virtual collapse of Cuban credit" as a factor that "might provide a basis" for the trading countries "to reassess the situation." The Ambassador described his last conversation with the Secretary concerning Cuba on February 19 and recalled that at that time Rusk had expressed concern about the sale of Belgian locomotives to Cuba. The Ambassador stated that "On the basis of this conversation the Belgian Government had intervened to block credit for that sale, because of its desire to work closely with" the United States. (Memorandum of conversation, September 15; *ibid.*, POL 2 CUBA)

286. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, September 9, 1964, 5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

The Marques de Merry del Val, Spanish Ambassador
Mr. Juan Duran, First Secretary, Spanish Ambassador

The Secretary
Mr. Hugh G. Appling, Deputy Director, WE
Mr. John H. Crimmins, Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, ARA

The Secretary said he wished to take up with the Ambassador, as he was doing with the Ambassadors of several other countries, the Cuban problem in the light of the deliberations of the Meeting of OAS Foreign Ministers (MFM) in July. He said that, although the immediate issue in the July meeting had been Cuba's interference in Venezuela, several Ministers in the course of the meeting had referred to Cuban activities in their countries also. The seriousness with which the Ministers viewed Cuban interference was demonstrated by the fact that the sanctions imposed on Cuba about exhausted the peaceful measures which remained available to the inter-American system. The Ministers hoped that Castro would heed the warning and thus avoid a dangerous situation. The Secretary pointed out that for our part we had made repeatedly clear to Cuba and the USSR that one of the two non-negotiable elements in any discussion of improved U.S.-Cuban relations was the cessation of Cuban interference; the other was the Soviet military presence in Cuba.

The Secretary referred to the paragraph of the basic resolution of the MFM which sought demonstrations of solidarity from non-OAS states. He pointed out that this measure, like the others adopted at the meeting, was not imposed by the U.S. but arose from the serious concern and initiative of the Latin members of the Alliance. The Secretary added that, in fact, the paragraph as finally adopted represented a moderation of a proposal, which at one point was favored by a majority, to interrupt trade by OAS members with countries trading with Cuba.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 2 CUBA. Confidential. Drafted by Appling and approved in S on October 5. The meeting was held in the Secretary's office.

The Secretary went on to say that there was considerable good evidence that the Cuban Government was facing foreign exchange stringencies as a result of the sharp drop in world sugar prices, low sugar production and possible over-extension of purchasing in the Free World. He commented that the Cuban credit position would be correspondingly impaired.

The Secretary said he wished to call the attention of the Government of Spain to the OAS resolution and its background with the hope that that Government would look at the Cuban problem in this perspective to see if there were ways of indicating its solidarity with the OAS countries. He complimented the Spanish Foreign Minister on his remarkable achievements in recent years in creating a new respect for Spain, particularly among the OAS countries. He made clear that he did not wish to urge any particular steps on the Spanish Government but to suggest their earnest consideration of the new situation.

The Secretary stated that the Spanish Government might wish to review its trade relations with Cuba. He noted that Spain's commerce with Cuba was substantially higher than a year ago. The Ambassador attributed Spain's increased purchases of Cuban sugar to the drop in the Spanish sugar beet crop; he expressed the belief that this year's crop would be better. In response to the Ambassador's question, the Secretary said that Soviet aid to Cuba continued to be substantial, but the Cuban economy continued to decline, with the supply of spare parts, for example, becoming an increasingly important matter.

The Ambassador asked whether there had been concrete results from the OAS Ministerial Meeting yet. The Secretary pointed to the closing of three Cuban Embassies which Castro's sister had described as "nests of subversion" in Latin America. He added that we were not overly concerned that Mexico had not yet broken relations, since some of the OAS states had seen some advantage in keeping at least one Latin American Embassy in Havana for purposes of asylum and observation. We did not know what Mexico's further steps might be but the OAS members were not unduly disquieted by Mexico's position at present. The Ambassador asked whether the President would take this matter up with the President of Mexico when they meet. The Secretary said he thought not since the situation had just been discussed at the OAS meeting and, with a change in government due in December, it seemed improbable that President Johnson would take this up with President Lopez Mateos.

The Ambassador remarked that Spain had been able to rescue many Cubans. For instance, a plane load of 81 refugees had been flown out this week, including some who had been condemned to death. The Secretary recognized that Spain had some special problems in Cuba.

He suggested that because of its special relationship it might be possible for the Government of Spain to speak frankly to the Cubans to tell them that they must stop their interference in other countries.

The Ambassador asked whether we had evidence of further arms shipments from Cuba into other countries. Mr. Crimmins said that Venezuela was the only well-established, large-scale case but that there were some other indications of Cuban arms on a minor scale, for example in northern Argentina.

The Secretary repeated that he hoped the Government of Spain would take a new look at the situation and measures which it might take in the light of the position adopted by the MFM and the further decline in Cuban creditworthiness. The Ambassador said he would report his conversation with the Secretary faithfully to his Government.²

² In a meeting on October 28 the Spanish Ambassador informed Rusk "that Spanish ships are now being removed from Cuban trade." (Memorandum of conversation, October 28; *ibid.*, Secretary's Memcons, 1961-64: Lot 65 D 330, October 1964)

287. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, October 6, 1964, 10:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

Cuba

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR
Llewellyn E. Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large, Department of State

Ambassador Dobrynin came in to see me today pursuant to an appointment which he had made almost a week ago. He said he wished to talk to me entirely on a personal basis about Cuba. His remarks were rather vague but his purpose seemed to be to express concern about raids on Cuba, the training of emigrant groups in Central America and elsewhere, and some rumor that some Central American countries

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 30-2 CUBA. Secret. Drafted by Thompson and approved in S/AL on October 6. The meeting was held in Thompson's office.

might take some forceful action² before the end of the year. In the course of the conversation, he mentioned the Artime group and another exile leader whose name he said he thought was Olivo.

I said that as he knew we had expressed ourselves as being opposed to these hit-and-run raids and pointed out how embarrassing it was to us that a Spanish ship had been sunk.³ I said I had not heard of the rumor of a Central American-supported action before the end of the year, and did not think it was true. I said we had taken strict measures to prevent the use of our territory by these groups and understood that these measures had been effective.

When he expressed surprise that a Spanish ship could have been sunk in view of the air and sea power we had in the area, I pointed out that we could scarcely get into the position of escorting ships to Cuba in view of our overall policy. He said he could understand this. He indicated that the Soviet Government had remained relatively quiet about the activities directed against Cuba as they did not wish to inject this issue into the American political campaign. I said that in conclusion that while I assumed that all of our policies would be under review after the election, I did not believe there would be any change in our attitude toward hit-and-run raids on Cuba.

² J.C. King of the CIA's Deputy Directorate of Plans met with Nicaragua's dictator, General Anastasio Somoza, on September 17 at Friendship Airport in Miami. King told Somoza that he "could count on a sympathetic understanding in Washington" if he dropped his support for Artime. (Memorandum for the record, September 17; *ibid.*) According to the minutes of a joint ARA-CIA meeting on October 1, FitzGerald said that Somoza told King he had information that Castro would attack the exile camps in Nicaragua and they would expect the United States to respond. FitzGerald saw this as a Somoza entrapment ploy. Mann "made it clear he wanted no such move on Somoza's part and directed that Somoza be so informed." (ARA-CIA Weekly Meeting memorandum, October 1; Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files)

³ The Artime exile group had sunk a Spanish ship, the *Sierra Aranzazu*, in mid-September. According to the Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee of September 25, Secretary Rusk had assured the Spanish Ambassador that the United States would assist in the investigation of the incident. At the same meeting it "was generally agreed that the U.S. should not lend weight to the case against Artime and the findings should remain 'as indeterminate as is plausible.'" (*Ibid.*, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records)

288. Memorandum From Peter Jessup of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, October 29, 1964.

SUBJECT

National Security Action Memorandum No. 311²

You have asked for a sit rep on the committee established by NSAM 311. My present judgment is that it has bogged down, not because of personality differences and interagency disagreements, but rather because of unresolved technical problems which prevent the accurate judgment factor from being applied.

These amount to:

a. gaps remaining in the factual information available regarding advanced aircraft capabilities. (Thompson will try to shake an interim report loose from McCone on this problem.)

b. a disagreement as to whether satellites can, by themselves, provide adequate coverage. NRO said no for some time but is revising this opinion. (This will go back to USIB.)

c. It has not been determined whether the JCS will permit the most sensitive ECM techniques to be used in peacetime reconnaissance U-2's over Cuba.

d. Agreement does not exist as to whether a mix of surveillance methods is advisable or not. DOD favors this.

e. Ambassador Thompson advocates a reaffirmation of UN ground inspection in Cuba.

Another factor may be that Ambassador Thompson, a reflective thinker out loud, may lack the two-fisted authoritarian approach required to hammer out the kind of a paper you want from this committee consisting of Tom Hughes, Kitchen, Weiss and Lindjord for State, Ray Cline for CIA, and Brig. Gen. John Vogt and Alvin Friedman of Defense.

When I can catch Ray Cline I will get additional insight.

I would recommend that the work of this committee be further refined now that the election period is over. In other words, the question should be can we live after November 4th with any degree of lessened

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. I, 1/64-1/65. No classification marking.

² Document 277.

assurance. The committee should dispense with such matters as what to do after a shutdown, etc. etc. and concentrate on what are the minimal requirements and what are the minimal means to dissatisfy these. Our 303 Committee could generate the answers to the technical problems by direct orders. These are the problems which have the NSAM committee floundering. The time is getting short; the UN may debate the matter before we have your paper.

Peter Jessup³

³ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

289. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, November 10, 1964.

SUBJECT

Cuba—Miscellaneous

John Crimmins, Des FitzGerald, Joe Califano, and I met to talk about miscellaneous Cuban problems. Here are some of the items which came up.

1. *Aranzazu Incident*—John Crimmins said that we have completed our “investigation” of the *Aranzazu* incident and that the Spanish have now asked us to give them our evaluation of the various reports we have furnished to them. John is now working on a paper of talking points he will use with the Spanish (he wants to keep it oral if possible). The general pitch he will probably want to use will take into account such facts as (a) that we want to give the Spanish the minimum necessary to keep them from thinking that we are trying to deceive them and (b) that the Spanish, themselves, probably evaluate Artime as the prime suspect. Specifically, such points as the following might be made to the Spanish: *First*, while we cannot rule out the possibility that the Cubans sunk the *Aranzazu*, it is probably more likely that the

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activity, Vol. III, 1964, 1965. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only.

exiles did it. *Second*, there are a number of exile groups that have the capability of doing the job. *Third*, the most likely of the exile groups is probably Artime. But the fact that Artime's boat was in Curacao would seem to rule him out; and even if this could be explained, we could still not prove that Artime is the culprit. *Fourth*, (if pressed) by a process of elimination, the attack would seem to have come from the Dominican Republic² (the Spanish already strongly suspect this—see attached cable).³ In any event, we are sure it did not come from the U.S.

John Crimmins plans to clear his talking points with the Special Group before he talks to the Spanish.

2. *Special Group Items*—Des mentioned that a dissident group [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] inside Cuba have contacted Artime's people; reportedly, they have picked Artime because they feel that anyone with his resources must have the support of the U.S. Government. Des feels that we should let this contact develop and, in this connection, he believes that the Special Group should permit the continuance of our support to Artime for another 60 or 90 days and, if absolutely necessary, allow Artime to make one more attack (more or less controlled by CIA) on Cuba. If we drop Artime precipitously, the dissident group in Cuba will assume that Artime is not worth contacting and their willingness to express dissidence may tend to dry up. In all of this discussion, Des emphasized that he is no great admirer of Artime and that the above is not an Agency device to keep Artime's group alive. This item will probably come before the Special Group on Thursday.⁴

Des also mentioned the possibility of passing on to Dorticos, in an unattributable, deniable fashion, the message that, while the U.S. cannot live with Fidel Castro, it might well be able to live with Dorticos. Des feels that Cuba is in terrible shape, that Dorticos knows it, and that a move like this could conceivably produce a big dividend. At best, it will start Dorticos plotting; at worst, (if Castro finds out) it will help to sow some seeds of dissension and distrust. This item will probably come up at a later Special Group meeting.

² In a November 21 memorandum Crimmins noted that a "large number of FBI reports of interrogations of Cuban exiles in Miami and Puerto Rico" had been passed to the Spanish. Crimmins said that he would tell the Spanish that "We are quite satisfied" that the attack did not come from Jamaica or Haiti and that "we are certain it did not come from Puerto Rico." (Ibid.)

³ Telegram 519 from Santo Domingo, November 3; attached but not printed.

⁴ According to Ambassador Thompson's notes on the 303 Committee meeting on November 12, the CIA proposal was approved with Department of State support. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records)

3. *Erosion of Cuban Economy*—Des was very hopeful that Cuba will be in very bad economic shape by the end of 1965. [1 line of source text not declassified]; some of this is going in already, and some is on the way. Emphasizing the extreme sensitivity of the operation, Des said that the effect on large amounts of Cuban machinery could be brutal.

The point was made that there was, these days, a general recognition by the European missions in Cuba that the Cuban economic situation is grim and that, in fact, the isolation policy is not entirely a farce. To some extent, this realization coincided with the timing of the recent Cuban restrictions on credit.

4. *British Channel to Castro*—John Crimmins said that Patrick Gordon-Walker, in his meeting with Secretary Rusk,⁵ suggested that the British would be pleased to act as a middle man for a dialogue between the U.S. and Cuba. The Secretary has asked John to look into the desirability of this. The initial feeling of the group was that it was not a good idea. Among other things, if we want to establish a dialogue with Castro, there are better channels than the British.

5. *Basic Review of Cuban Policy*—The group agreed that, with November 3 behind us, we can usefully do some basic review work on Cuba. To this end, John Crimmins agreed to write a paper which would outline the major problems and the possible options, including accommodation. This will be ready in a few days' time and will be distributed for comment. We can then decide where to go from there.

Des FitzGerald said we should consider the re-institution, in the near future, of the "unilateral" CIA-directed covert program which had scored a number of hits last year. The group agreed, however, that a decision on this should probably wait until some of the basic review work on Cuba had been completed.

GC

⁵ Rusk and Gordon-Walker met on October 27 in Rusk's office; see Document 397.

290. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, November 19, 1964, noon.

SUBJECT

Meeting at the White House—12 Noon

IN ATTENDANCE

The President-Elect, The Vice-President-Elect, Secretary Rusk, Secretary Ball, Secretary McNamara, Secretary Vance, McGeorge Bundy, McCone

The above were present for all topics; others came in as indicated.

[Omitted here is discussion of the Congo and South Vietnam.]

3. *Cuba*. In attendance: Amb. Thompson.

Rusk outlined the work done by the Thompson Committee on the question of overflights of Cuba,² explaining the position that Castro had taken, forecasting debate in the United Nations, and explaining briefly the alternatives open to us such as satellites, drones, balloons, the Oxcart, or a mixing of all of these.

McNamara advocated satellites, suggesting consideration of a launch pad at Cape Kennedy for an East-West satellite mission.

Rusk then asked for an explanation by me of a plan developed by CIA to fly over the unprotected zones. I explained the plan in considerable detail, using maps indicating that U-2's could fly and photograph 80% of the island and remain out of range of the SAM's. However, this would only cover 30% of the priority targets and would not cover the major military or population concentrations. I indicated that the mounting of a satellite 112-B camera for oblique photography would give us useable photography over all of the defended areas with resolution of about 5'. This would be better than satellites and could be synchronized with weather. I raised the danger of the redeployment of SAM's, indicating that such a move by Castro could be detected by the U-2's if they were equipped with available warning systems. I concluded by stating that I had less confidence in the product from satellites than indicated by Secretary McNamara, that the use of satellites over Cuba would deprive us of some capability over USSR and Communist China, and it would be impossible to refute stories of missiles in Cuba on the basis of satellite photography. I explained in

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI (McCone) Files, Job 80-B01285A, Box 6, Folder 10, DCI Meetings with the President, Oct-Dec 1964. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by McCone.

² See Documents 277 and 288.

some detail the innumerable times I had gone before Committees of Congress to discuss Cuban missile rumors and had been able to disprove them satisfactorily with U-2 photography. This, I said, could not be done with satellites. The President asked if I was positive that there were no missiles in Cuba. I replied you could not absolutely prove the negative; we were satisfied that all missiles which we had seen had been removed; all missile sites under construction had been destroyed and were non-existent; all secure areas obviously built for nuclear war-head storage had been destroyed and no new ones had appeared. Finally, the redeployment of the SAM's, which left the logical missile-launching areas unprotected, made me think the Cubans and the Soviets did not intend to reintroduce missiles at the present time.

There was no decision except to explore the subject further and to continue U-2 surveillance on the most modest reasonable basis subject to further review before or during the UN debate.

Also re Cuba: See addendum.

[Omitted here is discussion of South Africa.]

Addendum

Cuba

Rusk made two important observations: First, that he felt that the purpose of reconnaissance over Cuba was to produce intelligence on the presence of, or the introduction of, offensive missiles, offensive aircraft or other weapons or weapons systems of sufficient range to pose a threat to the security of the United States. Requirements for overflights, whether by manned aircraft, satellites, balloons, drones, etc., should be governed by this criteria. Collateral intelligence would be useful, such as information on military encampments, equipment, deployments, economic developments, etc., in studying Cuba, but should not govern as criteria for establishing requirements for reconnaissance.

