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MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Subject: Nitze's Memorandum for NSC Executive Committee:
"Relationship of Cuban Objectives to Present
Decisions"

File 0

PMK

Pertinent Facts

1. On 15 November 1962, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA) submitted copies of subject paper (Enclosure B) to the Office of the Chairman, JCS for review and comment.
2. Summary highlights of the subject paper are included at Enclosure A.
3. The paper is an analytical study of probable Soviet strategy and objectives relating to Cuba and the US present position and recommended courses of action. The assumed Soviet objective of a retention of a foothold in Cuba is borne out by their past actions, i.e., not facing up to a confrontation; withdrawal of IREMs and MRBMs coupled with cooperation during inspection at sea. The IL-28's appear to be the political-military tool the Soviets are using to obtain their objective, while at the same time walking a tightrope to insure that the US will not be provoked into depriving them of their Cuban base through force.
4. The paper outlines the US position prior to and through the missile/bomber discovery phase to the present time. The US objectives are restated with recommended courses of action. The "Carrot and Stick" approach is recommended to force removal of the offensive weapons and Soviet military personnel from Cuba.
5. Finally, if it appears to the Soviets the US is insisting on the original demands, they may have to evaluate Castro's survival as dubious. They might well want to disengage their prestige in Cuba and return to the Soviet Union with as much dignity as possible.

Comments

6. The paper is based on an estimate of probable Soviet strategy that appears at this time to be accurate in view of present Soviet actions in the UN. One of the recommended US Carrot actions (suspend the quarantine if the IL-28's are removed pending resolution of the problem of verification and adequate safeguards) needs clarification. Another Carrot recommended action is to hold out the offer to Cuba for re-admission to the OAS and to the benefits of a Western Hemisphere denuclearized zone. This course of action is not in the best interests of the United States and is opposed to the JCS position.

Recommendations

1. The rationale expressed in this paper in regard to assumed Soviet courses of actions and objectives appears sound and the Carrot-Stick approach to recommended action has merit. However, the paper concludes on an overly optimistic note in predicting the possibility of hasty Soviet evacuation.
2. The question of Cuban participation in a denuclearized zone, as yet undefined, should not be raised.

Approved *W. L. Harbo* Director, J-5

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ENCLOSURE A

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HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the ISA paper "Relationship of Cuban Objectives to Present Decisions" are:

1. Soviet Perspective

a. Retain an optimum foothold in Cuba.

b. Soviets probably see the situation in the following light:

(1) Over-extended in Cuba - did not want to face a confrontation at this time.

(2) Withdrew missiles to defuse the immediate dangerous situation.

(3) Retained IL-28's in Cuba as a barter for future negotiations.

(4) The US has the power to eliminate Soviet presence in Cuba.

(5) To carry out negotiations by probes, being cautious not to provoke the US in using military power.

c. Objectives.

(1) Retain a Communistic regime in Cuba for it is their first significant advance into the Atlantic community.

(2) Use Cuba as a base for future expansion in Latin America, frustrating the United States.

(3) Retain in Cuba defensive weapons as a prestige factor.

(4) Retain Soviet military in Cuba to man Soviet weapons.

(5) Retain Cuba as a potential submarine refuelling and refit base.

(6) Retain IL-28's in Cuba.

d. Soviet strategy in view of the above objectives would be to negotiate the lower priorities above and retain the maximum number of high priorities. Further, to make every effort to insure the sovereignty and integrity of Communist Cuba by:

(1) Resisting on-the-ground inspection.

(2) Resisting US aerial reconnaissance over Cuba.

(3) Winning acceptance of the OAS and the US to some form of Soviet base in Cuba.

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Enclosure A

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(4) Seek to normalize the situation as soon as possible.

(5) Seek to get a formal US commitment against invasion of Cuba.

2. The US Perspective

a. The United States prior to the recent crisis held that Soviet military presence in Cuba was not negotiable.

b. The discovery of missiles and bombers in Cuba forced the US into a position to resort to the show of force or use force if necessary. As a result, the missiles were removed. The bombers have remained in Cuba.

c. The continued presence of bombers in Cuba offers an opportunity to the US that would not exist if the Soviets had removed them with the missiles. Cuba most likely would have returned to the status she enjoyed before the present crisis. The US can now apply pressure due to the presence of the bombers in such a manner to advance long term interest of such as removal of the Soviet presence from Cuba and the reorientation of the Cuban regime.

d. US Objectives

(1) Attain removal of remaining offensive weapons.

(2) Obtain removal of USSR military presence.

(3) Obtain removal of Castro and/or reorientation of the Communist regime. A minimum goal should be the accomplishment of 1 and 2 above and 3 as a long term objective.

