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4 October 1962

OPERATION MONGOOSE - Bertie

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of Meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) on Operation MONGOOSE, 4 October 1962

PRESENT: The Attorney General; Mr. Johnson; Mr. Gilpatric, General Taylor, General Lansdale; Mr. McCone and General Carter; Mr. Wilson

1. The Attorney General opened the meeting by saying that higher authority is concerned about progress on the MONGOOSE program and feels that more priority should be given to trying to mount sabotage operations. The Attorney General said that he wondered if a new look is not required at this time in view of the meager results, especially in the sabotage field. He urged that "massive activity" be mounted within the entire MONGOOSE framework. There was a good deal of discussion about this, and General Lansdale said that another attempt will be made against the major target which has been the object of three unsuccessful missions, and that approximately six new ones are in the planning stage.

Mr. Johnson said that "massive activity" would have to appear to come from within. He also said that he hopes soon to be able to present to the Group a plan for giving Cuban exiles more of a free hand, with the full realization that this would give more visibility to their activities. On this latter point, Mr. McCone said that he reserves judgment as to the feasibility and desirability of such a program. (Mr. Johnson agreed that he has reservations as well.)

2. Mr. McCone then said that he gets the impression that high levels of the government want to get on with activity but still wish to retain a low noise level. He does not believe that this will be possible. Any sabotage would be blamed on the United States. In this connection, he cited the enormous number of telephone calls that had been directed at CIA at the time that the skin divers landed in Eastern Cuba and at the time Cuban exile students shot up the apartment house. He urged that responsible officials be prepared to accept a higher noise level if they want to get on with operations.

In partial rebuttal, the Attorney General said that the reasons people were so concerned at the times mentioned were: (a) the fact that the skin divers were Americans, and (b) that the student

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activity was irresponsible and foolish, and if either of these had in fact been engineered by the U.S. it would have been a great mistake. He went on to say responsible people do wish to get on with operations but want to relate the possibility of attributability to the importance of the particular undertaking. He also questioned whether we are going down the right road or whether "more direct action" is not indicated. He urged that alternative and imaginative plans be developed for accomplishing the overall objective.

3. Returning to Mr. Johnson's point about the necessity of massive activity coming from within, Mr. McCone pointed out that internal security missions are now so rigid that internal uprisings are sure to be brutally suppressed. It was agreed that the current guidelines do not call for inciting such an uprising.

4. Mr. McCone and General Carter explained the tremendous efforts which are necessary to insure that an operation such as the sabotage one previously authorized cannot be pinned directly on the U.S. After considerable discussion, the Group agreed that it is not necessary to go to such extreme lengths to guarantee non-attributability and that short cuts will be acceptable.

5. Mr. Gilpatric reported that Defense is now working hard on establishing a Cuban brigade. Recruits will be trained for four or five months and will then be on call for any future action.

6. General Taylor reported that the Joint Staff is refining various military contingency plans, based on a variety of possible situations. Such situations include: Soviet action against Berlin; presence of Bloc offensive weapons in Cuba; attack against Guantanamo; a popular uprising; armed Cuban subversion in the Hemisphere; and the establishment of a direct threat to the U.S.

7. The Group then turned to the subject of reconnaissance of Cuba. (Dr. Scoville and Colonel Steakley joined the Group for this part of the discussion.) It was pointed out that the Agency is now restricted to using its high performance vehicle in the southeast quadrant of Cuba, because of the SAM sites. It was questioned whether this is a reasonable restriction at this time, particularly when the SAMs are almost certainly not operational.

Colonel Steakley and Dr. Scoville described for the Group a spectrum of reconnaissance activities which could be undertaken, ranging from low-level Navy fighters through drones, up to the Agency's capabilities, particularly equipped with new radar countermeasures.

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The result of this discussion was that it was agreed that DOD and CIA should get together on recommendations for targets within Cuba that require coverage and on recommendations as to how to achieve this coverage. A meeting was set for next Tuesday, at which time DOD and CIA should be prepared to discuss all possibilities, including requirements, capabilities, vulnerabilities, etc.

8. There was some discussion of the desirability of mining Cuban waters. It was pointed out that non-U.S.-attributable mines, which appear to be homemade, are available and could be laid by small craft operated by Cubans.

9. It was agreed that the Attorney General should act as Chairman of the Special Group (Augmented) at least for the time being.

10. It was agreed that four major points emerged from today's discussion:

- a. We ought to go all out for increased intelligence.
- b. There should be considerably more sabotage. 101
- c. Restrictions on attributability can be relaxed so that training and other preparations can be subject to some short cuts.
- d. All efforts should be made to develop new and imaginative approaches to the possibility of getting rid of the Castro regime.

Thomas A. Parrott
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cc: General Lansdale

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