Note: This criteria should be passed to COMOR and should be discussed with General Carroll.

Secondly, Rusk stated that he had had a long meeting with Dobrynin and had been told that Castro had stopped all subversive activities and efforts against Latin America and had insisted to the Soviets that neither he nor his government are engaged in any way in such nefarious operations. I stated that our information contradicted this statement as there were a number of developments which indicated acceleration in these activities by the Castro Cubans.

Note: This criteria should be passed to COMOR and should be discussed with General Carroll.

Attachment

Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency

CUBA

We continue to receive reports and rumors of missiles in Cuba and these we disprove by U-2 photography. I would expect a continuation of such rumors and also a continuation of statements by individuals or members of the Congress similar to those we have witnessed in the last two years. I have depended heavily on U-2 photography to dispel these rumors.

While satellite photography will make some input into our intelligence on Cuba, it will not be conclusive because of the resolution of KH-4 and the small area coverage of KH-7. Also we expect disappointments from satellite photography because of uncertain weather conditions encountered in Cuba and the impossibility of synchronizing satellite missions with Cuban weather. It should be noted that every mission targeted against Cuba will involve sacrifices of intelligence gathering capabilities on the Soviet Union and Communist China.

An east-west orbit would be useful but expensive and KH-4 or KH-7 missions in such an orbit, while covering Cuba more satisfactorily than the present north-south orbit, would not produce intelligence of particular interest in other parts of the world.

U-2's can be flown in the safe corridors and a satellite 112-B camera can be mounted in a U-2 on an angle and thus photography of the defended areas of Cuba as well as the undefended areas can be had with photographic resolution of about 5 feet which will be useful in my opinion and better and cheaper than satellite photography with KH-4 because of resolution and KH-7 because of area coverage. This however would continue the political problem.³

³ A notation written by McCone following this paragraph reads: "Rusk discussed Cuba with Dobrynin—who says Castro has quit [subversion] against LA and will probably not attempt shoot down flights against missiles or main targets. This might be done by mix of means." A memorandum of this conversation on November 18 is in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XIV, Document 72.

291. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, December 3, 1964.

SUBJECT

Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 3 December 1964

PRESENT

Mr. Bundy, Ambassador Thompson, Mr. McNaughton, and Mr. McCone

[*name not declassified*] was present for Item 4

[*name not declassified*] was present for Item 5

[Omitted here is discussion of unrelated subjects.]

3. Cuban Forecast

The paper "Proposed Infiltration/Exfiltration Operations into Cuba during December and 1–7 January 1965"² was approved by telephonic vote on 3 December 1964.

4. Manuel Artime

a. The CIA paper of 23 November 1964 entitled "Synopsis of Meeting with Manuel Artime Advising Change in Policy Regarding U.S. Government Support for His Operation"³ was noted by the principals.

b. The CIA paper dated 30 November 1964 entitled "Proposed Take Over of the Cuban Merchant Ship *Rio Caonao* by the Artime Group" was discussed by the principals with a marked lack of enthusiasm for the concept.² (This paper was not a CIA endorsed proposal, but a relay to the Committee of stated intentions of Artime.)

c. Ambassador Thompson cited five vigorous State Department objections:⁴ (1) the inevitable charge of piracy and its complicative fac-

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted on December 4 by Jessup and distributed to Thompson, Vance, and McCone.

² Attached but not printed.

³ The paper described the CIA's meeting with Manuel Artime on November 13, in which Artime was advised of the recommendations of the 303 Committee meeting of November 10; see Document 289. The CIA told Artime that he was "to concentrate all of his assets on developing the internal operation while still maintaining his paramilitary posture to the degree necessary to preserve his attractiveness to the internal group." Artime made a strong plea to be allowed to proceed with the Rio Caonao operation, [*text not declassified*]. Artime was requested to prepare and submit his operational plan. The CIA paper is attached but not printed.

⁴ ARA's objections to Artime's proposal were detailed in a December 1 memorandum from Acting Assistant Secretary Adams to Thompson. Thompson reiterated these objections to the 303 Committee. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Files, 303 Committee Records)

tors, (2) a revival of Spanish charges at a time when repercussions of the *Aranzazu* incident have not yet faded, (3) the possibility of intercept by Cuban naval craft, (4) reverberations of such an act in UN debates, and (5) possible retaliations by Castro from his missile sites.

d. Mr. McCone stated he could not view this proposal favorably and he would prefer that Artime's energies be channeled into a commando effort more susceptible to guidance and control.

e. Mr. Bundy felt the proposal had too many Cecil B. de Mille overtones.

f. Mr. McNaughton stated he understood that this paper was to be tabled until Mr. Vance's return but he would record the views of those present. The Committee Secretary determined that if there had been some votes in favor, the matter should be postponed until Mr. Vance was heard, but since the attitude was overwhelmingly negative, this constituted a veto.

g. In response to a question, [*name not declassified*] indicated that when informed of the U.S. attitude on this operation, he felt Artime would abandon the idea, but he could offer no guarantee that this would be the case. [*name not declassified*] also indicated Artime was farther along in his operation with internal dissidents and was shortly to have a meeting with their representatives, probably in Paris.

h. Mr. McCone urged that the pace not slacken in the preparation of a Cuba after Castro study which he understood was under the aegis of Mr. Crimmins, the Coordinator for Cuban Affairs. Ambassador Thompson made note of the request.

[Omitted here is discussion on Sudan and the World Youth Festival.]

Peter Jessup

292. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, December 15, 1964.

SUBJECT

Che Guevara and Lisa Howard

1. I have talked to John Crimmins about the Che Guevara approach. He and Tom Mann are very interested to hear what Guevara wants to say to us if, in fact, he does want to say something to us. (I told State that I thought that this could be a Lisa-generated² operation but that the odds are probably 7–5 that Guevara, in fact, would like to talk to us; whether he would say anything to us that we don't already know is another matter.)

2. The mechanics of talking to Guevara is the tough part. He is a real center of attention in New York (e.g. police, crowds) and it would be extremely awkward to try to get together with him privately. In addition, my own very strong view is that we should keep Lisa Howard out of it as a middleman; among many other considerations, Lisa is so subjectively wound up in rapprochement that one would never know what Guevara is saying and what Lisa is interpreting.

3. John and I agreed tentatively on the following outline.

(a) If Lisa Howard calls me back, I will simply tell her that I have nothing to tell her and will let her know if and when I do.

(b) John will explore with selected people in State the possibility and desirability of having a USUN type (maybe Yost) "fall in front of" Tabio, who is the Cuban ambassador to the UN, and say (1) that we understand from a newspaper source that Che wants to say something to us, and (2) is this true? If the answer is affirmative, we can then decide what to do. The main problem is to ascertain the truth—e.g.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Contacts with Cuban Leaders, 5/63–4/65. Top Secret; Eyes Only.

² Lisa Howard of the American Broadcasting Company had a 10-hour interview with Fidel Castro on April 22, 1963, and wrote an article in the September 1963 issue of *War/Peace Report*, entitled "Castro's Overture," stressing Castro's expressed desire for reaching an accommodation with the United States and his willingness to make substantial concessions to this end. She subsequently made numerous calls to Cuban and NSC officials, attempting to facilitate a rapprochement; see Document 240.

whether Che really has something to say to us or whether this is Lisa Howard building bridges. Somewhere along the line, our man would also indicate that, if it is true that the Cubans want to talk to us, we prefer not to talk through unofficial third parties.

GC

293. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, December 17, 1964.

SUBJECT

Meeting with Che Guevara, Cuban Minister of Industry

PARTICIPANTS

Under Secretary George W. Ball
Senator Eugene McCarthy
Thomas C. Mann, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs
R. E. Woods, Staff Assistant to the Under Secretary

Senator McCarthy outlined the main points of his December 16 conversation with Che Guevara, Cuban Minister of Industry. The meeting was arranged directly with the Senator by Lisa Howard and took place in her New York apartment.

The Senator said he believed the purpose of the meeting was to express Cuban interest in trade with the US and US recognition of the Cuban Regime. Mr. Ball agreed this was plausible, saying that because of the state of the Cuban economy, the Cuban Regime was interested in reviving its trade relations with the US to obtain convertible currency. Further, he felt that Guevara probably recognized that any dealings with the US would add respectability to the regime in the eyes of other Latin American States.

Guevara told Senator McCarthy the Alliance for Progress would fail because it merely underwrites vested interests and the status quo. He said that Venezuela and the Central American States in particular needed revolutions. Chile was one state that was undertaking reforms that might make a revolution unnecessary. He noted that Chile would recognize Cuba if it were not for United States pressure.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA-US. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Woods on December 18.

Guevara did not attempt to conceal the subversive activities which Cuba was undertaking. He explicitly admitted that they were training revolutionaries and would continue to do so. He felt that this was a necessary mission for the Cuban Government since revolution offered the only hope of progress for Latin America.

Guevara attacked United States' overflights but not in particularly belligerent terms. He said that Cuba had the means to shoot down the planes, but had not taken any action against the United States. He insisted that there was no juridical basis for the overflights and that such a juridical basis was not furnished by OAS approval. Guevara mentioned only one specific "violation of sovereignty", this being when a US helicopter landed "over the line" (presumably at Guantanamo). He said that in this case, after some talk of firing upon the helicopter, it was permitted to leave Cuban territory.

Guevara said he knew the CIA was in Cuba. He stated that most of Cuba's enemies worked for the oil and power companies. He said the regime could identify them and they in turn knew they would be shot if they resorted to sabotage.

Guevara took issue with a statement that Ambassador Stevenson had made that the US was not withholding shipments of drugs to Cuba. Mr. Mann commented that drug shipments may have been cut back and that this was one area in which the Cubans could score on us. Mr. Ball said there was no reason why we should not sell drugs or medicines to Cuba, and Mr. Mann said he would look into the matter.

Guevara told the Senator that while conditions in Cuba were not good, there was no question of the regime collapsing. On the question of refugees, he said Cubans who did not like life on the island were free to leave. Mr. Mann commented that this was not true. Guevara also said the regime did not want any refugees returned to Cuba.

On relations between the Government and the Catholic Church, Guevara said they were good but that Party members could not belong to the Church. He mentioned in passing that they had more problems with Protestants than with Catholics.

On free elections, Guevara said these had not taken place because the revolution had not fully evolved. As to what form of government might eventually develop in Cuba, Guevara said—with pointed reference to Senator McCarthy—there was no interest in a bicameral congress or in anything along the lines of the Supreme Soviet in the USSR. He commented that the latter had no real power.

Mr. Ball asked if any references were made to Cuba's relationship to Moscow. It was mentioned that Lisa Howard had made the point that better relations with the US would give Cuba a more desirable position vis-à-vis Moscow. Mr. Ball said he believed the USSR was becoming fed up with Cuba but felt compelled to continue supporting it

because of its symbolic importance as the first country to go communist without pressure of the Red Army.

Mr. Ball emphasized the danger of meetings such as that which the Senator had had with Guevara. There was suspicion throughout Latin America that the US might make a deal with Cuba behind the backs of the other American States. This could provide a propaganda line useful to the Communists.

Mr. Ball pointed out that Guevara could not move about without a great many people knowing where he was and whom he was seeing. McCarthy agreed, mentioning the large number of police cars that had gathered when he met Guevara. Mr. Ball asked that McCarthy get in touch with him if any further contacts with Guevara were contemplated. Meanwhile it was essential that nothing be publicly said about the McCarthy–Guevara meeting although there was danger that Guevara himself might leak it.

294. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, December 18, 1964.

SUBJECT

Senator McCarthy/Che Guevara

1. John Crimmins gave me a brief read-out (reportedly, more details are to come)² on the meeting Senator McCarthy had with George Ball about McCarthy's meeting with Che Guevara. After listening to McCarthy, State feels that the conversation was entirely Lisa-generated and that Che really had nothing to tell us. (My own pre-conversation odds, which I transmitted to State, were 7–5 that Che wanted to talk to us but less than even money that he would say anything new to us.)

2. Che exuded confidence with McCarthy.

(a) Latin America, with the possible exception of Chile, is going to collapse. Everything is ripening in Cuba's direction. The U.S. is on the wrong wicket and is going to lose.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Contacts with Cuban Leaders, 5/63–4/65. Secret; Eyes Only.

² See Document 293.

(b) Resumption of trade with the U.S. would be good but Cuba can get along without it.

(c) The U.S. policy on drugs to Cuba is iniquitous.

3. If the McCarthy/Che conversation does become public, it could cause us some problems (e.g. in Latin America) since McCarthy will be viewed by some as an envoy from the Administration. Our line presumably will be to simply stick to the facts—i.e. that we don't control U.S. Senators and newspaperwomen; in this regard, the Senator did not ask for our recommendation before he had his talk with Guevara.

About the only plus from the McCarthy/Che meeting is that it was probably an eye-opener for McCarthy.

GC

295. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Williams) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann)¹

Washington, January 8, 1965.

SUBJECT

Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 7 January 1965

Cuba

“a. The recommendations in the CIA paper of 6 January 1965 entitled, ‘Activities of Manuel Artime Buesa During December and Early January; Contact with Military Dissidents Inside Cuba,’² were discussed at length and approved with the proscriptions elaborated below.

“b. The identification in the paper of the principal dissidents purporting to overthrow Fidel Castro led to a number of questions from the Committee members: What reason is there to believe that these per-

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, January–June 1965. Secret; Eyes Only.

² Attached but not printed.

sons are bona fide? What sort of a man is Cubela?³ Does [*name not declassified*]⁴ have the loyalty of the men under his command? What are Cubela's present relations with Fidel Castro?

"c. Mr. FitzGerald's estimate was that these individuals were genuine 'disenchantees' positively identified from other sources as being anti-Castro. Predicting success or failure was not possible because of the unknown factors: security, loyalty, resoluteness of officers and men, and judgment and luck in their timing. Ambassador Thompson wondered if open civil war would be a desirable objective, and he suggested a Soviet reaction in other theatres in that event.

"d. Mr. FitzGerald then requested that consideration be given to reiteration by higher authority of a theme, made by the late President Kennedy in a speech about a week before he died, to the effect that there are a lot of people in Cuba with whom the United States is prepared to deal.⁵ Mr. FitzGerald said that the impact of this message on the island at that time could not be overestimated and its reissuance now would have a strong psychological impact. The Committee members were receptive to this concept, and Mr. Bundy requested a submission of draft language from Mr. FitzGerald which could be used by higher authority in response to a planted question at a forthcoming press conference.

"e. Mr. McCone wanted the committee to know that dealing with autonomous exiles was, unfortunately, a part of a previously approved total program against Cuba and that Artime, less and less responsive to persuasion, constituted a persistent menace. Mr. Bundy concurred that Artime was a firecracker in our midst.⁶

"f. It was in this context then, that the Committee agreed with the recommendation in the paper (i.e., that the subsidy to Artime be paid through the month of February). Mr. McCone's suggestion that additional payments for 'two or three months' could be offered in exchange for acceptance of restrictive conditions⁷ by Artime was also approved.

³ Cmdte. Rolando Cubela is identified in the January 6 CIA paper as "a representative of an internal military dissident group, which is plotting to overthrow Castro."

⁴ [*text not declassified*] one of the three groups that Cubela said were involved in a coup against Castro.

⁵ In an address before the Inter-American Press Association in Miami on November 18, 1963, Kennedy said "once this barrier is removed, we will be ready and anxious to work with the Cuban people." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1963*, p. 876)

⁶ See Document 296 for an addendum to this paragraph.

⁷ concentration of development of the internal operation and curtailment of grandstand operations to augment his image. [Footnote in the source text.]

Ambassador Thompson reserved the right to refer the Committee position to Assistant Secretary of State Mann prior to signing off. (Subsequent to the meeting, the office of the Deputy Director for Coordination/INR indicated that Mr. Mann had been advised of the tenor of the meeting and concurred in the Committee's decision.)"

296. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, January 13, 1965.

SUBJECT

Amplification of the Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee,
7 January 1965

At the request of Mr. McCone, the following amplification of the record of his remarks concerning Manuel Artime is inserted as a change on page 2 of the minutes dated 8 January 1965.² In place of paragraph 3.e. of the 8 January minutes the following paragraphs are added:

3.e. Mr. McCone impressed on the Committee the difficulty of dealing with the autonomous exile groups and it was, in his opinion, extremely dangerous and of questionable effectiveness. Incidents beyond the control of CIA or USG might occur which could be very embarrassing.

f. Mr. McCone explained that support of the autonomous exile groups was part of a 6-point program and that when the program was submitted, stipulation was made that the program was a package involving propaganda, psychological efforts, infiltration, directed sabotage operations, economic denial, and autonomous operations.

g. As time passed, some of the "package", most particularly the directed sabotage operations, was discontinued for policy reasons. Hence, the effectiveness of autonomous operations has been greatly reduced and the danger of embarrassment enhanced. Furthermore, Artime is not responsive to persuasion or direction and thus constitutes a persistent menace.

h. The Committee agreed the situation is hazardous and Mr. Bundy called Artime "a firecracker in our midst."

¹ Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, January–June 1965. Secret; Eyes Only.

² Document 295.

Paragraph 3.f. of the minutes dated 8 January thus becomes paragraph 3.i.

In the opinion of the Executive Secretary, this amplification is completely in accord with what transpired at the meeting.

