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II

BLOCKADE

Action Contemplated

A. This alternative contemplates a series of political steps culminating in the establishment of a full or limited naval blockade based on a formal declaration of war within the framework of the OAS and the Rio Treaty. The maximum objective would be the bringing down of Castro and the minimum objective would be the prevention of the introduction into Cuba of further offensive weapons. Hopefully, at some stage in the political steps, Khrushchev and Castro, faced by our clear determination, would agree to a settlement that would accomplish the minimum objective without the necessity of proceeding to the blockade. However, the likelihood of this is not high and once having undertaken this course we should be prepared to proceed firmly and expeditiously through its various steps. A full blockade could possibly be effective in about three months in bringing economic chaos to Cuba. A limited blockade could permit the passage of food, medicines and other purely civilian goods to reduce hardship to the Cuban people, and be directed only at offensive weapons or all weapons and war materiel, including POL.

B. Advantages. The advantages of the plan are that it contemplates a series of ascending political steps, at each stage of which Khrushchev and Castro could find an "out" if they desired and by maximum consultation reduce strain on our alliances and permits the action to be undertaken

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with the maximum possibility of such allied support as can be obtained. It also avoids the necessity of major military action directed against Cuban soil and could accomplish our objectives with minimum casualties on both sides.

C. Disadvantages. The Soviets could readily counter with a full blockade of Berlin or a blockade against only American forces in Berlin which could face us with a direct military confrontation with the Soviet Union. If the Soviets attempted to break the blockade it would also require that we take direct military action against Soviet vessels, including Soviet warships or submarines. The series of political steps contemplated would also permit our allies considerable opportunity to bring pressure to deflect or deter us from our course.

D. Accompanying Diplomatic Moves.

Scenario

1st day

1. Immediately communicate privately with Khrushchev and Castro on presence of MRBM's, implying that, if satisfactory answer not received, further unspecified action would be taken.

2. Simultaneously inform key Latin American Governments (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, and selected Central American countries) of facts, including showing of photographs here to Ambassadors, of communications to Castro and Khrushchev and of contemplated OAS action.

3. Simultaneously inform key NATO countries (Germany, France, U.K. and Italy) of facts, including showing of photographs to Ambassadors here.

4. On

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2nd day

4. On the following day inform the NAC and OAS of the facts without spelling out contemplated action in detail.
5. On the same day, following conclusion of NAC and OAS meetings, the President issues a public statement including the following elements:
  - a. Facts on the bases, emphasizing nature of threat to all of Caribbean area.
  - b. Reference to previous Soviet public and private assurances that bases would not be established.
  - c. Reference to President's previous statements on establishment of offensive threat in Cuba and Congressional Resolution.
  - d. Reference to OAS Foreign Ministers' communique of October 6, including specifically surveillance of Cuba.
  - e. Precautionary military steps that have been taken to neutralize threat. (This would imply but not specifically state nuclear weapons are targeted for immediate use against bases.)
  - f. The fact that we have immediately instituted consultation with the OAS members on further steps to be taken to meet this threat to hemispheric security.
6. Without prior announcement but without attempting to conceal the fact, undertake evacuation of dependents from Guantanamo.

7. Make

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7. Make a special effort to have Venezuela, Colombia and Central American countries issue prompt public appeals for effective action keyed to threat bases represent to them.

3rd day 8. Await replies from Khrushchev and Castro and gauge domestic and international reaction.

9. Call for meeting of "Organ of Consultation" of the OAS for following day.

4th day 10. Dependent on assessment of reactions and replies received from Castro and Khrushchev, convene "Organ of Consultation" of the OAS seeking a resolution authorizing armed action against the threat to the security of the Hemisphere.

5th day 11. If and when OAS action (which requires two-thirds' vote) is favorable, immediately seek a special session of the Congress to obtain a declaration of war. In the presentation of the resolution to Congress, the limited objectives of seeking the prevention of installation in Cuba of offensive weapons through a blockade should be expressed.

12. Immediately following favorable action by Congress, impose blockade.

E. Allied Reactions

While the major European maritime powers have vigorously resisted the presently proposed limited inhibitions on the shipping trade with Cuba, they can be expected to take quite a different

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position when they are once informed of the nature of the Cuban threat to the United States and the seriousness of the American response. Particularly if there is a formal declaration of war by Congress, the Governments of the Allied Powers can be expected to cooperate with the United States in enforcing the blockade and in imposing the necessary discipline on their own shipowners. Under these circumstances it is not believed that the blockade itself would result in serious problems for the NATO alliance; however, other actions taken by the Soviet Union in response to the blockade might prove divisive as indicated above.

F. Soviet Reactions

While there can be no certainty of Soviet reaction, there is a possibility that the Soviets would not attempt to break the blockade so declared but would confine themselves only to action in the United Nations, propaganda, etc. The possibility of their moving against Berlin would in part be determined by their estimate of the allied unity that would exist on this subject. If they moved on Berlin, either by a full blockade, a blockade of allied forces, or a blockade of only American forces, we would of course be faced with a direct confrontation there. In any negotiations the Soviets would, of course, seek to

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"trade off" Cuba and Berlin. If the Soviets attempted to break the blockade direct military action would be required against Soviet vessels, including warships and submarines.

G. Cuban Reactions

Cuban reactions could include an attack against Guantanamo, which would require direct military action on our part outside the area of the base to insure its defense. Castro might also take such action as beginning the execution of small groups of the Bay of Pigs prisoners, and/or other political prisoners making the lifting of the blockade the price for stopping. If and when the blockade resulted in threatening Castro's hold he might in desperation make small sporadic air attacks against American civilian targets on the East coast. It is very unlikely that he could, without Soviet cooperation and assistance, fire MRBM's or other atomic weapons at U. S. targets.

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