3. Recommended Action

a. The Carrot

(1) Continue to offer a return to the Hemisphere to the Cuban people.

(2) Seek to split the present Cuban government.

(3) Suspend the quarantine if IL-28's are removed, pending resolution of the problem of verification and adequate safeguards.

(4) Hold out offer to Cuba of re-admission to OAS and to the benefits of a Western Hemisphere denuclearized zone.

b. The Stick

(1) Adhere to original US demands.

(a) Removal of bombers and nuclear weapons.

(b) Adequate safeguards.

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(2) Continue aerial surveillance.

(3) Tighten the blockade.

4. Summary

The author states that the combination of Carrot and Stick measures should be played to reach the US objectives in Cuba. In addition, if the IL-28's are removed, pressures should shift to Cuba and remove Castro or reorient the Communist regime. It appears to the author that if the US insists on its original demands regarding Cuba, the Soviets might evaluate Castro's capability to survive as dubious. In that case, they might well disengage themselves from Cuba and evacuate their people and sophisticated equipment with as much dignity as the situation permitted.

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Enclosure A

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Paul H. Nitze
November 15, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR NSC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Relationship of Cuban Objectives to Present Decisions

1. Problem. To analyze the relationship between present decisions on what to do next re Cuba and long term objectives.

2. The Soviet Perspective.

a. Regardless of the motives behind the original Soviet initiative in emplacing missiles in Cuba, it seems reasonable to assume that a retention of the optimum foothold in Cuba remains, at this time, as an important objective. At this writing the Soviets probably see the situation in the following light:

(1) The Soviet Union was overextended and did not wish to face up to a direct and full scale confrontation over Cuba.

(2) Their withdrawal of IRBMs and MRBMs, coupled with their cooperation in the outgoing inspection, has defused the situation to reduce danger of immediate major conflict. Further, given the political context of the US, this move has estopped the US from immediate and outright invasion of Cuba.

(3) The retention of IL 28's in Cuba represents a politico-military tool for use in securing Soviet objectives. These can be bartered away to obtain concessions from the US, if they must be; or they can be used to soften the impact upon the Cubans of the Soviet retreat by turning the bombers over to that government, if circumstances permit. In the latter case the Soviets could be expected to use the IL 28's to win certain concessions from Castro.

(4) The US has the power to eliminate the Soviet presence in Cuba but must operate within constraints imposed by partial Soviet performance and by the realities of the power equation elsewhere.

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Enclosure B

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(5) Therefore the thrust of Soviet negotiations with the US and with Cuba must be to lay the foundation, by a series of probes, for the best possible posture for themselves in Cuba, without provoking the US to apply that degree of power which would deprive them of their Cuban base.

b. Ideally the Soviets want to retain in Cuba a capability for a wide spectrum utilization of their position. A listing of their objectives might have the following priority:

(1) Retention of a Communist oriented regime in Cuba-- the minimum requirement for long term utility for any purpose-- their first significant advance beyond the Eurasian mainland and into the Atlantic Community.

(2) Use of that base for subversion of Latin America, disruption of OAS, and frustration of US objectives.

(3) Retention of US accepted "defensive weapons" including MIGs, Komars, antiaircraft artillery, et., as a prestige factor, to bolster the Communist regime, and to deter invasion.

(4) Retention for several reasons of a Soviet military presence. (It is unlikely that SAM's could be maintained without a Soviet presence.)

(5) Retention of Cuba as a potential submarine refueling and refit base.

(6) Retention of bombers in Cuba.

c. Soviet strategy in the light of the foregoing considerations would seem to require the step-by-step compromise of the lower priorities above in order to retain the maximum number in the higher priority that US pressure will permit. It would seem further to require that every effort to be made to insure the sovereignty and integrity of Communist Cuba by:

(1) Resisting US aerial reconnaissance over Cuba, by equating aerial reconnaissance with lack of respect of sovereignty and therefore with invasion.

(2) Winning a more effective and formal commitment against invasion and therefore respect for the sovereignty of a communist regime in Cuba.

(3) Winning tacit acceptance of the OAS and the US to some form of Soviet bases in Cuba.

(4) Resisting (or cultivating Cuban resistance to) on-the-ground inspection.

(5) Seeking to normalize the situation as soon as possible.

d. None of the five points above would preclude Soviet tactical intransigence (e.g., publicly pressing the 5 Cuban demands, etc.) to provide a radical position from which to compromise with the US. Moreover, the Soviets would need to consider constantly what other pressures to bring to bear elsewhere in the world should the US press beyond a certain minimum on the priority list above. This minimum probably consists of the first three items in paragraph 2b.

e. Beyond the present confrontation the Soviet Union would undoubtedly be planning to place a "victorious" connotation on whatever settlement is achieved. If the bombers remain in Cuba their task in this regard will be an easy one.

