

4 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Proposed Presidential Statement on
Cuba

1. We consider this to be an appropriate time for a Presidential statement on the Cuban situation. The growing economic pressures weighing on the Cuban people, the regime's increasing restrictions on individual rights, the continuing harassment of exile raids, and the mounting indications of frictions between the Cuban and Soviet regimes combine to create conditions that would probably give such a Presidential statement a greater impact inside Cuba than would have been the case even a few months ago.

2. We have reviewed the proposed Presidential statements on Cuba which were circulated to the members of the Standing Group of the NSC for the 16 July meeting (attached). Our comments of 15 July on these proposed statements remain valid.

3. Because of the changes that have occurred in the Cuban situation, however, we feel that several new points would be appropriate for a Presidential statement at this time, along with many of the key points made in the Department of State draft of July. Specifically, we feel that the following points should be added:

a. We think there should be greater emphasis on the worsening economic plight of the Cuban people: the general economic decline that was manifest well before Hurricane Flora; the continuing shortages of consumer goods; the ineptness of the Castro bureaucracy; the tightened control by the regime over the

lives of the Cuban workers; the weakening of worker incentives and the substitution of work speed-up gimmicks; the attempts to liquidate the medium farmer inherent in the 4 October decree confiscating all farms larger than 167 acres; the shift in agriculture from cooperatives to the more tightly controlled state farms; and the concern of the small private farmers that they will be next.

b. We feel that it would perhaps be useful for the President to make some statement on US policy toward a post-Castro regime re-emphasizing that the United States does not envisage the turning back of the political clock in Cuba to pre-Castro days and stating United States willingness to work with and assist a popularly-based anti-Communist regime. It might be appropriate to recall the following passages from the President's address in the Orange Bowl on 29 December 1962:

"Under the Alianza para el Progreso, we support for Cuba and for all the countries of this hemisphere the right of free elections and the free exercise of basic human freedoms. We support land reform and the right of every campesino to own the land he tills. We support the effort of every free nation to pursue programs of economic progress. We support the right of every free people to freely transform the economic and political institutions of society so that they may serve the welfare of all...and I believe these are the principles of the great majority of Cuban people today, and I am confident that all over the island of Cuba, in the government itself, in the army, and in the militia, there are many who have viewed with dismay the destruction of freedom on their island and who are determined to restore that freedom so that the Cuban people may once more govern themselves."

c. Specifically, we believe it extremely important in this context that the President emphasize our recognition that many Cubans now serving the

Castro regime will play a part in its overthrow. These people need to be assured that the United States is sympathetic to their problems.

d. We feel that it would also be appropriate again to stress the fact that Cuba has become a satellite of a foreign power and an instrument of a foreign ideology. Even though the number of Soviet military personnel in Cuba has been reduced in recent months, this has not lessened Cuba's dependence on the Soviet Union.

e. The President might also wish to touch on the problem of Cuban subversion in other Latin American countries, stressing the point that Castro is inciting small minorities in every other Latin American country toward violence and terrorism in an attempt to lessen the pressures weighing on him at home. He seeks thereby to destroy developing democratic institutions in many of these countries before they have become sufficiently well-rooted to demonstrate their value.

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