Peter Jessup

297. Memorandum to the 303 Committee¹

Washington, February 23, 1965.

SUBJECT

Withdrawal of Support from Arttime Group

The Department of State strongly recommends that, in light of recent developments in the activities of the Arttime group,² the 303 Committee adopt immediately the following course of action with respect to that group:

1. Arttime will be notified without delay that, in conformity with previous statements made to him, US support for his group will be terminated as of February 28, with phasing out of US assistance to be carried out as quickly as possible.

2. Arttime will be notified immediately, with respect to his dealings with Cubela³ concerning the "internal operation", that (a) it is our firm estimate that under present circumstances such an operation is impractical, unrealistic and almost certain to fail; (b) we cannot be certain that the participation by internal Cuban elements is not a provocation and a trap; and (c) in any case, we want it clearly understood

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. II, 1964, 1965. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. According to a February 23 covering memorandum from Williams to Jessup, Thompson had approved the memorandum and wanted it circulated to members of the 303 Committee. The memorandum was prepared by Crimmins, following a meeting among Rusk, Thompson, Hughes, and Mann according to the February 25 ARA-CIA Weekly Meeting report. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meeting Reports)

² Arttime's group had recently made an attack on Casilda, Cuba, carried out by the captain of the Arttime vessel, without the approval of either Arttime or his deputy, thus disregarding the expressed wishes of U.S. officials for Arttime's group to desist from all such attacks. (Memorandum from Carter (INR/DDC) to Hughes, February 25; *ibid.*)

³ See footnote 3, Document 295.

that we cannot and will not make any commitments in advance concerning US support for such an operation.

3. Through both diplomatic and Agency channels, the Nicaraguan, Costa Rican and Dominican Governments will be informed discreetly, but clearly, that (a) we are in no way supporting Artime; (b) he is on his own; (c) any arrangements made with, or facilities provided to, Artime by the Governments concerned are strictly between them and him; and (d) we would understand and would have no objection if the Governments concerned were to refuse assistance to him or withdraw present assistance from him.

298. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Williams) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Adams)¹

Washington, March 8, 1965.

SUBJECT

Minutes of the 303 Committee Meeting March 4, 1965

The minutes of the meeting of the 303 Committee held on March 4, 1965 contain the following items:

[1 heading and 2 paragraphs (9 lines of source text) not declassified]

“Cuba—Proposed Political Action Operation to Acerbate Cuban-Soviet Relations²

“In the proposed deception operation to acerbate Cuban-Soviet relations, Mr. FitzGerald said that the Agency was withdrawing the proposed use of former Senator Kenneth Keating and hoped to build a

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Secret; Eyes Only.

² A January 25 memorandum to the 303 Committee proposed that Castro’s suspicions of the Soviets be aroused by having a prominent American announce a trip to Moscow and inform the press that the purpose of the trip was to publish articles, and meet Kosygin or another top Russian official at the Kremlin. The individual would return to the United States, but instead of publishing anything about his Soviet visit, he would visit Florida, the Caribbean area, and Washington, trying to make it appear as if secret negotiations about Cuba had been conducted by the United States and the Soviet Union behind Castro’s back. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. I, 11/63–7/65)

similar confusion operation around an actual trip to Moscow planned by lawyer James Britt Donovan. Mr. Donovan would remain unwitting. Ambassador Thompson asked if this would not preclude Mr. Donovan's usefulness in other possible missions in the future. The reply was that there are no plans in sight to make use of Mr. Donovan's services. The proposal was considered as approved."

"Cuba—Future of CIA's Cuban Paramilitary Program; Proposed UDT Sabotage Operation³

"a. The Committee vetoed the proposed UDT operation for the present time. A discussion followed in which Mr. FitzGerald stated that keeping paramilitary assets in being is an expensive process and such a 'shelf life' is limited in duration. He emphasized that only the lesser motivated types are willing to remain on ice indefinitely—better caliber people drift away.

"b. While accepting this difficulty, it was the opinion of Ambassador Thompson that this asset could be needed in the future, and Mr. Vance felt it important to preserve the capability despite its tendency to waste away. It was agreed to expend the necessary funds to keep such a paramilitary capability in force."

"Cuba—Support to Artime

"In regard to the two papers on support to Artime, Mr. FitzGerald stated that there was no basic disagreement between State⁴ and the Agency;⁵ it was a matter of how best to terminate Artime. He felt that there was some obligation now to 'get the boys back home.' After some discussion back and forth, it was decided that an undetermined sum to return the Cubans from Caribbean outposts was in order. Mr. Bundy directed that these arrangements be established and completed by the end of April. Ambassador Thompson asked some questions concerning the internal operation of Cubela and indicated that it was a matter

³ A January 18 memorandum to the 303 Committee reported that a substantial number of Cubans had been "selected and intensively trained in all aspects of paramilitary work, including commando tactics and sabotage," but were "becoming discouraged at inaction," and that, therefore, some type of underwater demolition team action against Cuban navy patrol vessels or "other Cuban targets of opportunity" should be taken. The memorandum stated that "If an operation of this type is not considered acceptable," the "CIA be authorized to begin reduction of its commitments in the paramilitary field." (Ibid.)

⁴ See Document 297.

⁵ According to the ARA-CIA Weekly Meeting Report of February 25, FitzGerald expressed concern that DDC had "circulated" a paper recommending that aid to Artime be cut off as of the end of February. FitzGerald stated that the Agency's view was that aid should be continued for another 2 months to give Artime time to develop his potential for action with Cuba. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meeting Reports) The CIA paper on this subject has not been found.

of some concern to the Department and that it be made absolutely clear that there was no U.S. commitment to Cubela via Artime. Mr. FitzGerald confirmed this. He felt that Cubela was living on borrowed time.”

“Cuba—Problem of U.S. Support for Cuban Exile Organization RECE

“This brought the discussion to the RECE proposals.⁶ It was the consensus of the group that ‘either-you-do-or-you-don’t’ and that the U.S. should not be involved with another exile organization. The committee agreed to reimburse Major Oliva some \$17,000 and to offer Oliva himself some help in finding a sort of job commensurate with his talents. A suggestion of enrollment in the International Police Academy was made, and Mr. Vance and Mr. FitzGerald agreed to collaborate on finding a solution.”

“Cuba—Emergency Exfiltration Operation

“The committee approved a one shot emergency exfiltration operation for 5 March 1965. The paper concerning his operation was circulated at the meeting and is hereby attached.”⁷

“Cuba—Question and Answer for Presidential Press Conference

“a. Paragraph 3.d. of the minutes of 7 January 1965 authorized a proposed draft of a planted question and answer on the subject of Cuba for a forthcoming Presidential press conference. The purpose of this question and answer was to reiterate a theme made by the late President Kennedy⁸ a week before he died to the effect that there were Cubans within Cuba with whom the U.S. would be willing to deal.

“b. Mr. Bundy directed that the draft be circulated to members for comment at a future meeting. There was some doubt expressed whether a press conference at this time could appropriately generate a question on Cuba. The draft is appended to these minutes as an attachment.”⁷

“Previous Approvals by Telephone

“The Cuban infiltration/exfiltration operations for March were approved by voice vote on 17 February.”

⁶ In a March 1 study by the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, prepared in consultation with operating-level representatives of the 303 Committee agencies, and forwarded to the Committee under a March 1 covering memorandum, Crimmins discussed the background of the RECE (Representation of Cubans in Exile) request for U.S. support, the basic factors affecting a decision, and the principal conclusion that the U.S. Government had “only a limited interest in keeping RECE alive.” The covering memorandum concludes with the statement that “the Department is inclined to favor giving no assistance to RECE.” (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. II, 1964, 1965)

⁷ Attached but not printed.

⁸ See Document 295.

299. Memorandum From the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs (Crimmins) to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann)¹

Washington, March 16, 1965.

SUBJECT

US-UK-Canadian Talks on Cuba

Purpose—The talks have two purposes: 1) to try to come to a common assessment of the present situation and outlook in Cuba, and 2) to set out and examine, on the basis of this common assessment, the range of options² open to the West. Although lines of policy will inevitably be discussed, it is clearly understood by all concerned that there will be no attempt during the talks to fix a common policy toward Cuba.

Possible British Position—We cannot be sure about British motivations in the talks, for which they took the initiative.³ It is possible that they are approaching the discussions with an open mind, intent only upon an examination of the facts. On the other hand, they may regard the talks as the first step in a process to move us toward a relaxation of current pressures on Cuba.

If the British have the latter intention, they may advocate the line, set forth in various "think-piece" despatches written by their Ambassador in Havana, Adam Watson (whom you met last summer), that whereas our policy toward Cuba has been successful in isolating Cuba, it cannot overthrow the Castro regime or induce any changes in his basic policies. Therefore, the British may argue it is necessary to provide inducements to Castro (in addition to keeping some pressure on him)

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA. Secret.

² According to a March 2 memorandum from Chase to Bundy, Secretary Rusk told Crimmins that he wanted "no new initiatives on Cuba policy for the time being." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Memos re: Cuba Miscellaneous, 11/63-6/65)

³ In a January 15 memorandum to Rusk, Mann stated that the British Embassy, "acting on instructions from London" had inquired informally of Crimmins "concerning the Department's receptivity toward an informal US-UK examination of the Cuba question." The British added that they would be interested in inviting the Canadians to participate. Mann, Thompson, and Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Tyler agreed "that a review of the kind suggested by the British could be useful." Rusk initialed his approval of an informal exchange with the British and the Canadians, but added in a postscript that "In agreeing to informal discussions, it should be made clear that the U.S. has clear and far-reaching agreements with the members of the OAS with respect to Cuba and this factor must be fully taken into account." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA)

in order to reduce or terminate his subversive activities and to lessen his dependence on the Soviet Union. The inducements would be (1) expanded economic and other relations with the non-OAS West (i.e., the US would cease its objections to such ties); and (2) an end to “subversive activities” against Cuba, to be keyed to Castro’s cessation of activities against Latin America.

There are, however, some indications that the British may have somewhat revised the assessments upon which the approach above was based, and are now thinking in more modest terms, having in mind a more limited objective and the consequent employment of narrower inducements. We may find that they will stress the single goal of preventing Castro from, as they put it, being forced irreversibly into complete dependence upon the Soviets. The means by which this would be accomplished would be the expansion of trade and other relations between Cuba and the non-OAS West. There would be no reciprocal arrangement on subversive activities.

Recommended US Position—The policy which the US is following arises from two key judgments: 1) the present Cuban Government has as a firm long-range goal the organization of Latin America in a form inimical to Western interests; and 2) the close association of the Soviet Union with the present regime, manifested by its dependence upon the Soviet Union for its security, constitutes an extension of Soviet power and influence into Latin America which is unacceptable to the West as a whole and particularly to the nations of this Hemisphere. Our objectives, therefore, are to prevent the present Cuban Government from attaining its own objectives in Latin America and to bring about the retraction of Soviet power and influence.

US Views on Possible British Position—While we agree that an opening to the West might give Castro more independence in his dealings with the USSR, we see little or no reason to believe that this would affect his bed-rock, continuing reliance on the Soviets for basic economic support and military guarantees, which no one in the West, outside the United States, can provide. Moreover—and this is a basic point—there is no evidence whatsoever that Castro has any intention of making an ideological shift, of moving out of the “Socialist” camp, or of being ready to abandon his objectives in Latin America. His strong desire for greater independence relates to his relationships within, not outside, the camp. We believe that an arrangement like the one which the British may propose would be advantageous to Cuba and the USSR and distinctly disadvantageous to us. We consider that such a policy would be less effective than our present low-cost, low-risk policy in keeping Castro from moving toward his objective in the Hemisphere and in inducing a retraction of Soviet power and influence. In fact, the “relaxed” policy could well be destructive of any hopes of further progress toward our (and the OAS) goals.

300. Memorandum From Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, March 19, 1965.

SUBJECT

U.S./U.K./Canadian Talks on Cuba

On Wednesday and Thursday,² I attended the U.S./U.K./Canadian talks on Cuba. Jack Vaughn³ chaired the meeting, which included John Crimmins and Bill Bowdler on the U.S. side (Tommy Thompson attended the last session); Rennie (Head of Latin American Affairs) and Watson (Ambassador to Cuba) on the British side; and Pick (Head of Latin American Affairs) on the Canadian side. The purpose of the two-day talks was (a) to assess the situation inside Cuba and (b) to take a look at the policy options now available to the West. By and large, the talks consisted of a U.S./U.K. dialogue, with the Canadians listening and chipping in only occasionally.

1. The first order of business was to assess the *economic* situation in Cuba; on this, there seemed to be general agreement.

(a) *Sugar*—The crop this year will probably be about 5 million tons; it could be smaller if the cane does not get cut in time. In this regard, external activist pressures on Cuba seem to make some difference on cane-cutting; if there were a relaxation, there would be fewer soldiers and more experts available to cut cane.

Cuba's sugar production will probably reach 6.0 to 7.5 million tons by 1970 (6.8 million in 1961), which is a lot of sugar but which is considerably short of the Cuban target of 10 million tons. Russian combines are now being used and will undoubtedly be used more and more in the future. Sugar expansion in Cuba does seem to have some limiting factors—e.g., the difficulty of putting too many resources into this one industry, in view of other requirements.

(b) *Trade with West*—Cuba sells an average of 1.5 million tons of sugar to the Free World each year; the Cubans have a dilemma here in that they like to earn the convertible currency but definitely do not like the price these days. Imports from the West will drop

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, US/UK/Canadian Talks, 2/65-3/65. Secret.

² March 17 and 18.

³ Mann resigned as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs on March 17, and Jack H. Vaughn assumed this position 5 days later.

considerably in 1965 as opposed to 1964 because of Cuba's foreign exchange problems.

(c) *Trade With and Aid From the Bloc*—It is hard to say just how much subsidy the Soviets pay for Cuban sugar; while the announced price is considerably above the world market price, it should be noted that the sugar is part of a barter deal—and we don't really know the true value of what the Soviets are giving the Cubans in exchange for the sugar. With respect to aid, Russian loans are probably not very hard and they probably don't expect to get repaid. As a general point, it is amazing how little the Russians get, in the form of Cuban good behavior, for the investment they are making.

(d) *Miscellaneous*—A number of interesting miscellaneous points were made. *First*, the management problem is severe in Cuba. There is entirely too much transferring of personnel; also, the penalties for failure are excessive and lead to over-caution. *Second*, Fidel is not always happy about sending trainees to Russia—e.g., learning to farm in a cold climate is not very applicable to farming in Cuba. *Third*, next to sugar, cattle production is the second most important economic activity; arable crops don't seem to count for much. *Fourth*, in terms of growth, Cuba seems to be at the bottom of the pendulum. The economy may swing back and make up the ground it has lost since 1961, but it is probably going to take Cuba a number of years before there is any real economic growth.

2. *Political Currents in Cuban Leadership*—The group generally agreed with the set of conclusions attached at Tab 1. Ambassador Watson did go on to elaborate at some length on the struggle between Castro and the Old Guard communists. He made the point that the removal of the Old Guard from points of power might not only be a reflection of Castro's dissatisfaction with this group; it is also possible that the Old Guard is getting more and more disenchanted with Cuban progress and, in fact, is not unhappy to withdraw from the fray. In this regard, Watson speculated that the Old Guard may do much to feed Moscow's doubts about Russian involvement in Cuba.

3. *Cuban Relations with Latin America*—At the outset, the British expressed strong reservations about the U.S. view regarding the threat of Cuban subversion in the Hemisphere. In the first place, there is not much subversion (e.g., "surely there is more OAS subversion against Cuba than there is Cuban subversion against Latin America"). In the second place, Cuban subversion is negotiable. Castro is beginning to have doubts about it. He is not so sure there will be revolution in Latin America in the near future and, in any event, he is not so sure he will be the leader of it. These beliefs, in addition to the belief that Castro may want to concentrate on his own island, lead the British to believe that he would reduce his subversion if he got something meaningful

in return. In a related regard, the British speculated that any recent increase in subversive activity has to do with the fact that Castro may feel that his efforts at rapprochement with the West have been rebuffed.

The U.S. pointed out that, while it would be nonsense to attribute all Latin American tension to Cuba, it would be inaccurate to say that Cuba had no responsibility for a considerable part of it. Certainly, there was plenty of evidence around to indicate Cuba's subversive interests. *First*, there was the recent meeting in Havana among Latin American communists to revitalize the subversive effort. *Second*, there is in operation today a very energetic National Liberation Section in the Cuban Government's Directorate General of Intelligence. *Third*, the public line has been getting harder. Cuba no longer talks so much about "exporting revolution by example." In a recent speech, for instance, Guevara talked about "bullets instead of ballots." *Fourth*, there are recent hard cases in point, too. In Colombia, for example, the leader of a recent carefully planned subversive incident had spent two months in Cuba just before coming home to lead the insurgency. *Fifth*, the training of guerrillas goes on. Ambassador Vaughn noted that in Panama literally hundreds have received training over the past couple years and that this number of people can make quite an impact on a fragile society. His personal experience with a few of these trainees indicates that they are Chinese-oriented, fanatical, and violent.

By the end of the discussion, the British, while still implying that a deal might be made with Castro on subversion, seemed to have a somewhat better appreciation of the Cuban threat in Latin America.