3. The US Perspective

a. The US, prior to the recent Cuban episode, had held that the presence of a Communist regime and a Soviet military presence in Cuba was not negotiable.

b. The discovery of missiles and bombers in Cuba, after US warning of the consequences, placed the USG in a position from which a resort to force, or the threat of it, became necessary. As a result the missiles were removed.

c. In the absence of firm assurances that the bombers will be removed, there is a prima facie case in favor of continuation of the threat of force.

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d. If the US signs off on a post-crisis Cuba which retains its Communist regime and its on-the-ground territorial integrity without adequate safeguards and Western Hemisphere verification, the Communist bloc could make a plausible case before the world of a "peaceful" victory for their cause. Cuba would be able to claim to have emerged from the crisis in a more secure position than before the missiles were emplaced. Moreover, the Latin American nations might see (in the increasing liaison between Communist Cuba and their own leftist parties) a real political threat in this situation which could weaken the US image and harm US objectives.

e. In actual fact, the continued presence of the bombers in Cuba presents a basis, in the post-missile environment, for a more forceful approach to our longer term goals--i.e., the elimination of the Communist regime and the restoration of Cuba to the hemisphere. Had the Soviet Union removed both bombers and missiles in the initial withdrawal, such complete acquiescence might have made it politically infeasible to do more than accept the return to status quo ante. In the present circumstances we have not only the need (as an immediate objective) but also the opportunity (for longer range objectives) to initiate action to carry us beyond that status quo ante. We should apply our threat of force or the force itself against the presence of the bombers in such manner as to advance these long term interests--i.e., removal of the Soviet presence from Cuba and reorientation of the Cuban regime.

4. US Objectives. The US objectives in view of the USSR and US perspectives discussed above should be as follows:

- a. To obtain removal of remaining offensive weapons.
- b. To obtain removal of USSR military presence (troops, MIG pilots, SAM personnel, etc.).
- c. To obtain removal of Castro and/or reorientation of the Communist regime.

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Of the foregoing, our minimum goal at the present time should be the accomplishment of those two objectives, above, which are most likely to fall below the line of priorities in paragraph 2b for which the USSR would exacerbate the crisis. Actions taken should seek to insure this minimum. The achievement of these two objectives will place the US in a position where the accomplishment of the third can be a lower key matter to be accomplished over a longer term period.

5. Recommended Action.

a. The carrot.

- (1) Continue to offer a return to the hemisphere to the Cuban people.
- (2) Seek to establish communications with segments of the Cuban Government designed to split the regime and cause its reorientation.
- (3) Suspend the quarantine if the IL 28's are removed, pending resolution of the problem of verification and adequate safeguards.
- (4) Hold out the offer to Cuba of readmission to OAS, and to the benefits of a Western Hemisphere denuclearized zone (described in a separate paper).

b. The stick.

- (1) Adhere to the original US demands.
 - (a) Removal of bombers and nuclear weapons.
 - (b) Adequate safeguards against re-entry of offensive equipment.

MB: The details of safeguards and verification are the subject of the separate paper. However, it is important to recognize the relationship between the accomplishment of our objectives and the degree of severity of these safeguards. Also, the timing of our spelling out of the meaning of adequate verification and safeguards is important. It is recommended

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that the US communicate no details until the bombers have been removed. At that time the USSR should be given a detailed plan best calculated to force her to give up, in combination with other pressures, her military presence in Cuba.

(2) Continue aerial surveillance. The objective here should be to obtain full coverage and to extend the precedent but not to incite air defense retaliation. (That option should be reserved for later use, if needed.) Moreover, every effort should be expended in negotiations and by US actions, to rebut the Soviet attempt to construe such surveillance on a violation of territorial integrity or of any assurance against invasion.

(3) Tighten the blockade. This mechanism has been the instrument of force to date. In present circumstances the US has a plausible case before the world that the Soviet Government has provided only partial performance. The "hail and pass" procedures should give way to actual visit and search. If more force is needed the quarantine should be extended to POL. This tightening of the quarantine will keep up the US momentum while adding to the credibility of the US position.

c. The orchestration.

(1) A combination of carrot and stick pressures should be so played as to force out the offensive weapons and Soviet military presence while weakening the Cuban Communist regime.

(2) The focus of these pressures should shift primarily to Cuba if the USSR removes the IL 28's.

(3) If it appears to the USSR that we will insist on our original demands, including full and continuing safeguards and verification, they would have to evaluate

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Castro's survival as extremely dubious. In that case their course might well be to disengage their prestige and evacuate their people and sophisticated equipment with as much haste and dignity as the situation permitted.

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