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March 29, 1962

SECRET

MEMORANDUM TO MR. MCGEORGE BUNDY

Subject: Actions on Cuban Prisoners

We are taking several steps to deal with the Cuban prisoner trials aimed at (a) attempting to assure that executions will be held to a minimum or not conducted, (b) to counteract the propagandist impact of the trials.

1. A special working group under Ed Murrow has been set up and is now at work. This group met yesterday.

2. We have asked all our posts in Latin America and our NATO representative to approach their governments to see if appeals can be made to Castro for fair trials, justice, etc., or if they will protest the trial. We intend to make a special effort with regard to Brazil whose good will means much to Castro.

3. This morning the OAS will adopt a Dominican Republic resolution calling for fair trials, adherence to international standards of justice, etc.

4. We are looking into the possibility of a similar resolution in the Economic and Social Council of the UN--not sponsored by us--with the possibility of requesting UN observers.

5. We have allowed the Cuban families to go to Cuba for the trial with the assurance that they will be readmitted. We have no right to deny them permission to leave, but they need our assurance that they can be readmitted. We will release this.

6. The Cuban families committee will probably send an appeal to Castro asking that they be allowed to send in legal counsel for the accused. If this request is granted we will try and get leading Latin jurists to go to Cuba to make speeches at the trials, etc.

7. We are trying to have some international press organization request that there be full, public coverage of the trials.

8. A direction has gone out to all our PAO's in Latin America instructing them to have local media protest the trials, injustice, etc., and call for clemency.

9. We

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EO 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)

State 4/75 NLK-75-38
 by MFD NARS, Date 6/20/75

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9. We are suggesting to the Cuban Families Committee that they let it be known that they are compiling a blacklist of all associated with the trial--lawyers, judges, etc.--for future action.

10. We are considering an approach to the Czech embassy informing them that executions of the prisoners would have a profound impact on public and political opinion in this country raising the pressures to take unilateral action against Castro.

11. We are considering an approach to Castro--through intermediaries--to make a deal for the life of the prisoners; offering money or food to spare their lives. This would probably be carried out, if it is carried out, through voluntary relief agencies.

12. Procedures have been established to keep the USIA and CIA on top of this situation constantly as it develops.

Richard N. Goodwin

ARA:RNG:j

Clearances: ARA-Mr. Martin (in
substance)
G-Mr. Johnson

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