4. *Soviet Intentions Towards Cuba*—While there was a difference in emphasis between the U.S. and the British, by and large there was close agreement with the summary paragraphs attached at Tab 2.⁴ The British emphasized the point that the Russians are not very happy with the present burden and that they would certainly be prepared to accept closer Western/Cuban relations.

There was a good deal of discussion on the question of just how far the Soviets would be willing to disengage from Cuba. They would conceivably go pretty far—e.g., permit downfall of the Old Guard; agree to military neutralization of Cuba (although Cuba would have some contrary views on this). On the other hand, even the British did not think that the Soviets would willingly permit Cuba to leave the Socialist camp, although they did imply that this could conceivably come about over the long pull once the West had its foot firmly in the door.

5. *Options for the West*—By the end of the talks, the British view seemed to boil down to the following elements: *First*, the U.S. policy

⁴ Attached but not printed.

has been “brilliant” (Watson), and has provided us with a remarkable opportunity to loosen the Cuban/Soviet tie. This is an important opportunity since we do not want to make the Cuban/Soviet tie indissoluble. *Second*, while it is clear that the U.S. and the OAS should probably not ease their pressures, the non-OAS Free World countries should be encouraged to sound out the Cubans on what their terms might be. In this regard, one of the Western carrots might be an offer of increased contact with the non-OAS Free World (e.g., trade and cultural contacts), in exchange for good behavior on Castro’s part—i.e., less subversion.

The case for the present policy and for a harder policy was made by the U.S. and ran roughly as follows: We want to reduce subversion and induce a retraction of the USSR from the Hemisphere; in this regard, we are engaged in a policy designed to strengthen the internal resistance of L.A. governments, weaken Cuba, and demonstrate to the Soviets that they have made a mistake. Thus far, the policy has had moderate but measurable success. *First*, economic prospects in Cuba are not bright; the regime’s failure to demonstrate progress has hurt the regime with its own people and has hurt Cuba as an example in Latin America. *Second*, Cuba has been denied any subversive successes in Latin America. *Third*, this hard policy has increased Cuban/Soviet tensions. *Fourth*, it should be emphasized that this is a policy which has called for very modest risks and costs on the part of the West.

Moreover, one could argue that a modest intensification of the present policy would improve results. (In this regard, for all practical purposes, the non-OAS West has had no political restraints on their relations with Cuba.) Among other things, an intensification might increase Soviet/Cuban tensions and make Castro look like even more of a satellite to Latin Americans. This course, which does not significantly increase the chances of Cuban subversion, allows us to wait comfortably and safely for the breaks and for the chance of hitting the jackpot (eviction of the Soviets). On the other hand, relaxation may reduce the chances that we will ever hit the jackpot, may give Cuba political and economic respectability, and may demonstrate to Latin Americans that the Cuban path is worthwhile after all.

6. A considerable amount of documentation related to the U.S./U.K./Canadian talks has been done and is still in process. *First*, State is drafting up a joint record of conclusions which will be cleared by the British and Canadians⁵ and which primarily will spell out the options for the West, with the arguments pro and con. I will show these to you when we get them. *Second*, there are in being a number of British,

⁵ Reference is to “Resume of US-UK-Canadian Talks on Cuba,” March 18. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, US/UK/Canadian Talks, 2/65-3/65)

U.S., and Canadian papers on such subjects as the Cuban economic situation, political currents in Cuba, Cuban relations with Latin America, and Soviet intentions towards Cuba.⁶ I will not burden you with these unless you indicate that you would like to take a look at some or all of them.

7. So far as the U.S. is concerned, the meetings were quite useful. In addition to providing us with an excuse to march up the Cuban hill again, the meetings gave us an opportunity to educate the British and Canadians to our side of the story and, hopefully, to persuade them that we are really not madmen when it comes to Cuba. The next step is to get together among ourselves and, taking into account the British views, give a good, hard, inter-departmental look at where we are headed and what we want to do about Cuba in the future. This process is in the works now and will be picking up steam over the next few weeks.

GC

Tab 1

Conclusions

The principal conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing analysis are:

1. Castro remains the dominant figure on the Cuban scene. Power centers in him. He is the dynamic of the revolution. His popular support remains strong, despite the gradual erosion. He holds the rival elements together and is the arbiter of their differences. He will accept no diminution of his personal leadership. There is no force in Cuba today in a position to challenge his authority.

2. Castro turned to the Soviet Union in 1959 and 1960 more out of necessity than conviction, dictated by the internal and external programs he set for himself. In the process of reorienting Cuba toward the Soviet Bloc he came to accept Marxism-Leninism. His strong emotional commitment to radical change predisposed him in this direction. He is motivated, however, more by personal ambition than by ideological commitment. Having transformed Cuba into a Marxist-Leninist state and associated her with the Bloc, he finds himself more dependent upon Moscow than is compatible with his plans and temperament.

3. While Castro would like greater elbowroom within the "Socialist" camp, there is no evidence to indicate that he desires to break

⁶ These papers are *ibid.* and in the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL CUBA.

away. A Communist world organized along the lines of regional polycentrism in which Cuba would lead an independent Latin American group is more in line with his objectives.

4. Of the various groups which comprise the Cuban political spectrum, the neo-Communists are clearly dominant. This is due to their numerical strength, the positions they hold in the party-state apparatus, and the fact that Castro is himself a neo-Communist. No other group is in a position to challenge the neo-Communists as long as Castro takes their side.

5. The old-guard Communists are passing through a critical period in which Castro appears intent on severely reducing, if not eliminating, their influence. The only support which the old-guard has comes from Moscow. This is sufficient, however, to make Castro move cautiously against them.

6. The fact that the neo-Communists appear to be on the ascendancy represents no advantage for the West because they are more fanatical, more emotionally “anti-imperialist”, and more disposed to push armed struggle as the appropriate means for achieving power in Latin America.

301. Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee¹

Washington, March 22, 1965.

SUBJECT

Status of Termination of Manuel Artime’s Autonomous Paramilitary Group

1. In accordance with the decision of the Committee on 4 March 1965,² CIA has begun phasing-out support to Artime.

2. Artime has agreed to cooperate in the disbanding of his paramilitary group. [5 lines of source text not declassified]

[6 paragraphs (1½ pages of double-spaced source text) not declassified]

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, January–June, 1965. Secret; Eyes Only. Circulated to 303 Committee principals at the March 30 meeting, according to an April 2 memorandum from Williams to Vaughn. (Ibid.)

² See Document 298.

302. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Williams) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Vaughn)¹

Washington, June 11, 1965.

SUBJECT

Minutes of the 303 Committee Meeting June 10, 1965

The minutes of the meeting of the 303 Committee held on June 10, 1965 contain the following items:

"Cuba—Proposed Reactivation of CIA's Paramilitary Effort

"a. Admiral Raborn stated that he had requested this subject on the agenda and went on to say he felt strongly that as a result of the Dominican situation and increasing subversion in the Hemisphere, we should make Castro's life as difficult as possible at home as a deterrent to his mounting interference outside his own borders. There were a number of things that could be done with existing capabilities and we should concentrate on hitting the source of the difficulty.

"b. Mr. Bundy observed that the paper² was a good statement of that viewpoint but we had spent some months in searching for ways to hurt Castro without hurting ourselves more and had not found them. He remained skeptical as to whether any or even a combination of the various methods would permanently damage Castro without our incurring high collateral political costs. Mr. Vance said he had just discussed the methods enumerated in a. through d.³ with the Secretary of Defense, and they had emerged negative on all higher noise-level operations at the present time. Ambassador Thompson indicated State was opposed, if for somewhat different reasons. Continual harassment by the U.S. might stimulate Soviet aid, whereas if left alone, the Soviets might tire of the rising costs of Cuban disarray and ineptitude.

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 303 Committee Records. Secret; Eyes Only.

² Reference is to a June 2 memorandum to the 303 Committee entitled "Proposed Reactivation of the CIA's Paramilitary Effort Against Cuba." (Washington National Records Center, Foreign Policy Historical Files 1962-1972, 330 77 0131-#3, Cuba)

³ Items 9a.-9d. were proposals for maritime CIA commando raids against Cuban coastal targets, CIA underwater teams' demolition of ships in Cuban ports, night attacks against the *Playa Giron*, Cuba's only liquid petroleum gas equipped tanker, and/or other Cuban merchant vessels in Cuban territorial waters, and air bombing of selected targets within Cuba, such as the guerrilla warfare training center at Minas Frias, by CIA Cuban exile pilots and non-attributable aircraft. (Ibid.)

“c. Mr. FitzGerald emphasized the problem of internal morale. If the Cubans on the island realized that the U.S. was faint-hearted, they would continue their coalescence into the Castro body politic. Already, agent recruitment was decidedly more difficult. [3 lines of source text not declassified]

“d. The limited activities consisting of infiltration/exfiltration operations, intelligence collection, and economic measures appeared to be all the Committee members were prepared to endorse at this time.

“e. Mr. Bundy said he would summarize the disparate views and present them to higher authority.”

[Omitted here is discussion of Haiti; see Document 345.]

303. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson¹

Washington, June 26, 1965.

SUBJECT

Covert Action Against Cuba

1. I think you should know that Admiral Raborn has recommended reactivation of a paramilitary effort against Cuba. This matter has been considered in the 303 committee (the committee which monitors all covert operations).² Tommy Thompson, Cy Vance, and I are against the recommendation, but, along with Raborn, we have agreed to report the matter to you in case you want to pursue it further.

2. The Raborn recommendation calls for the following types of operations:

- (1) Maritime raids by commando teams against coastal targets.
- (2) Use of an underwater demolition team to blow up ships in Cuban ports.
- (3) Night attacks on major Cuban merchant vessels while in Cuban territorial waters.
- (4) Air bombing of selected targets in Cuba by covert aircraft.
- (5) Deception operations designed to give the impression of imminent invasion by U.S. forces.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, 1/64–6/65. Secret; Sensitive.

² See Document 302.

3. The trouble most of us see in such operations is that their international noise level outweighs their anti-Castro value. Especially with the Dominican problem before us, most of us do not recommend visible violent actions against Cuba. I believe this is also the opinion of Dean Rusk and Bob McNamara. But if you feel differently, we can have the matter examined again.

McG. B.³

Look at it again⁴

Leave it alone for now

³ Printed from a copy that bears these typed initials.

⁴ Neither option is checked, but a July 2 memorandum from Alfred T. Wellborn (INR/DDC) to Vaughn stated that "on 29 June, the disparate views on Cuba were brought to the attention of higher authority, who directed that written argumentation for and against the proposal contained in 'Proposed Reactivation of CIA's Paramilitary Effort Against Cuba', a CIA paper dated 2 June 1965, be prepared for his future study." See footnote 2, Document 302.

304. Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs¹

Washington, August 10, 1965.

ARA VIEWS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF REACTIVATING CIA PARAMILITARY EFFORT AGAINST CUBA

I. Background

In June 1963 President Kennedy approved a covert policy and an integrated program of action toward Cuba. Three basic considerations underlay the program: first, the United States did not contemplate the use of military force against Cuba; second, the United States wished to exert maximum pressure by all means available to it (short of military intervention) to prevent the consolidation of the Communist regime; and third, dissident elements in the military and in other power centers of the regime could be encouraged to bring about the eventual

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meetings Reports, August 12, 1965. Secret; Sensitive. Prepared by Crimmins and forwarded to Thompson and Rusk.

replacement of the regime and to eliminate the Soviet presence in Cuba.

The program which was approved consisted of six interdependent, mutually reinforcing courses of action: (1) the covert collection of intelligence to meet both strategic and operational requirements; (2) propaganda actions to stimulate low-risk simple sabotage and other forms of active and passive resistance; (3) exploitation and stimulation of disaffection in the Cuban military and other power centers; (4) economic denial actions in support and extension of overt efforts; (5) general sabotage and harassment, designed to achieve economic and psychological impact and to be conducted by either external, CIA-controlled assets or by internal assets in being or to be developed, initial emphasis to be placed on external operations with a shift to internal assets as soon as feasible; and (6) support of “autonomous” anti-Castro Cuban groups to supplement and assist in the execution of the foregoing courses of action.

Of these six components, the first four are still in operation. Although there was agreement when the entire program was approved that, if results were to be achieved it would be necessary to continue the program for a considerable period of time (18 months), even in the face of difficulties, the fact is that actions under Course 5 (CIA-controlled sabotage and harassment) were suspended in January 1964 after only five hit-and-run operations had been carried out in the period August-December 1963. In terms of purely Cuban policy, the raids probably had had a net positive effect. The decision to suspend was taken essentially on broader grounds, including concern about disturbing the emerging détente between the US and the Soviets (whose support Castro normally invokes against direct US pressures against him), the desire to avoid measures which might prevent or delay Soviet troop withdrawals from Cuba, the desire to have “clean hands” in moving towards OAS action on the Venezuelan arms cache case, and the belief that other less costly measures, particularly economic, would be effective. A tactical factor was the embarrassment caused us by the Cuban capture of a CIA infiltration team in December 1963 and the subsequent revelations by members of the team. It is important to note that this incident occurred in connection with an infiltration and that this kind of operation continues to be approved.

Operations by “autonomous” groups were permitted to proceed, and the first effort occurred in April 1964. In late 1964-early 1965, however, these too were closed out because they were producing more problems and risks—including complications in US-USSR relations and in the Vietnamese situation—than results. An important special factor during most of the life of the autonomous operations was the concern that they would provoke Cuban action against US surveillance overflights. The immediate motive for abandonment of the autonomous ap-

proach was the highly embarrassing attack on a Spanish merchant vessel in September 1964, which illustrated forcefully the lack of US control over groups not directly responsive to CIA.

Thus, there are no paramilitary efforts being mounted against Cuba at present. The CIA proposal is, in effect, an attempt to seek a reversal of the early 1964 decision with respect to their own operations. There is no intention to resurrect the autonomous approach. The basis of the CIA proposal is the belief that the present state of the Cuban question counsels a resumption of CIA-controlled paramilitary activity.

II. Current Situation

The Castro regime is almost certainly more firmly entrenched now than at any time since its accession to power. Its control, however, is not absolute. The economy, although still operating at a relatively low level and hampered by disorganization and inefficiency, has been moving forward in the past two years. The prospect is that modest advances will continue through 1965, with the outlook highly uncertain beyond this year. Politically, the regime certainly has problems, but it appears capable of dealing with them, short of the disappearance of Castro. Security measures have become increasingly effective, but there are, from time to time, evidences of uneasiness and over-reaction to internal or external threats, real or imagined, on the part of the regime. The great bulk of the population is apathetic. Although the average Cuban is probably unhappy with his lot and skeptical of significant, early improvement of it, he is almost certainly becoming more and more resigned to the permanence of the regime. Internal active opposition to the government has grown increasingly weaker. Morale among anti-regime elements within and outside Cuba is low, and there is growing reluctance among these groups to take the risks involved in acts of resistance. This prudence is heightened by the absence of visible, effective external pressures.

The pressures, largely economic, which we have placed upon the regime have probably had moderate success in delaying—but not in preventing—the movement toward internal consolidation of the Castro government. If maintained at their present level, they will probably become more and more difficult to maintain and less and less effective.

Moreover, these pressures have not induced the regime to abandon its subversive efforts in Latin America. The great bulk of the evidence shows that Cuba has been trying to make those efforts more effective at a time when our own subversive measures against it have been sharply reduced. There are, moreover, several indications of increased Soviet activity in fostering “national liberation movements” in Latin America. The Soviet endorsement of the harder line set forth by

the November 1964 meeting of Latin American Communist Parties in Havana has been translated, according to reliable reports, into concrete and substantial financial assistance to the Venezuelan FALN. It is not possible to say whether this apparent Soviet decision to become more heavily involved in Latin America arises from the need to meet Chinese Communist pressures, from an assessment that the general situation in the Hemisphere affords more opportunities than heretofore, or even from an intention to place heavier pressure on us in Latin America in response to our policies in Vietnam. No matter what its origin, the evidence of heightened Soviet activity in Latin America is clearly relevant to any consideration of the effects on US-USSR relations of US policies toward Cuba and toward subversion in Latin America.

The situation in Latin America from the US point of view remains fragile, and subversion, whether from Havana, Moscow or Peking acting independently or, in the case of the first two, together, remains a constant serious concern. It is certainly true that, in contrast to 1961, the image of Cuba in Latin America has been dimmed and that, moreover, this may have resulted in part from the comparatively low-key US policy toward Cuba in the past two years. Nevertheless, a Communist Cuba which will be able to show that it is progressing economically and is consolidated politically cannot help but be impressive in Latin America. When such a regime is able, at the same time, to continue to carry out acts of subversion with impunity, in part because it is under the protection of the USSR, the negative effects for the United States are magnified in Latin America. The weakening or even the disappearance of the Communist government in Cuba would certainly not solve US problems in Latin America, but its continuation and its gradual entrenchment seriously prejudice US objectives and programs.

The US actions in the Dominican Republic have probably had mixed effects on Latin American views on US policy toward Cuba. On the one hand, those elements in Latin America which have advocated a "hard" US line on Cuba and Communist subversion were probably encouraged by the US intervention and hoped that it foreshadowed a "tougher" attitude in keeping with their opinion that the problem of subversion should be attacked at the source. They would probably welcome US moves against Cuba. On the other hand, most of the sectors which opposed or were made uneasy by the US action in the Dominican Republic as a retrograde step in US-Latin American relations would probably tend to fear that a more aggressive US stance toward Cuba was part of a general administration policy of "cracking down" in Latin America. Therefore, their response probably would be unsympathetic. Although the Cuban regime has by no means been able to restore its image in Latin America as a result of the Dominican affair, it probably has made some gains in at least the short term in left sectors of the Hemisphere.

