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19 February 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, CUBA PROJECT

Subject: Tasks 33c and 33 d

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Mr. Gilpatric have approved the attached plans responsive to Tasks 33 c and 33 d. This completes our action on these Tasks.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, CARIBBEAN SURVEY GROUP

Subject: Cover and Deception Plans for Caribbean Survey Group (Working Group) Tasks 33c and 33d

1. In accordance with instructions, an Outline Cover and Deception (C&D) Plan for an Air/Sea exercise in the vicinity of Cuba (Caribbean Survey Group (CSG) Working Group (WG)) Task 33c, and an Alternative C&D Plan, CSG (WG) Task 33d, are attached.

2. The purpose of these plans is to develop the mission, the tasks, the basic concepts, and an outline of sequential events only in sufficient detail that the Unified and Specified Commanders, and supporting commands concerned, will be able to develop their supporting plans in detailed form to ensure accomplishment of the objectives.

3. Determination of tentative execution dates for either plan and the exercises involved therein has been the most enigmatic, indeterminable single problem due to the many timing factors involved. With the sugar harvest during the period 15 January through 15 April, with the most critical period between 1 February and 1 April, it is desirable that any C&D plan be designed to cause a reaction of great enough magnitude to include a call-up of the militia or a complete disruption of the available labor force. Therefore, it must be capable of execution either at the beginning of the harvest period, or at least no later than a date when the harvest is in full swing. Yet, to accomplish this disruption, the C&D plan must be credible to the extent that it will produce an aura of fear of a US invasion within Cuba through a gradual build-up of psychological harassment before culminating in an action which should clearly indicate that the use of military action is a determined intent of the US; an action which must have a provocative climax strong enough to produce a Cuban mobilization. Thus, while a series of US military actions may only engender the psychological build-up and perhaps assist in the development

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of a fear of the US, this series of build-up actions is considered necessary, if the credibility of the climax is to be achieved.

4. Similarly, if the climatic exercise, or concurrent exercises, are to be sufficiently provocative to cause the desired Cuban mobilization, then the US must be in the best possible military position in order to be able to immediately and decisively counter any overt Cuban military reaction; either ordered by Castro or resulting from an irrational act by an uncontrollable subordinate. Therefore, the psychological build-up period also must be used to place the US in favorable position through prepositioning of forces, marshalling of lift, or general preparations before culminating in the climatic C&D exercise to be executed. Ergo, both the psychological build-up and the US military preparatory activities, including the detailed planning involved take time. It is considered that a period of thirty days from the date of a policy decision until the execution day of any C&D plan is an absolute minimum.

5. Accordingly, while the attached C&D plans indicate a tentative execution date of 14 March 1962, certain implementing actions would be required by 12 February, hence, this date can no longer be met and the exercises involved will encounter slippage; which, in turn, will place any possible date of execution well into the last one-third of the 1962 harvest season, if not at the very end of this period.

6. Additional timing factors should also be noted. It is a hard fact that any exercises of this scope either meshed with or superimposed over other exercises currently in planning stages or in projected future exercise schedules will have broad implications. In this connection, while not a complete list due to the time allowed for the development of the C&D Plan and the closeness with which the Task 33c and 33d projects must be held, a study of exercises which might affect timing

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is appended hereto as Tab A. Although certain of these have been considered desirable and applicable for inclusion in the over-all C&D planning considerations by the CSG (WG), it is important to note that any additional inexplicable cancellations, advancement or retardation of exercise dates might create consternation, bewilderment and endless questions; unless, of course, an adequate cover story, i.e., a world-wide US exercise, is also developed. It is equally true, however, that mere cancellation of some exercises in favor of the C&D plan might make Castro slightly nervous by indicating that the US might mean business.

7. Although only a partial listing of the major exercises now scheduled, Tab A gives an indication of the complexity of the disruption the execution of basic Task 33c would create in the US military training schedule. In short, execution of either plan would require all of the Services to concentrate only on preparations for a Cuban contingency, at least until Castro's reaction became known; in essence, Tasks 33c and 33d result in plans that produce a situation in which the US must be prepared to go full tilt against Cuba, with all other activities subjugated to the Cuban objective. At the same time, however, Tab A shows the additive exercises, which, if feasible, might be modified to offer an increase in alternative exercises adaptable to other time frames.

