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(E54)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

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DATE: June 9, 1975

SUBJECT: Cuba Policy: Tactics Before and After San Jose

PARTICIPANTS: The Secretary
Mr. Eagleburger, Deputy Under Secretary, M
Mr. Rogers, Assistant Secretary, ARA
Mr. Lord, Assistant Secretary, S/P
Mr. Gleysteen, ARA/CCA - notetaker

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The Secretary: What?

Mr. Rogers: Decisions are needed on two levels. First, whether we probe the Cubans again before San Jose. If we don't know what's on the Cubans' minds:

-- we'll get nickeled and dimed by the Canadians;
-- Congress will get ahead of us on Cuba policy.

The Secretary: So what! Cuba is not a popular issue.

Mr. Rogers: Also for resolution is whether we decide to seek a prior agreement on compensation, or whether we are to agree on terms to negotiate compensation and establish diplomatic relations, leaving settlement on compensation until later.

The Secretary: No. Absolutely not. This is out of the question. It is not my style of work.

Mr. Rogers: This was the way it was done with China. A relationship was established before compensation was agreed upon. There could be a machinery for a dialogue with Cuba which was less than a full relationship.

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(Drafting Office and Officer)

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- 2 -

The Secretary: I would like to explore with the companies whether they can not delay another six weeks.

Mr. Rogers: We'll explore if the Babcock and Wilcox license can be held up; we have told the companies to hold their applications.

The Secretary: Is this straight?

Mr. Rogers: Yes it is.

The Secretary: Yes, it is straight if we haven't already told the Canadians that we'll lift the sanctions after San Jose.

Mr. Rogers: I can't speak for EUR but will check with Art Hartman. I'm sure not.

The Secretary: I thought you people put EUR up to that memorandum.

Mr. Rogers: We had nothing to do with sending it up; I just concurred.

To get back to the probe with the Cubans; we have few cards to play now; after San Jose, we'll have even fewer.

Mr. Lord: Yes. The Cubans know what will happen in San Jose.

Mr. Eagleburger: The Cubans have never replied to the message to a diplomat in New York.

The Secretary: The Chinese played with exchanging messages for a year.

Mr. Eagleburger: There have been four messages to the Cubans and no reply.

The Secretary: I don't see what we can gain tactically by a probe.

Mr. Rogers: The cards in our hands are declining in number.

The Secretary: What can we give them anyway; lifting of third country sanctions?

SECRET/NODIS

The Secretary: What other basis?

Mr. Rogers: Something less than having an Ambassador in Havana.

The Secretary: It was 1 1/2 years of contact with China before we reached agreement to exchange missions:

- Cuba is not important.
- I will not cater to the propensity of the Democrats to make unilateral concessions;
- Cuba can do nothing for us except to embarrass us in Latin America--and we thought we had successfully taken care of this.
- I would prefer not to lift the third country sanctions until San Jose.
- What about the Hartman memo? I was told by MacEachen there would be six more weeks before something builds up again. But now I am told to do something immediately.

Mr. Rogers: You have told the Canadians it is better to wait until August before pressing us again.

The Secretary: My answer was negative because MacEachen does not expect any pressure as suggested in the memos.

Mr. Rogers: MacEachen apparently misunderstood, thinking third country sanctions might be lifted in June instead of August. Ambassador Porter phoned today and got this confirmed.

The Secretary: The Canadians want to show that they can make the Secretary back-up. Have we encouraged them to do this? Is there any reason why another foreign firm should get the contract?

Mr. Rogers: Sure. There are other manufacturers of boilers in Germany and Japan. The main issue is the price. Canada could lose the contract.

SECRET/NODIS

- 4 -

Mr. Rogers: We could indicate we have some discretion in determining this.

The Secretary: What would you say if the Cubans said, "screw you"! Suppose they don't answer? I don't see how we can make any threats about not supporting the lifting of sanctions at San Jose.

Mr. Rogers: Well, there are the third-country sanctions-- proposals for a basketball team to Cuba, etc.