Within the United States, interest in the Cuban problem is at a very low ebb. The administration is not under significant domestic pressure to "do something"—beyond what it is now doing. In part, this attitude seems to be founded on the belief that matters are going reasonably well for us in Cuba. If this belief begins to wane, if events elsewhere in Latin America go against our interests and especially if such setbacks could be attributed in any way to Cuban activities, this acceptance of current administration policy could change, especially in 1966. An influential general factor here would be the results of our Vietnamese policy.

III. Advantages and Disadvantages of Paramilitary Activities As a Means of Pressure

A. *Principal Advantages*

1. Paramilitary activities have a considerably better chance of creating within Cuba the political, economic and psychological effects we have sought—and therefore of reducing the Cuban regime's ability to project itself externally—than the principal other means of increasing pressure available to us, i.e., the intensification of overt economic denial measures.

2. They provide an unmistakable signal to all concerned of our continuing opposition to the Cuban regime.

3. They can be justified, if necessary, in appropriate quarters as a response to the harder Cuban-Soviet line in Latin America, particularly in view of the long stand-down which can be presented as an unsuccessful attempt by us to elicit a similar slackening of Cuban subversion.

4. They may exacerbate Cuban-USSR relations, should Soviet response to Cuban requests for support be considered inadequate by Havana.

5. The risk of capture of participants is not appreciably greater than that involving infiltration/exfiltration teams, whose operations remain authorized.

6. It is possible that the resumption of paramilitary activities might inhibit any Cuban plans to become further involved in Vietnam (e.g., the dispatch of volunteers).

7. US involvement in the activities is to some degree deniable because of the personnel and techniques involved.

8. The activities take advantage of an existing capability, which over time is degraded through disuse.

9. Those elements in Latin America which are concerned about Cuba and Communist subversion would probably welcome the

resumption of activity as a sign of our determination to get rid of Castro.

B. Principal Disadvantages

1. It is impossible to predict with any assurance whether and to what degree paramilitary activities will in fact bring about the results hoped for within Cuba. The regime may be able to utilize the activities as a means of rallying political support against "imperialist aggression" and as an excuse to the Cuban people, the Soviets, and others (including Latin Americans) for its failures. Moreover, the erosion of the will to resist and the improvement of the security apparatus may have progressed beyond the point of no return.

2. There is no serious possibility of cloaking US involvement, whether or not missions go awry and personnel are captured.

3. If we decide it is necessary to suspend the activities in mid-course, the effects will probably be sharply negative and perhaps irreparable.

4. The resumption of paramilitary activities will probably stimulate uncontrolled exile groups to attempt to launch raids from US territory.

5. Such activities may strengthen rather than weaken Soviet-Cuban ties, particularly in the context of the Soviet-Chinese Communist conflict.

6. Subversive efforts in Latin America may be intensified in retaliation, and our own "dirty hands" may reduce our ability to obtain Latin American and other support for counter-action.

7. Paramilitary activities increase the risk of Cuban action against surveillance overflights.

8. They will probably reinforce the fears in some sectors in Latin America that the administration is embarked on a course of direct action throughout the Hemisphere.

IV. Conclusions

1. Under present levels of external pressure, the Cuban regime probably will become stronger and better entrenched.

2. The regime remains committed to the "export of revolution" and, in concert with the USSR, is attempting to make Communist subversive activities in Latin America more effective.

3. The stronger the regime becomes, the greater are the difficulties and dangers for US policy in Latin America.

4. In spite of the improvement in its position, the regime still confronts economic and political difficulties which constitute vulnerabilities and which indicate that we have not yet run out of time.

5. Increased pressure, either in the form of additional overt economic measures or of a resumption of paramilitary activities, offers some unmeasurable prospect of halting and in time reversing the trend in Cuba.

6. Of the two types of pressure, paramilitary activities provide a better chance of success.

7. In the past paramilitary activities, after a relatively brief trial, have been considered to be too costly politically in relation to their return and to the availability of other means of pressure believed at the time to be promising.

8. In order to maximize the chances of success, and to avoid the perhaps irreparable damage of suspension in mid-course, paramilitary activities have to be carried on steadily and progressively over a considerable period of time.

9. A decision to embark upon paramilitary activities carries with it an acceptance of their objective, a coup from within the power structure, the timing and nature of which we might well not control.

10. Under present circumstances, we have three gross policy options with respect to Cuba:

a. We can continue our present policy in full awareness that, barring some fortuitous development, we will probably lose ground in terms of both our Cuban and our Latin American objectives.

b. We can increase pressure, by either resuming paramilitary activities or taking additional economic measures (which are less costly, less risky and less effective), in the hope—whose realization cannot be assured—that we can arrest and eventually reverse the forward movement of the Cuban regime.

c. On the grounds that our present policy is no longer productive and that a policy of increased pressure is too uncertain, costly and risky, we can move toward accommodation and try to bring about a Titoist evolution of the Cuban regime, accepting in the process the probability of serious damage to our long-term interests, particularly in Latin America.

11. Of these options, a policy of increased pressure on Cuba provides the best protection for our position in Latin America.

12. Because it has a better chance of being successful than other available means of increasing pressure and in spite of the substantial costs and risks it clearly entails, the resumption of paramilitary activities against Cuba meets the needs of our Cuban and Latin American policies.

13. The resumption of these activities will certainly have positive and negative effects on the achievement of national objectives in areas of foreign policy beyond Latin America, and the net result of these effects must obviously be assessed.

V. Recommendations

ARA recommends that, provided that the benefits to our Cuban and Latin American policies are not clearly outweighed by disadvantages elsewhere,

1. You support the resumption of a sustained program of paramilitary activities, it being clearly understood that each operation will be subject to the authorization of the 303 Committee.

2. If you decide that the broad national interest would not be served by resumption,² you authorize in principle the initiation of additional measures of economic denial, it being understood of course that these measures would be subject to your approval.³

² For Rusk's response, see Document 306.

³ At the ARA–CIA meeting on August 11, John Hart from the CIA responded that the Senate paper “stated well the things the Agency wanted to get across.” He took exception to the view that paramilitary operations were merely a “pinprick;” he believed that none of these efforts had been really carried through. He also noted that Cubans “over-react” to these operations and therefore the disruptive effect was greater. Hart assured Vaughn renewed operations could be undertaken without “undue publicity” and fully under CIA control. (Memorandum from Carter to Hughes, August 12; Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meeting Reports)

305. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 85–65

Washington, August 19, 1965.

CUBA

The Problem

To estimate the Cuban situation and outlook over the next year or two.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, NIC Files, Job 79–R01012A, NIEs and SNIEs. Secret; Controlled Dissem. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Agency. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on August 19.

Conclusions

A. Castro's hold on power is firm; there is virtually no chance of his overthrow in the foreseeable future.

B. His regime has abandoned its ill conceived program for rapid industrialization and is concentrating on what Cuba can produce most readily—sugar. The economy is making some progress, though not enough to advance living conditions much during the next few years.

C. Recognizing that he has no alternative to further large-scale aid from the Soviet Union, Castro has moved politically closer to the Soviets and has cooled toward the Chinese Communists.

D. He no longer views all Latin America as on the brink of revolution, and will concentrate his clandestine support where revolutionaries are already active—in particular, Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru.

E. Both the Soviets and the Cubans will probably exercise caution to avoid any direct confrontation with the US in Latin America; thus Castro is not likely to use his SAMs to shoot down a U-2.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the estimate.]

306. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rusk to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)¹

Washington, August 30, 1965.

I am informed that you would like to have my views for presentation to the President on the CIA proposal to reactivate its paramilitary efforts against Cuba. While I believe it would be advisable for the CIA to keep open, so far as may be practicable, the option of renewing such activities in the future should circumstances warrant, I am strongly opposed to resumption of such operations at this time. I believe that with the current situation in the Dominican Republic and the status of the conflict in Viet-Nam, not to mention other problems around the world, we should not initiate the actions proposed which could well precipitate another crisis. Moreover, the proposed program

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Memos to Pres., McG Bundy, Vol. 14, Secret; Sensitive. Drafted by Thompson on August 30.

could well affect Soviet policies in a manner adverse to our interests. I should be glad to reconsider the matter should changes in circumstances so warrant.

As of possible interest, I attach a study of this question prepared by the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs of the Department,² which constitutes a useful statement of the problem from the point of view of our interests in the Western Hemisphere, but, as will be noted above, on the basis of our world-wide interests, I do not reach the same conclusions.

Dean Rusk³

² See Document 304.

³ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

307. Memorandum From Peter Jessup of the National Security Council Staff to President Johnson¹

Washington, September 22, 1965.

SUBJECT

Status of Proposed Reactivation of US Paramilitary Activities Against Castro

On June 2, 1965, Admiral Raborn, in the forum of the 303 Committee, requested the reactivation of the paramilitary effort² against Cuba on a highly selective basis. The CIA argued as follows:

1. Castro is supporting and encouraging active or potential insurgent groups in 14 Latin American nations as well as several in Africa. Cuba is a privileged sanctuary within the Western hemisphere from which Communist subversive efforts are launched.
2. Castro defiance of the US strengthens ultra-nationalist and pro-Communist movements in the hemisphere.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Memos to Pres., McG Bundy, Vol. 14. Secret. Sent to the President under a covering memorandum, in which Bundy "reluctantly" agreed with Rusk and McNamara, and asked the President whether he wished to "Let it go" or whether they "should take the matter up at an early lunch." The President checked the latter option. A notation in Bundy's handwriting reads: "P.S. President heard negative argument on Sept. 29 and agreed to drop matter for now."

² See footnote 2, Document 302.

3. Although time is on Castro's side, he is still vulnerable. Many divisive forces are at work within Cuba.

4. Reactivation of selective paramilitary harassment at this time is our best means to cost him heavily in money and manpower at a highly critical time and reduce his capability to export revolution.

5. CIA has in being a small paramilitary mechanism composed of Cubans which can mount carefully selected operations which can destroy installations and facilities with loss of life held to a minimum while economic damage is maximized.

6. The program envisaged would include:

- a. sabotage of Cuban ships in Cuban ports
- b. maritime raids on coastal targets
- c. deception operations to keep Cuban defenses on costly alert.

The Department of State examined this proposal; the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs (ARA) supported the CIA reasoning.³ They felt that of all possible methods, paramilitary activities have the best chance of creating within Cuba the political, economic, and psychological effects we seek. Reactivation of these operations would provide an unmistakable signal to all concerned of our continuing opposition to Castro. The stronger the regime becomes, the greater the difficulties and danger for US policy in Latin America.

ARA concluded that we can 1) continue our present "limited" policy and probably lose ground; 2) we can increase pressure and perhaps arrest and eventually reverse the forward movement of the Cuban regime; 3) we can move forward toward an accommodation. . . . Of these options, the policy of increased pressure provides the best protection of our position in Latin America.

On 30 August, the Secretary of State made known his views in the attached memorandum.⁴ He is "strongly opposed to resumption of such operations at this time" for reasons he makes clear in the attached single page memorandum.

On 20 September, Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance confirmed that he and Mr. McNamara hold the same opinion as Mr. Rusk.

Peter Jessup⁵

³ See Document 304.

⁴ See Document 306.

⁵ Bundy initialed under Jessup's signature.

308. Editorial Note

On September 28, 1965, Fidel Castro stated that Cubans desiring to go to the United States would be permitted to do so, and he declared that exiles wishing to come and pick up their relatives at the Port of Camarioca would be free to do so after October 10. There followed a chaotic rush of small boats from Florida to Camarioca.

On October 3, at a previously scheduled signing of an immigration bill at Liberty Island, New York, President Johnson declared "to the people of Cuba that those who seek refuge here in America will find it." Noting the dedication of Americans to the tradition of giving asylum to oppressed people, he directed the Departments of State, Justice, and Health, Education, and Welfare "to immediately make all the necessary arrangements to permit those in Cuba who seek freedom to make an orderly entry into the United States." Johnson stated that priority would be given to immediate relatives and requested the assistance of the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross "in processing the movement of the refugees from Cuba to Miami." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*, Book II, page 1039) In an October 6 memorandum to the President, Bundy stated that "Castro seems to have misread, deliberately or otherwise, your Statue of Liberty statement, interpreting it to mean that we wanted to conduct all negotiations through the Red Cross. We have pointed out to him through the Swiss that this is *not* the case. A note to Castro setting forth our position on modalities for the movement of refugees is going to the Swiss Embassy in Havana today." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Files of McGeorge Bundy, Daily Regional Staff Reports to President)

The first of the refugees with family members in the United States began arriving in Florida by small boat in October. By October 18 the number had exceeded 700. As Bundy stated in an October 14 memorandum to the President, "we took special measures to persuade Cubans in southern Florida to wait until orderly arrangements could be worked out. We have been largely successful in obtaining their cooperation." Bundy noted that the previous night "the Cubans had replied to our note outlining procedures for handling the flow of refugees. They indicated a willingness to start operations right away. We had expressed a desire to keep the flow to about 3,000 per month, but they said they preferred a 12,000 rate. They said that men of military age (15–26 years) would not be allowed out, but agreed to our priority of immediate family members. They want to make up the lists of persons to depart, but they explicitly recognized our right to veto persons on the lists. They do not want the Red Cross to participate, noting that the Swiss can do what is necessary." Bundy concluded by stat-

ing that the U.S. Government would "concentrate on getting agreement where agreement is possible, while insisting on orderly procedures for movement." (Ibid.)

Negotiations with Castro through the Swiss Embassy in Havana resulted in the United States and Cuba exchanging notes on November 6 formalizing a Memorandum of Understanding covering procedures for the movement of refugees from Cuba to the United States. It called for the departure of between 3,000 and 4,000 Cubans per month in an airlift provided by the U.S. Government, departing from Varadero Airport, 85 miles east of Havana. The understanding contained no time limitation. The Cuban Government wanted two modifications inserted into the Memorandum of Understanding involving the exclusion of men of military age and also technicians and professional persons. The United States refused to incorporate the "two points" into the memorandum, and the Cuban Government finally agreed to refer to its prohibition on the departure of military age men, certain technicians, and political prisoners in supplemental notes to the general Memorandum of Understanding. Details of the U.S.-Cuba negotiations formalizing the Memorandum of Understanding are in the Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. I, 4/64-1/66, including an October 28 memorandum from Bowdler to Bundy, and the text of a note delivered by the Cuban Foreign Ministry to the Swiss Embassy in Havana on October 19.

The United States continued to insist that the Camarioca boat traffic had to be reduced, controlled, and eventually eliminated. On October 28 the Cuban Ministry of Interior announced that as of midnight that day, no more boats would be allowed to dock at Camarioca to pick up relatives. This action slowed the southward flow of boats, but some 300 small boats already anchored at Camarioca continued to move northward. Finally, on November 4, as agreement on the understanding became imminent, the Cuban Government announced that as of noon that day it would permit no further departure of Cuban citizens from Camarioca. (Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Historian, Research Memorandum No. 1230, May 20, 1980)

On November 13 the U.S. Government began a sealift evacuation of the 2,000 stranded refugees at Camarioca by chartered vessels. The sealift was completed on November 24 when the last eligible Camarioca refugees were brought to the United States. The shift from sealift to airlift took place as scheduled on December 1. The airlift operated on the basis of two flights per day, 5 days a week, carrying an average of 4,000 persons each month from Varadero to Miami, Florida. In all, 9,268 refugees arrived from Cuba during 1965. Of these, 3,349 came in December via the airlift arranged by the United States and Cuban Governments. (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*, Book II, page 1040) As of December 1, 1968, the airlift

had brought 131,372 Cuban refugees to the United States. (Paper prepared by John F. Fitzgerald, December 10, 1968; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Miscellaneous Correspondence, FitzGerald, Oct–Dec 1968) The airlift continued until April 1973, by which time a total of 260,737 refugees had entered the United States. (Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Historian, Research Memorandum No. 1230, May 20, 1980)

The airlift provided a major new transportation link, since after the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 all direct commercial air transportation between the United States and Cuba had been suspended, although some people could arrange transportation through Mexico or Spain. “Several hundred thousand Cubans apparently registered their desire to leave Cuba when the airlift began or shortly thereafter.” (Paper prepared by FitzGerald, December 10, 1968; National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Miscellaneous Correspondence, FitzGerald, Oct–Dec, 1968) The Cuban Government stopped accepting new registration for the airlift in May 1966 (see Document 309). By December 1968, there were still thousands on this list awaiting departure.

**309. Memorandum From the President’s Special Assistant
(Rostow) to President Johnson¹**

Washington, May 25, 1966.

SUBJECT

Incidents at the Guantanamo Naval Base

In the past four days there have been two reported incidents of Cuban penetration of the Guantanamo Base perimeter. They are reminiscent of a rash (7) of such incidents last March.

Night of May 21–22

A Marine sentry at about 7:00 p.m. observed an armed Cuban soldier on the Base side of the fence. The sentry reports that he challenged him and fired a warning shot which the intruder ignored. A second

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. 2, 2/66–7/67. Confidential. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

shot wounded him. It is not clear whether the Cuban was on the Base side of the fence when this shot was fired. The Cuban soldier involved in the incident was probably the one which the Cuban Government alleges was killed by the Marines while at his post on the Cuban side of the fence.