8. In compliance with Tasks 33c and 33d as assigned, however, the subject C&D plans have been developed using four basic precepts:

a. The conduct of a psychological and economic harassment of an unfriendly government exploiting both physical and psychological military operations.

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b. To attain a maximum condition of military readiness for Caribbean contingency operations while conducting this exploitation.

c. Funds and forces for the execution of this plan are not limiting factors.

d. Conflicts with existing, planned or projected exercises or operations are not limiting factors.

9. Accordingly, the plan envisages three separate but concurrent and related exercises:

a. An Air/Sea assault exercise in the Caribbean area (Vieques Island), to be conducted by CINCLANT in order to test Contingency Operations Plans 314/316-61 (Cuba), while maintaining a ready posture for emergency Guantanamo augmentation, should such augmentation be required.

(1) If feasible and appropriate, CINCLANT will conduct a Weapons Demonstration as a part of the Vieques operation showing recent modernization advances in armament, equipment, and procedures to invited high level, friendly Latin American officials. This may be utilized in US interests to show other Western Hemisphere powers the overt portions of this exercise, thus tying these other country representatives into a vocal defense of US friendly intentions.

b. A concurrent CINCLANT loading and deployment exercise along and off the East and Gulf coasts of the US, also to test the readiness factors of CINCLANT OPLANS 314/316-61; to include a related readiness alert of additional CINCSTRIKE augmenting forces designated in OPLANS 314/316-61 which might not be participating in the coastal exercises. Additionally, the actual deployment of those CINCPAC forces designated in CINCLANT OPLANS 314/316-61 would lend credence to the deception story, and heighten the illusion of threat

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when reported transiting the Panama Canal. This deployment will also serve to preposition these forces in the Caribbean area should execution of Cuban contingency Oplans be ordered by higher authority.

c. A concurrent CINCONAD air defense exercise to test the air defense of the southeastern US, with predetermined flight paths designed to harass the present unfriendly Cuban government.

10. The three concurrent exercises are considered applicable to Task 33c and might well excite a counter-alert possibly involving the call-up of Cuban military forces (particularly the Militia), thus resulting in the disruption of the available labor force during the latter portion of the harvest period.

11. The alternative plan, Task 33d, envisages but two separate yet concurrent and related exercises, to be melded into those exercises now planned by the Unified and Specified Commanders:

a. Execution by CINCLANT, of a small scale test of Oplan 314-61 in the Camp LeJeune/Camp Davis area of North Carolina. Planning for this exercise (QUICK KICK) is currently underway; estimated date of execution during the period 29 April - 13 May 1962. This date would have to be stepped up to more closely coincide with the harvest period, placing execution about 15 March - 1 April 1962 (still in the latter days of the harvest). While this exercise utilizes only a small portion of Oplan 314/316-61 forces, it might serve as a vehicle with which to harass Castro at a more comfortable distance. To bolster this exercise, the JCS would direct CINCSTRIKE to alert all remaining STRIKECOM forces not participating in CINCLANT's modified exercise "QUICK KICK" in the Camp LeJeune/Camp Davis area on a test basis.

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b. Concurrently, CINCONAD, supported by additional CINCLANT forces, will conduct an air defense exercise (CONAD C&D PLAN "BROAD SHOULDERS"), which, as modified in distance of participating aircraft tracks from the Cuban land mass, etc., still affords a provocative harassment feature.

c. Additionally, other steps to be taken concurrently with the execution of "QUICK KICK" and "BROAD SHOULDERS", thus adding to the credibility of US action against Cuba (some also to be taken in conjunction with the basic C&D Plan of Task 33c), include:

(1) Evacuation of selected civilians, including dependents, from Guantanamo.

(2) Land the Marine Battalion of the Ready Caribbean PHIBRON at Guantanamo for "Rest and Recreation" (Alternative plan only).

