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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 15, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BUNDY

SUBJECT: Che Guevera and Lisa Howard

1. I have talked to John Crimmins about the Che Guevera approach. He and Tom Mann are very interested to hear what Guevera wants to say to us if, in fact, he does want to say something to us. (I told State that I thought that this could be a Lisa-generated operation but that the odds are probably 7 - 5 that Guevera, in fact, would like to talk to us; whether he would say anything to us that we don't already know is another matter.)
2. The mechanics of talking to Guevera is the tough part. He is a real center of attention in New York (e. g. police, crowds) and it would be extremely awkward to try to get together with him privately. In addition, my own very strong view is that we should keep Lisa Howard out of it as a middleman; among many other considerations, Lisa is so subjectively wound up in rapprochement that one would never know what Guevera is saying and what Lisa is interpreting.
3. John and I agreed tentatively on the following outline.
 - (a) If Lisa Howard calls me back, I will simply tell her that I have nothing to tell her and will let her know if and when I do.
 - (b) John will explore with selected people in State the possibility and desirability of having a USUN type (maybe Yost) "fall in front of" Tabio, who is the Cuban ambassador to the UN, and say (1) that we understand from a newspaper source that Che wants to say something to us, and (2) is this true? If the answer is affirmative, we can then decide what to do. The main problem is to ascertain the truth - e. g. whether Che really has something to say to us or whether this is Lisa Howard building bridges. Somewhere along the line, our man would also indicate that, if it is true that the Cubans want to talk to us, we prefer not to talk through unofficial third parties.

GC
Gordon Chase

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

By WJ NARA. Date 2-21-90
NIJ 36-180 appeal

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