Night of May 23–24

At about midnight a Marine patrol sighted six armed Cuban soldiers in the salt flats area inside the Base perimeter. The Cubans reportedly fired four rounds at the Marines and fled over the fence. The Marines fired back with seven rounds. Our men were not hit. We have no report on the Cubans. But there is no evidence that they were hit.

Relation to Refugee Flights

At present there is no indication that these incidents are in any way related to the Cuban suspension of refugee flights last Friday. The suspension was deliberate. But the reasons are not yet clear. Administrative delays in shifting from Category "A" refugees (immediate family members) to Category "B" (all others wishing to come) is not a sufficient explanation.

Since the airlift started last December 1, almost 22,000 Cuban refugees in the "A" Category have arrived. The Cuban Government claims that there are no more persons in this particular group who wish to come. We know otherwise—HEW has close to 50,000 Category "A" applications.

We told the Cubans last week that we are prepared to start with Category "B" refugees, so that the record is clear that any delay—or suspension—is not our doing.

There are several as yet inconclusive indicators that the Cubans would like to close down the airlift if they could find a means to shift the onus on us. State is alive to this and will not get mouse-trapped.

Walt

310. Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee¹

Washington, November 18, 1966.

SUBJECT

CIA Survey of Its Cuban Operations

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the members of the 303 Committee of the results of a survey of CIA's Cuban operations undertaken in recent months, and to solicit the Committee's ratification of the proposed amendment in the program.

2. In February² 1966, the 303 Committee ratified the Agency's program of action³ against the Castro regime. This program consisted of the following courses of action:

- a. Covert collection of intelligence for strategic requirements.
- b. Covert collection of counterintelligence and the use of this information to counter Cuban efforts to export the revolution.
- c. Intelligence and covert action operations; the former designed to detect, and the latter to exploit discontent, within the military and other key power centers.
- d. Economic warfare operations designed to further weaken the economy.
- e. Covert actions, including propaganda, designed to stimulate discontent, to maintain the spirit of resistance, at least to some degree, and to maintain the isolation of Cuba.

3. It should be noted that, in contrast with earlier CIA programs, the objective of the program described in the February 1966 memorandum was to contain the Castro regime rather than to undermine it.

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Secret; Eyes Only.

² "22 March" is handwritten above this date in the memorandum.

³ In a March 23 memorandum to Gordon, Koren noted that "The following item is contained in a Memorandum for the Record, dated 22 March 1966, subject: Telephonic Approvals by 303 Committee Principals: 'The CIA paper 'CIA Program of Action against Cuba' dated 21 February 1966 was noted without comment.'" (All *ibid.*) The February 21 CIA paper informed the members of the 303 Committee that the CIA's program of covert actions, including propaganda, covert collection of intelligence, covert collection of counterintelligence, and economic warfare against Cuba continued, despite "apathy and disillusionment" being "particularly noticeable in agent motivation." It noted that two related programs had "met with success during the past year," including "an energetic effort to encourage the defection of key personnel such as diplomats, industrial and commercial experts, and merchant marine officers." It also noted that "Limited financial assistance is provided to several émigré political organizations, with 303 Committee approval, to keep these nuclei of resistance alive."

4. The CIA survey concluded that the courses of action approved by the 303 Committee in February 1966 are still valid, but that a change in emphasis on certain aspects is required. Specifically as a result of the survey, CIA plans to take the following actions:

a. Increase emphasis on the collection of intelligence and counterintelligence through operations in third countries. This is necessary because of the quantitative and qualitative improvement in the Cuban security services which has resulted in increasing difficulty in creating and maintaining in-place assets in Cuba. The decline in the productivity of agents recruited by means of infiltration operations exemplifies this problem.

b. Because of the decreasing effectiveness of intelligence infiltration operations it is planned to limit these to those essential to exfiltrate agents who are in difficulties in Cuba, to provide support to inside assets, and to infiltrate teams for intelligence purposes only on limited occasions in order to gain access to high priority targets.

c. To revise the total output of written and radio propaganda directed at Cuba, retaining those portions of the current program which are currently effective, and eliminating those portions which have become outdated because of the erosion of time and changes in the situation. The revision of the program will involve an overall quantitative reduction, but is not expected to affect the impact within Cuba appreciably. The proposal envisages elimination or reduction of support to certain specialized exile groups, such as jurists, students, and teachers. Also under active consideration is the possibility of substituting use of commercial radio stations located in the U.S. for the present radio broadcast facility maintained [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*].

d. No changes in other aspects of the program are contemplated.

5. The proposed changes in emphasis will not materially affect CIA's capability to accomplish the limited containment objective cited above. They will result in significant savings in money and manpower, however.⁴

6. The Castro Government and the exile groups, as well as the Latin American republics, may note and incorrectly interpret this change in emphasis as a reduction in U.S. determination to restore Cuba to its rightful position as a member of the Western community of

⁴ In a November 23 memorandum to Thompson, Gordon recommended that the CIA proposal be supported in the 303 Committee. Gordon noted that the CIA intended to cut down its 24-hour-a-day propaganda broadcasts to Cuba to 4-6 hours of comparatively high-quality material. Gordon also noted that the Agency intended to maintain "on an active basis six highly trained and expert infiltration teams (out of a one-time maximum of 25) on which it can rely for intelligence collection purposes." (Ibid.)

nations. It is believed that such an interpretation can be effectively thwarted in part by more sophisticated radio programming and by one or more authoritative restatements of policy by appropriate U.S. officials.

7. It is recommended that the 303 Committee ratify the proposed changes⁵ in emphasis in the CIA program.

⁵ According to a November 28 memorandum for the record, the committee approved the paper as presented. [*name not declassified*] of the CIA answered questions about the paper and, according to these minutes, estimated that the finely honed program would result in savings of approximately \$2,000,000. (Ibid.)

311. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 85–67

Washington, March 2, 1967.

KEY ISSUES AND PROSPECTS FOR CASTRO'S CUBA

The Problem

To estimate the outlook over the next two years.

Conclusions

A. The Castro revolution has survived adversity, but it has not prospered. Increasingly the regime is keying its hopes for major material progress to the more distant future, when it expects the economic and social impact of its large-scale education and long-term economic programs to be felt.

B. The level of the economy in 1966 was only slightly above that reached in 1958, the last prerevolutionary year; per capita private consumption was down nearly 25 percent, though favored groups in the population were better off. Economic gains in 1967 and 1968 will probably be minor, with little or no improvement in living conditions.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NIEs, 85, Cuba. Secret; Controlled Dissem. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Agency. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on March 2.

C. Fidel will almost certainly persist in providing encouragement and training support to "anti-imperialist" and insurgent movements abroad, and in extending material aid to a few of them. Poor prospects for success in Latin America help to account for his increased support to revolutionary elements in Africa, where there are more opportunities and fewer risks.

D. Differences about Communist revolutionary tactics and the amount of aid required by Cuba will continue to produce frictions in the Cuban-Soviet relationship. But Cuba remains important to the Soviets; they have little practical choice except to keep backing Fidel.

E. Castro has continued the process of institutionalizing his revolution and has talked of sharing more responsibility with his inner circle of colleagues. We believe that he will remain clearly preeminent, however, and his hold on power will remain strong.

F. In the unlikely event of Fidel's death or incapacitation during the next two years, a collegium headed by his brother Raúl and President Dorticós would probably take control. We doubt that this arrangement could long endure; at some point it would probably give way to a power struggle of unpredictable outcome. However, we know of no basis for supposing that a resulting new government would fundamentally change the domestic political and economic system. The effect on Cuba's foreign affairs is beyond useful speculation.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the estimate.]

312. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson¹

Washington, March 7, 1967, 8 p.m.

SUBJECT

Report of Soviet Strategic Missiles in Cuba

I have checked the charges made by Paul Bethel before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee today that there are Soviet strategic missiles in Cuba.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Strategic Missiles in Cuba. Secret.

Dick Helms has furnished me the following judgment passed by the United States Intelligence Board on March 2, 1967:

“We do not believe that the Soviets will again try to turn Cuba into a strategic base of their own, as in 1962. We think it highly unlikely that the USSR will attempt to reintroduce strategic missiles into Cuba.² We recognize that the Soviets have the technical capability clandestinely to reintroduce the components of a strategic weapon system. But the build-up of strategic forces in the USSR in recent years would make the installation of strategic weapons in Cuba of less significance to the Soviet strategic posture than in 1962. In any event, we believe that the risk of another grave confrontation with the US would be unacceptable to the Soviets.”

You should know that Paul Bethel is a propagandist who for the past five years has traded on his brief experience in our Embassy in Havana to make a living out of the Cuban issue. What he told the Subcommittee today is the same tale which he has repeatedly published in his newsletter and tells everybody who is willing to listen to him. The sources for his charges are the same Cuban refugees who passed through our intelligence screening process in Miami. What they tell our interviewers is critically examined by experts. Bethel accepts the stories without critical evaluation.

I am having State do an assessment of other charges made in his testimony. You will see from this how wild and irresponsible Bethel can be.³

Walt

² In an April 18 memorandum to the Director of Central Intelligence, Thomas H. Young, Jr., Acting Chairman of the CIA–DIA Team, reported that “we have received no intelligence which changes our conclusions that there are no strategic weapons or nuclear warheads in Cuba.” (OCI No. 1092/67; *ibid.*, Bowdler File, Vol. II, 2/66–7/67)

³ A handwritten postscript by Rostow on the memorandum reads: “P.S. Nevertheless, I’m going to make one more personal check-out tomorrow.” Below this line Johnson wrote: “W—I want more study given this by our best and report back to me.”

313. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Chile¹

Washington, April 22, 1967, 5:38 p.m.

180698. Sugarcane. Eyes Only for the Ambassador from Secretary.

At Punta del Este Valdez² spoke to me about Cuba and seemed to think that there are now some differences of view in Havana which might be open to probing. I told him what I had many months ago told Carrillo Flores of Mexico. The attitude of the United States remains that indicated by President Kennedy, namely, that Cuba could find its way back to the Hemisphere if it (a) stopped its interference in the affairs of other American states by agents, arms and propaganda, and (b) severed its military association with the Soviet Union. I said that the internal organization of Cuba is not the crucial obstacle but that these two primary external forces were fundamental. As you will recall, these have been the two key points all along. I added to Valdez that we have seen no real evidence that Castro is prepared to change his attitude on either point. Indeed, he seems to be differing with Moscow on the question of interference in other countries. Nonetheless, I told Valdez I saw no objection to any most secret probes which he might wish to undertake and that if he got anything of interest coming back we would be glad to know about it. I further said that we would set up this special channel between you and me in order to assure maximum secrecy and that he could be entirely frank in passing on to you, and to you alone, anything that develops.³

Regards.

Rusk

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL CHILE-US. Secret; Nodis. Drafted and approved by Rusk.

² Gabriel Valdez Subercaseaux, Chilean Foreign Minister.

³ Dungan reported to Rusk, in telegram 283 from Santiago, July 26, that Valdez had said the previous day that "there had been no developments significant enough to pass on to you." Valdez stated that the Cubans had been interested in knowing whether the Chilean probe was being made with the knowledge of the U.S. Government and that they were told that "this strictly Chilean initiative." Dungan concluded the telegram by stating that it was his impression "that matter is not being pushed aggressively." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL CHILE-US)

314. Action Memorandum From the Chairman of the Policy Planning Council (Owen) to Secretary of State Rusk¹

Washington, May 2, 1967.

SUBJECT

US Policy Toward Castro's Cuba

A review of our Cuba policy seems very much needed.

Our present policy of economic denial and political isolation through OAS action has contributed to Castro's difficulties, but has not shaken his grip on power. It may indeed be running into considerable difficulty. In any event, after six years it is only prudent to ask whether this policy will be the best means of advancing our national interests under the conditions which may prevail in the future.

A policy review might well conclude that, all things considered, no fundamental change is required. Various alternative strategies could, however, usefully be explored. For example, the manner and consequences of applying considerably increased pressure on the Castro regime, and the opportunities and risks involved in seeking some accommodation could both be studied.

Without a thorough evaluation, however, we do not have the basis for recommending any of these courses of action on Cuba. The NPP (National Policy Papers) would seem to offer the best framework for such a study: they are well established, interagency, comprehensive, and authoritative.

We would, of course, keep strict security on the fact of this review.

Recommendation:

That you approve the undertaking of an NPP on Cuba.²

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, S/P Country Files: Lot 72 D 139, Cuba, 1967–1968. Secret. Drafted by Henry D. Owens and cleared by Sayre.

² Approved by Rusk on May 15. In a September 8 memorandum to Jessup, Trueheart noted that "the study is just now getting under way." (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 303 Committee Records)

315. Editorial Note

In a May 23, 1967, memorandum for the record Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency J. S. Earman indicated that beginning April 24 he transmitted in installments a 133-page report to Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms on plots to assassinate Fidel Castro. A copy of the report is in the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 233, JFK Assassination Collection, Microfilm File 104-10184-10001, CIA Files, Job 80-T01357A, Box JFK64, Folder R48-ZZ. After reading a March 7, 1967, column by Drew Pearson that alleged the United States attempted to assassinate Castro, President Johnson directed Helms to conduct an investigation. (*Interim Report of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities*, Report No. 94-465, "Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders," November 20, 1975, page 179) The result was the Inspector General's Report of April 24, 1967, which clearly indicated that the CIA was in contact with and cooperated with Major Rolando Cubela of the Cuban military in plans to assassinate Fidel Castro. The operation was known as Project AMLASH. After receiving the report, Helms orally briefed the President about its contents. According to his testimony before the Select Committee, when asked by the Committee if he had told the President "that efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro had continued into Johnson's Presidency, Helms replied, 'I just can't answer that, I just don't know. I can't recall having done so.'" ("Alleged Assassination Plots," page 179) When asked whether President Johnson had been informed of or had authorized continuing efforts to assassinate Castro, Helms replied: "The Special Group would have continued to consider these matters, and I would have assumed that whoever was chairing the Special Group would have in turn reported to the President, which was the usual practice." (*Ibid.*, page 180)

The records of the Special Group for the Johnson administration do not record any consideration, authorization, or involvement by the United States in any plot to assassinate Castro during the Johnson administration, even though the CIA had a relationship with Cubela. Special Group/303 Committee Records of June–August 1964 indicate only that, in regard to rumors of Cuban émigré assassination plots against Castro and selected Cuban leaders, McCone and McGeorge Bundy were to inform Attorney General Kennedy to use U.S. law enforcement agencies to prevent such plans. (Minutes of Special Group Meetings, June 18, 1964, and July 30, 1964; Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records) The June 18, 1964, Minutes of a 303 Committee meeting read: "Mr. McCone was somewhat skeptical of the reported plots and stated that he would like

to go into the matter further. Others, including Mr. Bundy, felt that the United States was being put on notice and should do everything in its power to ascertain promptly the veracity of the reports and then undertake prevention. It was decided that Mr. Bundy would call the matter to the Attorney General's attention as a matter of law enforcement." (Ibid., Minutes of the June 18, 1964, meeting) Following an FBI investigation that dismissed the reported exile assassination plans, McCone sent Bundy an August 19 memorandum reviewing the investigation and agreeing with the FBI analysis. (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Exile Activities, Vol. I, 11/63–7/65)

In the minutes of the Special Group/303 Committee meeting on January 7, 1965, a CIA January 6 paper acknowledges Rolando Cubela only as "a representative of an internal military dissident group, which is plotting to overthrow Castro." The minutes indicate the Committee members asked, "What sort of man is Cubela?" See Document 295 and footnotes 3 and 4 thereto.