(3) Increase air traffic in the Cuban area by scheduling extra flights from the Florida area.

(4) Naval harassment can be instituted to a certain extent.

(5) Signal and communications harassment will be instituted to disrupt and divert.

(6) Unusual Washington, D.C., activities will be suggested; i.e., Special White House/JCS meetings; the recall to Washington of CINCLANT and senior diplomatic representatives for White House conferences, etc.

(7) "Heckler" flights with high performance aircraft moving toward Cuba at high altitudes, then diving to low altitudes when closed to about 30 miles of the Cuban coast and returning to home base. Additional flight patterns will reverse the procedure, going out low and returning high.

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(8) Acceleration of Guantanamo resupply, both surface and air.

12. Basically, the two C&D Outline Plans present a wide spectrum of possible military application.

a. Analysis of the basic C&D 33c Plan recognizes that while it may accomplish the objective of economic harassment, it also may initiate an irrational Cuban response or reaction thus provoking overt hostilities; but places the US in a favorable military posture should active US military action or intervention in Cuba become desirable or necessitated. The three concurrent exercises can be considered to be gravely provocative, thus necessitating an extremely costly, semi-mobilized military position.

b. On the other hand, the alternative C&D 33d Plan, being weaker and less provocative, may not accomplish the desired economic harassment objective, while it still might initiate an irrational Cuban response or reaction leading to overt hostilities. Being smaller in scale, it finds the US in a less favorable military position should active US military action or intervention become desirable or necessitated, and thus is the most dangerous for the US.

c. Both plans, being "outline" plans, require refinement and a contributonal input by the Commanders concerned.

d. Both plans, being flexible, can be modified and adapted to other time frames other than the 1962 harvest period; times perhaps more propitious and more rewarding for the effect to be gained when compared with the effort to be expended.

e. The C&D 33c and 33d Plans, however, are considered to fulfill the requirements of the Caribbean Survey Group (WG) Tasks 33c and 33d.

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13. Accordingly, although the Cover and Deception 33-C and 33-D Plans are forwarded in compliance with CSG (WG) Tasks 33c and 33d, it is concluded that:

a. The necessary scope of any major military Cover and Deception (C&D) effort required to disrupt the 1962 sugar harvest period, is not commensurate with the possible effects to be gained; however, such C&D effort may be appropriate and applicable to other missions and tasks of the Caribbean Survey Group.

b. The first phase of a US endeavor to cause the overthrow of the Castro Government should include the creation of a condition of unrest by covert means rather than the active use of major military forces, if practicable.

c. After a modicum of revolutionary feeling or action has been created by subversion, sabotage or other means, a C&D plan of major proportions can be used in a comprehensive, thoroughly planned, and coordinated Cover and Deception effort to initiate a second phase; including overt military intervention.

d. The Cover and Deception plans and forces involved should be used to:

(1) Create the required psychological build-up of the desired atmosphere in Cuba.

(2) Gain the necessary favorable prepositioned US military posture to counter a possible hostile Cuban reaction.

(3) Then lure or provoke Castro, or an uncontrollable subordinate, into an overt hostile reaction against the United States; a reaction which would in turn create the justification for the US to not only retaliate but destroy Castro with speed, force and determination.

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e. The Cover and Deception 33-C Plan presents advantages through the prepositioning and alerting effected and being considerably stronger in purpose and larger in scope, is considered much more acceptable than the Cover and Deception 33-D Plan. Consequently the execution or implementation of 33-D is discouraged.

14. It is therefore recommended that:

a. The attached Cover and Deception 33-C and 33-D Plans be accepted as fulfilling the requirements of CSG (WG) Tasks 33c and 33d.

b. That any policy decision considering the implementation of either plan or any similar plan involving the use of major US military forces for Cover and Deception (C&D) purposes defer implementation or execution until future circumstances indicate a more propitious or appropriate time frame; a time when the aims of a covert first phase have been realized and the remaining objective is to destroy Castro and his government through use of force.

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