The Secretary: I thought it was baseball?

Mr. Rogers: McGovern was dickering for a college level basketball team to Cuba this summer and a baseball team in the autumn. Incidentally I have to reply to Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn on the latter proposal. Also outstanding is a request for our shipping food and medicines by a religious group. This comes to \$10 million worth to Cuba.

The Secretary: I suppose you already granted it.

Mr. Rogers: No, not yet. The point is that our position is being continually chiselled away by Congress.

The Secretary: Don't let them. This should be easy.

Mr. Rogers: A Kennedy bill to abolish all the sanctions could pass.

The Secretary: That would be a great one to veto.

Mr. Eagleburger: Or you could hold your nose and let it go through.

The Secretary: I find it intriguing that Kennedy would let his name be attached to "soft on communism." Let us find out:

-- Who is in favor of it?

-- What do we lose by it?

-- Is this statesmanship?

SECRET/NODIS

SECRET/NODIS

- 5 -

Mr. Rogers: There could be some political credit for playing the humanitarian card in Congress; there is an issue there.

The Secretary: I favored a probe with Cuba last year but there was no answer; what new now can be said?

Mr. Eagleburger: Before San Jose, just tell them you're going to do it.

The Secretary: What happens if the Cubans announce that we have probed before San Jose.

Mr. Eagleburger: We'd be better off telling them what we are going to do - as we did with the Chinese.

The Secretary: Castro told Manckiewicz that the mere fact that Cuba had survived was a victory for them and a defeat for us. They treat us with contempt. But since all these things are going to happen, we might as well start a dialogue:

- Just before San Jose;
- do it in 4 weeks;
- better not bargain when you are going to vote to leave the countries free on the sanctions, if you are going to do it anyway.

Mr. Rogers: There are 20-25 unacted-upon subsidiary licenses.

The Secretary: Do a message to Castro, but get it up to me before it leaks; as it usually does before I get it.

Mr. Rogers: There are no leaks on Cuba from ARA in the last six months. We have a good record.

The Secretary: Yes, that's true. It is better to deal straight with Castro. Behave chivalrously; do it like a big guy, not like a shyster. Let him know.

- We are moving in a new direction;
- we'd like to synchronize;

SECRET/NODIS

- New York City under the UN mantle would be the place;
- steps will be unilateral;
- reciprocity is necessary;
- we shall stop until we get some reciprocity.

This should handle the McGovern problem. When the Democrats scream about our Cuban policy, we can say we've already done points 1, 2 and 3. This will keep the Cubans off-guard and we can warn the legislative branch of negotiations with Cuba.

Mr. Rogers: Remember what I told you when McGovern came back from Havana. McGovern quoted Castro as saying he was doing the following favors: allowing Luis Tiant's parents to visit the US for Senator Brooke and releasing the \$2 million of Southern airways hijack money for Senator Sparkman. Then McGovern said he would like some political prisoners released for himself. Castro replied, if I do this, what will I give to Kennedy when he comes here? That's a true story.

The Secretary: It better be, because when you told it to me the last time I told it to Kennedy. Kennedy responded - that he is sure there will be one more hanging by his thumbs with a sign "For Kennedy" on his chest.

Mr. Rogers: The release of Lunt is all but set.

The Secretary: I am seeing Jackie on Saturday night and it would be nice to say something to her about this if I can; say, 24 hours before Lunt's release.

-- (To Rogers) You should draft a message for the Cubans before San Jose.

-- When am I going to Latin America?

Mr. Eagleburger: When your schedule allows it.

SECRET/NODIS

- 7 -

The Secretary: I really do have to do this this year.

Mr. Rogers: Last week in August might be a time.

The Secretary: That's my thinking; if not then, then in October. Can't go in September because of the UNGA.

-- There are also the European Security Conference and the trip to China. The latter will be an excruciating bore if Chou En-lai is not on hand.

-- Have that message to the Cubans before San Jose--in three weeks.

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