The Select Committee concluded: "the records of the Special Group do not show any consideration of Castro's assassination or of the AMLASH plot during the Johnson administration (or earlier) and there was no other evidence that McCone or anyone above the Agency was informed of or specifically authorized the AMLASH plots." ("Alleged Assassination Plots," page 180)

The CIA Inspector General's Report of April 24, 1967, provides considerable information about Project AMLASH during the Johnson administration. The Report indicates that a CIA officer was passing an assassination weapon, a ballpoint pen rigged with a hypodermic needle for Black Leaf 40 poison, to Rolando Cubela, AMLASH-1, at the very hour that President Kennedy was shot. (Inspector General's Report, pages 93–95)

The Inspector General's report provides background on Rolando Cubela Secades, the second-ranking leader of the Directorio Revolucionario (DR) 13 de Marzo, an elite group of leftist students founded in 1956 to organize violence to overthrow the Batista regime. (Ibid., pages 78–79) Although close to Castro, Cubela became disenchanted with him. When the CIA first contacted him in March of 1961 in Mexico City, Cubela was non-committal, but he soon began to insist that the essential first step in overthrowing the Cuban regime was the elimination of Castro himself, which Cubela stated he was prepared to accomplish. (Ibid., pages 79–90)

After the aborted ballpoint poison pen incident, Cubela attempted to obtain a silencer for a Belgian FAL submachine gun, but the CIA was unable to produce one in time to be included in an arms cache drop. (Ibid., page 97) On December 6–7, 1964, in Paris, the CIA informed Cubela that the United States could no longer be involved in

the attempted assassination of Castro and that he would have to get help elsewhere in this respect. ("Alleged Assassination Plots," page 89; Inspector General's Report, page 100) Instead, the CIA put Cuban exile leader Manuel Artime and Cubela together in such a way that neither knew that the contact had been engineered by the Agency. "The thought was that Artime needed a man inside and Cubela wanted a silenced weapon, which CIA was unwilling to furnish to him directly. CIA did not intend to furnish an assassination weapon for Artime to give to Cubela, and did not do so." (Inspector General's Report, pages 100–101) Artime and Cubela met in Madrid on December 27 and December 30, 1964, where Artime agreed to provide a silencer to Cubela. (Ibid., pages 101–102) In Madrid on February 10–12, 1965, Cubela met Artime and reportedly received a Belgian FAL rifle with silencer and a pistol with silencer. Also during February 1965, Cubela requested financial assistance from several CIA officers for emergency travel expenses, and was given a total of \$8,200. (Ibid., page 106)

According to the Inspector General's Report, "On June 25, 1965, headquarters sent a cable to the stations concerned directing termination of contact with members of the Cubela group. It read in part: 'convincing proof that entire AMLASH group insecure and that future contact with key members of group constitutes menace to CIA operations against Cuba as well as to security of CIA Staff personnel in Western Europe. Under circumstances headquarters desires that contact work with key members of the group be eliminated as rapidly as possible, and that assets who may be in contact with individual members of the group or peripherally involved in AMLASH conspiracy be warned of danger implicit in these associations and directed to eliminate contacts ASAP.'" (Ibid., page 106) The CIA decided to terminate all contacts with the Cubela group, after it became apparent "that the circle of Cubans who knew of Cubela's plans and of CIA's association with them was ever-widening." (Ibid., pages 104–105) In March 1966, Cubela was arrested by Cuban security police, confessed his guilt, and, after Castro's written request to the prosecutor that the death penalty not be imposed, was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. (Ibid., pages 107–111)

316. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Oliver) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Kohler)¹

Washington, October 3, 1967.

SUBJECT

Travel to Cuba

Background:

As I am certain you know, one of the continuing concerns of this Bureau has been with the implementation of the Department's controls on the travel of U.S. citizens to Cuba. The Under Secretary spoke to me a short time ago on the general subject of travel controls.² He said that although he agreed with the position we had taken in several recent instances, such as the Cheddi Jagan case, he thought that possibly ARA's position on travel to Cuba was unnecessarily severe.

With this in mind, I thought it might be appropriate to outline to you our problems and views on this subject.

Our Current Practice on Cuban Travel:

Restrictions exist on the travel of American citizens to North Vietnam, North Korea and Communist China, as well as to Cuba. Under the current implementing rules (Tab A),³ exceptions to these restrictions relate to such categories as professional journalists, medical and public health specialists, and graduate scholars needing to do research in Cuba connected with their specialties. Other cases—including those involving humanitarian factors—are considered on a discretionary basis.

Journalists and scholars, of course, constitute the bulk of applications for waivers to our travel restrictions. As I understand it, SCA's position is that journalists, for example, constitute a *mandatory* exception, but it is supposed to be necessary for applicants to show (1) that they are established journalists who earn the greater part of their living through this profession and (2) that they are going to Cuba only

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, Oct–Dec 1967. Confidential. Drafted by Fitzgerald (ARA/CCA) and Oliver.

² No record of this conversation has been found.

³ Attached but not printed, Tab A, the Department of State's July 11, 1966, Press Release No. 163, restated the Department's guidelines relating to travel ban exceptions, added a new category of applicants, and restated the main criteria that such travel "be in the national interest of the United States."

for reporting purposes. In determining the application of these two factors to each case, SCA normally requests the views of our Coordinator of Cuban Affairs (ARA/CCA). Until recently, if that office interposed strong objections to an application, SCA either accepted these objections or deferred a final decision on the validation of the applicant's passport until CCA had had an opportunity to present its views in detail.

The celebration of Cuba's National Day on July 26 this year and the LASO (Latin American Solidarity Organization) conference which began on July 31 resulted in a flood of applications for journalist travel to Cuba. Our present concern over the handling of those applications arose when it became clear that ARA's role, as outlined above, was being seriously eroded to the point where, in a number of the most doubtful cases, passports were validated despite the fact that CCA had raised strong objections, in some cases without informing CCA of the action taken. I have attached (Tab B)⁴ a summary of several case examples.

ARA's View on Cuban Travel:

Our concern with the present way in which these applications are being handled does not stem from any innate desire on the part of this Bureau to be simply "hard-nosed". As a general rule, I personally believe that "the truth will out" and that any increase in the flow of information or opinions eventually will work to our advantage. However, I hardly need point out that the way in which we carry out the various aspects of our policy toward Cuba directly affects our relations with other Latin American countries. The application of our own restrictions on travel to Cuba is no exception to this rule.

It is part of our basic policy, and that of the OAS, to isolate Cuba, not only to cut down the movement of subversives, but also for political, economic and psychological reasons. This policy was reiterated strongly by the OAS Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Washington September 22-24, 1967. In connection with the recent LASO conferences, we made strenuous efforts to encourage Latin American governments to inhibit travel to that meeting. As a result, even Mexico, which has never broken relations with Cuba, cooperated with us with surprising effectiveness.

However, because of our leadership in the area of Hemispheric policy toward Cuba, the Latin Americans continually search for, and are quick to point out, any inconsistency, real or imagined, in our words and deeds. We are constantly enjoined by them to "practice what we preach". The presence of so many U.S. enthusiasts for the Castro regime

⁴ Attached but not printed.

who have been *authorized* by the Department to travel to Cuba inevitably raises questions in the minds of other Latin American governments.

All of this does not, of course, argue for no travel to Cuba. But it does I hope point up the fact that this Bureau has a central responsibility in determining the *scope* of our waiver policy; that our interest stems not simply from the fact that Cuba is within the geographic zone of this Bureau but more importantly, that U.S. actions on the matter of Cuban travel affect ARA's responsibilities elsewhere in Latin America.

I do not intend that we in ARA become simply "no sayers". But at the same time we must put forward our views when the situation warrants and, to do this, we need to be certain that full consideration will be given to them. I regret to say that as the system of considering applications for waivers now operates, we do not believe our views are being given the consideration due them.

I have seen enough of human institutions to know that a policy is sometimes changed without admitting it, by lowering the intensity of its administration. On the whole I think this is a poor way to make foreign policy. If a change in our policy on travel to Cuba is desired, then the Department ought to face up to that possibility, instead of fudging on operations under existing policy.

Summary:

Cuba has announced that early next year it will host a conference of "artists, scholars and writers" and that a conference of journalists is scheduled for July 1968. I can assure you now that we intend to cooperate as fully as possible with all interested offices to make certain that within existing USG policies toward Cuba, our travel regulations are applied in such a way as to serve our own best interests. At the same time, I hope that we can look forward to an improvement in the present method of reviewing applications for waivers in order to ensure that ARA's views on each case are taken into account.

317. Memorandum From William G. Bowdler of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow)¹

Washington, December 18, 1967.

SUBJECT

Cuba

Last Friday I had a most interesting talk with CIA's new man in Cuba. He is Dave Phillips—one of their more sophisticated operators who performed so well in the DR following the 1965 revolt.

Dave is revamping the Cuban operation. The apparatus mounted following the Bay of Pigs is obsolete. It was aimed at stimulating Castro's overthrow from the outside with propaganda, infiltrators, supplies, etc. For this purpose they had a large and not well-camouflaged establishment in Miami. The Miami operation is being phased out. The sizeable sea-borne infiltration-exfiltration capability is being dismantled and a small, more efficient one established for stand-by use. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] is being discontinued.²

The new emphasis is on developing contacts within Castro's inner circle. We need to know more about who his main advisers are and what they are thinking. If there is to be a change in Cuba, it is more likely to come from defections in this group. If Castro were to start looking for accommodation, one of them would be the first to know and probably the channel for feelers.

Dave agrees that Castro finds himself increasingly hemmed in. The loss of "Che" and the insurgency effort in Bolivia on the heels of the big LASO splash has been a serious blow. The outlook for the sugar

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. III, 8/67-3/68. Secret; Sensitive.

² In a December 6 memorandum to Kohler, Trueheart noted that the CIA was "set to phase out [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] the end of the fiscal year and to initiate, in its stead, broadcasts directed to Cuba from various privately owned stations" in the Caribbean area, including Costa Rica and Venezuela. Trueheart added that the "programs would be more temperate than those broadcast from [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]" but that they would "play up matters embarrassing to the Cuban regime to an extent that would be difficult for VOA." Trueheart also noted that he had notified the 303 Committee Secretariat that the Department of State approved the termination of the infiltration/exfiltration operations against Cuba. (Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records) In a December 12 memorandum to Oliver, Trueheart noted that the minutes of the December 8 303 Committee meeting stated that "the decision to discontinue these operations and maintain a skeleton force was approved." (ibid.)

crop this year is not good: only 5–5.5 million tons. Cuba is committed to deliver 5 million to the USSR alone. Relations with the Soviets are probably the testiest since the missile crisis, as reflected by Cuba's actions during the 50th anniversary ceremonies.

All this makes it most important that we:

- develop our intelligence on what is going on inside the regime.
- be alert to indications that Castro is looking for accommodation or his disillusioned lieutenants want to know where we stand if they move to dump him.

I am happy to see as politically sensitive an operator as Dave Phillips on the Cuban job at this time.³

WGB

³ A notation in Rostow's handwriting in the top right hand corner of the page reads "WB. Good."

318. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson¹

Washington, December 22, 1967.

SUBJECT

US-Cuban Relations

Attached is a memorandum given to Secretary Rusk by the Spanish Ambassador on December 21² reporting on a conversation between a special Spanish emissary and Fidel Castro on US-Cuban relations.

In a conversation with the Spanish Foreign Minister last month, Secretary Rusk asked if Spanish diplomats in Havana were in contact with Castro. The Secretary noted that it would perhaps be beneficial if they were to remind Castro that there are only two issues in our relations with Cuba which we regard as non-negotiable: (1) Cuban intervention and guerrilla activities in other Latin American countries and (2) the

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. III, 8/67–3/68. Secret; Eyes Only. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² Attached but not printed.

presence of Soviet arms on Cuban soil. The US, on the other hand, had no interest in interfering in Cuba's internal political situation.

It was not the Secretary's intention that the Spanish send a special emissary to Castro, but in their eagerness to be a bridge, they did. Castro received him promptly and listened intently. Castro was puzzled by the overture ("Why would the Americans think of this now?", he asked) but did not reject it. He said he wanted to analyze carefully the motives and timing of the message before responding. Predictably, Castro used the opportunity to recite all his grievances against the US.

Castro promised to maintain utmost discretion about the approach and to use the same channel for any response he may decide to make.

The Spaniards have taken what Secretary Rusk intended to be a low-key reminder to Castro of our position and, for self-serving reasons, escalated it to a special message delivered by a special envoy. As long as there are no leaks, this may prove to be an interesting and useful exercise. If it gets out that the US has taken the initiative in putting out accommodation feelers to Castro, it may prove embarrassing to us in Latin America and on the domestic political front. We have asked State to handle the matter on a most restrictive basis.

Walt

319. Memorandum From the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs (Fitzgerald) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Walden)¹

Washington, April 2, 1968.

SUBJECT

Current Committee Data

REF

Memorandum of 3/18/68 to you from O/MS²

The only committee pertinent to ARA/CCA is the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Cuba, of which I am chairman.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, POL Misc. Working Papers, 1966-1968. Secret.

² Attached but not printed.

This was established pursuant to National Security Action Memorandum No. 213 (Secret) of January 8, 1963, of which a copy is attached.³ NSAM 213 specified that this committee should be chaired by the Department's Coordinator of Cuban Affairs whose position was also created pursuant to NSAM 213. The other agencies on the Committee are the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency, currently represented by Deputy Assistant Secretary William Lang (ISA) and Mr. William Broe. Other agencies may be associated with the Committee's work as necessary in particular cases.

It is recommended that the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Cuba now be eliminated⁴ inasmuch as the establishment in the intervening period of the SIG/IRG mechanism provides an instrument for interdepartmental coordination of matters relating to Cuba along with all other areas. Because of the SIG/IRG, the Committee has not met since December 1966. Moreover, many of the factors which impelled the NSC to establish a special coordinating committee on Cuba in January 1963 have changed in focus in the last few years. Accordingly, it is recommended that steps be taken to withdraw that portion of NSAM 213 concerned with the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Cuba.⁵

Such action, however, should not apply to the position, functions or authority of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs who, under NSAM 213 was given day-to-day coordinating responsibility for Cuban policy. NSAM 213 provided that the Coordinator "will be responsible to the Secretary of State for State Department business, and under his guidance to the President and the Executive Committee for interdepartmental coordination". The need for this day-to-day coordination continues to exist.

³ Attached but not printed.

⁴ In a May 28 memorandum to Rostow, Read forwarded the Department's recommendation "that the portions of NSAM No. 213 that refer to an 'Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee for Cuban Affairs' be revoked." (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, POL Misc. Working Papers, 1966–1968)

⁵ In a June 12, 1969, memorandum to Assistant Secretary Crimmins, Fitzgerald noted that this recommendation had had the advance concurrence of Sayre, William Lang (DOD/ISA), and Broe. Fitzgerald then stated that "I later learned that no action was taken on this recommendation at the White House, apparently because Bill Bowdler, while agreeing with the reasoning behind the recommendation, believed that it was still desirable to keep the Committee in being as a useful instrumentality for the Coordinator in case a crisis situation arose." (Ibid., 1969)

320. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Oliver) to the Chairman of the Policy Planning Council (Owen)¹

Washington, June 4, 1968.

SUBJECT

Comments on National Policy Paper for Cuba

1. While I am in agreement with the general conclusions and recommendations of the second draft of the National Policy Paper on Cuba,² I wish to emphasize that the carrying out of the recommended actions would require an extremely careful and subtle approach. This is necessary so that (a) we do not give the impression to Cuba and to the world that we have finally accepted the permanence of the Castro regime in an unchanged form, and (b) that we do not over-emphasize the "carrot" aspect in the carrot and stick approach. The draft does, of course, fully discuss the dangers in implementing the program.

2. There is, however, one important new factor. Since the draft was first produced, internal conditions in Cuba have deteriorated strikingly. This trend has intensified even since the last draft was considered. This situation has been covered in other documents, including the first draft of the IRG paper on Cuba³ which is now being submitted. The point at hand here, however, is that the current deterioration in Cuba gives more hope than we have had for a long time that elements in the Cuban power elite may themselves conceivably be impelled within the near or at least foreseeable future to consider whether some drastic change does not have to be made in Cuba's posture toward the world (and even in the internal aspects) if Cuba is to survive. I therefore think that now and for some months to come we should be even more cautious in anything we do so as not to convey a seeming signal⁴ that we have

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, Apr-Jun 1968. Secret. Drafted by Fitzgerald and Park F. Wollam (ARA/CCA) on June 3.

² See Document 322.

³ Attached but not printed, the IRG Paper on Cuba, May 10, described a progressive decline in Cuba, including a shortage of consumer goods, a very poor sugar crop, a decline in Cuban productivity and foreign exchange earnings, public protest demonstrations, and anti-Castro wall writings. Also see Document 321.

⁴ In a February 16 memorandum to Under Secretary Katzenbach, Oliver had proposed an easing of the administrative criteria with respect to licenses for export of pharmaceuticals to Cuba. Katzenbach approved this recommendation on February 23. However, in an April 30 memorandum to Rusk, Oliver recommended that this modification be deferred because "Intelligence and other reports indicate a striking deterioration in economic, psychological and other conditions in Cuba." (Both in National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 245, The Secretary, 1968)

finally accepted the permanence of the Castro regime just at a time when others, who have disagreed with our attitude in the past, may be acquiring real doubts as to the viability of the regime. It is a time for alert watchfulness and for sending of signals which encourage power elite elements to do something about Castro or some of his policies in the hope that they could reach accommodation with us, rather than a time to seem conciliatory toward the Castro regime as such.

321. Special National Intelligence Estimate¹

SNIE 85–68

Washington, June 27, 1968.

CUBA: CASTRO'S PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OVER THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

Conclusions

A. Castro's problems have taken a turn for the worse over the past year. A severe drought has depressed sugar production and agriculture generally. Living conditions have become more stringent because of reduced food supplies and a variety of other factors, including new attempts by Castro to overcome his economic problems by forcing the population to work harder. There has been an increase in popular discontent and in the number of small, local disorders.

B. Nonetheless, we see little prospect that economic adversity will significantly weaken Castro's position over the next couple of years. A return of more favorable weather, already in prospect, would in itself somewhat relieve domestic pressures. Even if economic conditions were to deteriorate further, Castro would still have the advantages of charismatic appeal, political skill, and ultimately, a formidable military-security apparatus.

C. Although there probably will be fluctuations in the level of future Soviet aid to Cuba, we think it unlikely that the USSR will permit the Cuban economy to approach a critical condition. This will be so even if Soviet-Cuban tensions continue to develop.

¹ Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NIEs, 85, Cuba. Secret; Controlled Dissem; No Foreign Dissem. According to a note on the cover sheet this estimate was prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency with the participation of the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Agency. The United States Intelligence Board concurred in this estimate on June 27.

D. We doubt that either Castro's economic difficulties or his contentious relationship with the USSR will cause him to turn toward the US. He will, however, seek to expand his trade with other non-Communist countries. There will be an increasing reluctance by such countries to maintain Castro's diplomatic and economic isolation, though his limited financial credit will restrict his trade with them.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the estimate.]

322. Editorial Note

Henry Owen, Chairman of the Policy Planning Council, obtained Rusk's approval in May 1967, to review U.S. policy toward Cuba. Rusk agreed that a National Policy Paper (NPP) offered the best framework for such a study (see Document 314). The study did not get started until September 1967. During the spring of 1968, the ideas of the second draft of the NPP were still being debated within the Department of State (see Document 320).

The Policy Planning Council's final draft National Policy Paper on Cuba, dated July 15, 1968, described the present U.S. policy as "passive containment," consisting of three conceptual elements—1) protecting other countries from Cuban subversion; 2) applying "diplomatic isolation and economic denial policies" aimed at both hindering Castro's capacity to export subversion and at maximizing his internal problems and vulnerabilities; and 3) "hoping and waiting for 'breaks'" that might improve the situation. It described the present policy as the easiest one to follow at the time, but stated that the "capacity of the U.S. to isolate Cuba, exert pressure on Castro and exploit vulnerabilities is declining." "The ability of 'passive containment' to meet U.S. objectives may therefore with time have to depend increasingly upon the pure containment aspect, i.e., simply countering Castro's probes at target sites, rather than on measures having direct impact on Cuba itself."

The paper stated that the only apparent hope "that Castro and/or the Cuban power structure" would change their policy rested "on their becoming convinced that it is unproductive." "Present U.S. policy, however, does not promise to be the most effective way to achieve this kind of long-term improvement." It predicted that the effectiveness of economic denials would decline over the next few years and that the political cost of U.S. policy would grow greatly. "Present policy in sum is a negative and reactive one which offers limited promise of effecting desirable change."

The paper advocated replacing “passive containment” with “positive containment,” which it described as “a series of initiatives, parallel steps, concrete actions and understandings concerning limited things, all acted on their own merits at the time, the cumulative effect of which over time would be de facto changes.” It described “positive containment” as a strategy containing the elements of containment (keeping Castro from successfully subverting other countries), pressure (continued application of isolation/denial measures), psychological context (a change in the basic U.S. policy attitude of implacable hostility and threatening intentions), and “a variety of alternative probes to improve the situation.”

It would be important in the psychological context “largely to ignore Castro in public stances and proclamations” and to project “patience and friendliness toward the Cuban people.” In this respect, the paper advocated “encouraging more legitimate and responsible scholarship.”

The paper illustrated how a scenario of incremental “parallel” steps might unfold, without actually recommending the specific quids and pros. As an example, the paper notes that a Castro quid of continued repatriation of American citizens could be matched by a U.S. pro of granting licenses for commercial shipment of pharmaceuticals “on a more lenient basis.”

The paper concluded with a long series of courses of actions and contingencies. It restated basic U.S. Latin American policy ideas such as support for the Alliance for Progress, OAS regional cooperation, and intelligence surveillance, but also advocated steps to create a new atmosphere and new initiatives. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, S/P Files: Lot 72 D 139, Cuba, 1967–68)

This change in policy, however, was never approved, much less implemented. Instead, the present policy continued. In an August 28 memorandum to ARA/IRG Staff Director William D. Broderick, Director of the Office of Inter-American Political Affairs John W. Ford noted that his office agreed “with CCA that this is not the most propitious moment to embark on such a program, as Cuba’s present economic straits and the signs of growing discontent would indicate that the pinch of isolation is having a real effect and that we should therefore maintain the full pressure of the isolation policy.” He noted, furthermore, “that any U.S. actions or concessions must fit within the OAS criteria to which we are a party and must avoid if possible the impression of unilateral U.S. policy making. (Ibid., ARA/CCA Files: Lot 71 D 201, POL 3.4 OAS) In an October 29 briefing paper Fitzgerald wrote that this draft national policy paper “was never formally processed for approval because it was decided that it should be considered by the new administration.” (Ibid., Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, Oct–Dec 1968)

323. Memorandum From the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs (Fitzgerald) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Vaky)¹

Washington, July 30, 1968.

BRIEFING

Cuba

REF

Your memorandum of July 25 to all Office Directors²

In view of your familiarity with the Cuban situation as a result of chairing the NPP Working Group on Cuba, I assume it is unnecessary for me to give you a political, economic and security assessment.

The following are the major current problems and issues relating to Cuba:

1. *Political*

You are, of course, familiar with policy issues for the reason given above and I will therefore not discuss these here.

2. *Hijacking*

So far we have gotten back with reasonable promptness all of the U.S. planes, crews and passengers hijacked to Cuba (including the Cuban-born pilot, Prellezo, who was detained for a week or two before release), but the problem continues to be one of grave concern³ in aviation, Governmental, Congressional and press circles, particularly because of the danger that one of these days an accident may cause loss of lives. Measures to prevent hijackers from boarding planes or, once they are aboard, to thwart diversion of a plane to Cuba, are not promising and emphasis is therefore placed on the deterrence which might result from some arrangement for the return of hijackers to the U.S. for prosecution. The problem here is that since Cuba has not been suffering from hijacking of its planes, Castro has no incentive to enter into an arrangement primarily of benefit to us. We have no evidence

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, July–Sept. 1968. Confidential.

² Attached but not printed, this memorandum from Vaky requested a political, economic, and security assessment from all ARA Office Directors.

³ In a February 27, 1969, briefing paper Fitzgerald noted that from 1961 through 1968, 34 U.S. planes were hijacked to Cuba, including 17 in 1968. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, Jan–March 1969)

so far that the GOC is back of these hijackings and they may be embarrassed by the whole situation, but we feel that Castro would meet any request for return of hijackers with a demand for return to Cuba of all persons who escaped from the island by small boat or otherwise. At present we are exploring possibilities for solution through the Mexican Government and through international civil aviation organizations like ICAO and IATA. We have also asked the Swiss to ascertain Cuban willingness to use the refugee airlift plane for a return to Cuba of Cuban exiles who wish to go back permanently⁴ (although this will reduce the temptation to hijack only marginally since most hijackers have not been Cuban).

3. *Violence in U.S. by Cuban Exiles*

In recent months anonymous Cuban exiles, usually using the signature "Cuban Power", have been engaging in a wave of bombings and threats involving the Cuban Mission to the UN and tourist or other installations of countries which have been trading with Cuba. This has resulted in protests of the countries involved and in intensive efforts by law enforcement authorities both to protect these installations and to apprehend the perpetrators of these acts. Although the authorities have a pretty good line on a number of individuals believed to be associated with "Cuban Power", so far there have been no arrests primarily because it has been impossible to get direct evidence of guilt or to catch any one in the act. Our Mission to the UN and we have urged the authorities to do everything possible to harass the suspects.

4. *U.S. Citizens in Cuba*

We still have several hundred U.S. citizens who have not been allowed to leave Cuba freely and, together with their "fireside alien relatives", the repatriation group is estimated to number a few thousands. Starting with February of this year, Castro agreed to allow the Mexicans to carry out one repatriation flight a month on a Mexican charter plane via Mexico. This operation has been carried out routinely since then. There are new registrations every month of U.S. citizens (primarily dual nationals) and the net figure has not been declining very much, but at least we have been getting out many of the hardship cases and those persons who have been waiting longest. The Mexicans hope to step up the frequency of the flights later, but do not feel the time is yet right to approach Castro about this.

⁴ In his February 27 briefing paper, Fitzgerald stated that "No response was received in the ensuing months" to this initiative. Documentation on hijacking is presented in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XXXIV, Documents 296–314.

5. *Refugee Airlift*

This has been proceeding in routine fashion ever since it began on December 1, 1965, on the basis of two flights a day, five days a week. We bring out about 3700 refugees a month and the total thus carried out is now about 120,000. This is listed as a problem only in the sense that the influx of refugees represents a burden, financially and in terms sometimes of domestic politics, and as of July 1, 1968, there has gone into effect a quota of 120,000 immigrants a year for the western hemisphere. It has been determined that Cuban refugees must be counted against this with a resulting impact on the number of immigrants from other countries, including Canada and Mexico, who can be admitted. The airlift refugees themselves do not immediately count against this quota inasmuch as they are "paroled" into the U.S., but when they convert into permanent residents they count as immigrants and are subtracted from the quota. INS has estimated that probably 40,000 a year will have to be so counted, and in addition there are the thousands of Cuban immigrants who come via Spain and other countries.

6. *Guantanamo Base*

The general issue of retention of the naval base has not been in the forefront of issues for some time, even in the form of Cuban declarations, and in the last few years there have not been any fence-line shootings or other incidents of the type which caused tension in the past, but as long as we have the base there is always the possibility of incidents which could lead to serious consequences. Perhaps the main problem in the last year or two has been the increased use of the base as a means of escape from Cuba. The issue is somewhat sensitive (particularly as far as the Navy is concerned) in view of those provisions of the Guantanamo Base treaty which prohibit use of the base as a means of exit from or entry into Cuba. We have felt that we could not turn escapees back to the GOC and they are quietly evacuated by air to the mainland where they are "paroled" like other refugees. The GOC obviously knows of this but so far has not made a public issue of it. A correlary concern of ours has been over the possibility that Castro might infiltrate agents by this route, although we subject such escapees to close screening after arrival.

7. *Economic Denial Program*

You are quite familiar with this. The basic problem is that European and other countries trading with Cuba are less and less inclined to cooperate in our program of economic denial toward Cuba,⁵ both

⁵ The U.S. Government began a new element in its economic denial program towards Cuba during the fall of 1968 by working to delay and weaken the International Sugar Agreement approved by the UNCTAD Sugar Conference at Geneva on October 23.

because of commercial considerations and because of their feeling that Cuba is a U.S. problem not particularly of concern to them. The main present obstacle to increased trade by these countries is their growing doubt as to Cuba's credit worthiness in view of deteriorating economic conditions there and uncertainty as to the Soviet Union's willingness to continue underwriting Castro.

8. *Travel Controls*

Travel of U.S. citizens and residents to Cuba, along with that to Communist China, North Korea and North Viet Nam, is officially proscribed except for certain categories such as journalists, scholars, medical men and humanitarian cases. Court decisions, however, have virtually deprived the Department of the ability to enforce these controls except with respect to use of passports. Therefore persons who defy the ban are subject to no criminal penalties and not even to loss of passports unless it can be shown they used them in the banned countries.

A more particular problem for CCA is that even within the above admitted limitations, SCA shows little inclination to use what authority it has. Thus, for example, in examining applications for passport validation to go to Cuba, SCA does not, as in the past, insist on proof that the applicant is a *professional* journalist but often wants to accept as credentials the applicant's own claim, supported by a letter from some publication (often of the "butcher's-wrapping-paper" variety) that if he can get to Cuba the publication will print an article by him. The same is true of "scholars", SCA not requiring, as the original criteria did, that the scholar be an established one whose trip to Cuba *is* necessary for a particular research project. The result of all this is that we have a constant parade of U.S. radicals to Cuba on false pretenses and genuine scholars rarely go, as they cannot get Cuban visas.

The whole subject is such a farce that I would recommend dropping all travel controls on Cuba were it not for the fact that this would probably result in the resumption of the tourist trade on a significant scale. The result would not only be an economic advantage to Cuba but also a protection problem which, in the absence of diplomatic relations, we could not handle.

9. *Criticism of Cuban Policy*

Cuba is a sensitive issue to almost everyone and we are subject to constant criticism from opposite points of view. On the one hand, persons who feel strongly about the Castro regime, including Cuban exiles, attack us for not taking action to end the Castro menace and, on the other hand, the growing U.S. leftist-liberal community criticizes us for being "rigid" in our policies and, openly or otherwise, advocates a policy of accommodation with Castro.

In connection with the first school of criticism, one of the perennial charges is that there are still long-range missiles or other offensive weapons in Cuba. The intelligence community maintains a constant watch on this situation and, on the basis of all the evidence, believes that there are no offensive weapons or Soviet bases in Cuba, but reiteration of this assessment does not quiet anxiety more than temporarily. Excitement over this waxes and wanes but Cuba presents a more continuing issue in domestic politics than other countries in the hemisphere.

324. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Trueheart) to the Director (Hughes) and Deputy Director (Denney)¹

Washington, August 16, 1968.

SUBJECT

ARA/CIA Meeting, August 15, 1968

PARTICIPANTS

ARA—Messrs. Oliver, Vaky and Morris
CIA—Messrs. Broe, Horton and Phillips
INR—Mr. Gardner

[Omitted here is discussion on Bolivia.]

Cuba

There was a considerable discussion of what our next moves toward Cuba should be. The Agency referred to a paper that it had submitted to the Department in April² and which, according to Mr. Vaky, was still on the Secretary's desk. In this paper, a copy of which is attached, the Agency discussed the possibility of approaching Cuban leaders around Castro to assure them that the U.S. had no wish to abrogate or wipe out the gains of the Cuban revolution and that it was prepared to cooperate with these leaders and indeed support them in any post-Castro regime, if they were prepared to cooperate covertly

¹ Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA/CIA Weekly Meeting Files. Secret. Drafted by Richard F. Gardner on August 16.

² Attached but not printed.

with CIA to provide information and perhaps to take timely action that would expedite the removal of Castro as a regime leader.

Messrs. Oliver and Vaky indicated that they felt some of the language of this proposal required modification but that it might provide a basis for discussion. It was felt especially that references to a post-Castro regime or the suggestion of Castro's removal were not appropriate.

Phillips, who runs the Cuban branch in DDP/WH, said that matters were reaching the point that CIA really had to know how our policy toward Cuba was going to develop. Right now the issue was both confused and becalmed. Mr. Oliver's speeches were being interpreted by some as opening up the possibility of Cuban-U.S. rapprochement. There was a world-wide impression that secret negotiations were in fact going on between Cuba and the United States.³ The domestic economic and political situation in Cuba was worse now than it had been any time under Castro (Phillips stated here that he never had been one of those who had depreciated the strength and endurance of the Castro regime) and actually the biggest thing that Castro had going for him at the present time was the wide spread impression among second-echelon Cubans that he was negotiating some sort of political settlement with the United States.

[1 paragraph (10½ lines of source text) not declassified]

What, Phillips wanted to know, did the Department wish to be done with this facility? Should we attempt to open up and pursue a dialogue or should we close it down immediately? Oliver said that at the moment a freeze should be put on any further talk and that it merely be indicated to the Cubans that the channel would be kept open for their use if they so desired.

Returning to the question of the wide-spread rumors that the United States and Cuba were in negotiations, Phillips asked what he might say if in fact he were approached by a member of the Cuban DGI and were asked if negotiations in fact were going on. Oliver replied

³ In the *Washington Post*, July 18, Drew Pearson reported allegations of U.S. "diplomatic overtures to Castro towards resumption of diplomatic relations with Cuba." ARA's suggested guidance prepared that day by Sayre and Fitzgerald for the noon briefing was that "No consideration is being given to resumption of diplomatic relations with Cuba." The guidance referred to a March 15 statement by Oliver in Miami, reiterating U.S. policy on Cuba: "We are not aware of any indication by Fidel Castro that he would like to resume diplomatic relations with the United States. On the contrary, as recently as February 1968 Castro is quoted by a foreign journalist as saying: 'this kind of peaceful co-existence is of no interest to us—our quarrel with American imperialism is total and insurmountable. As to us, we have no contacts with the U.S. and have no desire for any.'" (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, ARA/CCA Files: Lot 73 D 191, Misc. Correspondence, Fitzgerald, July–Sept 1968)

that we should deny that negotiations were taking place, but that we should add that the ball was in the Cuban court and that channels for negotiation existed.⁴

Mr. Vaky wanted to know if the question put by Phillips meant that the Agency intended to take the initiative in approaching Cuban intelligence, or whether CIA merely meant to remain passively prepared with an appropriate response in case it ever was approached by the Cubans with a query of the sort mentioned. Phillips replied that the Agency intended to await a Cuban initiative. Gardner said that if in fact rumors and reports of negotiations were working as strongly in Cuba's favor as Phillips had indicated, and if in fact we wanted to scotch reports that these negotiations existed, the method of denial just agreed upon seemed excessively demure. Mr. Vaky suggested that perhaps it would be better to instruct station chiefs in Latin America to see it through their own means that denials of the negotiations were effectively made in their own countries. The meeting ended without further concrete suggestions being made. The creation of a small study group with State, Defense and CIA participation to consider the question of what exactly we should do next about Cuba was made but no definite decision was reached.

It was agreed that another meeting should be held to review this subject and what had been said about it in the current meeting. It was recognized that any decisions about changes or developments in our policy toward Cuba would have to be referred to a higher level.

⁴ According to an August 6 memorandum for the files, Arlene Gould of *Life en Español* called on Bowdler that afternoon and asked if he would like to meet with Cuban UN Delegation member Jesús Jiménez, who was in Washington for a Pan American Health Organization meeting. Bowdler responded: "I told her I did not wish to meet with Sr. Jimenez; if the Cubans are interested in making an official contact, other channels are available to them. With respect to the recent newspaper stories about U.S.-Cuban talks, I told her I was not aware of any such talks and that our position on the subject was clear." (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Cuba, Vol. IV, 1965-68)