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Nota de Archivo: *Washington. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–50, SRG Meeting, Chile, 12/23/70. Top Secret; Sensitive. This paper was prepared for the Senior Review Group. The December 23 covering memorandum from Moorer to Kissinger states, "There is no current, well-defined U.S. policy concerning the establishment of communist military bases within the Western Hemisphere. Such a policy could facilitate quick and decisive action by the United States in the event an attempt is made to establish such bases." (Ibid.) Five days later Moorer wrote to Laird, "U.S. preventive moves [against an increased Soviet presence] should include formulation and announcement of a more definitive national policy designed to deter the establishment of Soviet military bases in the Western Hemisphere." (Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, December 28; ibid.,*

Preliminary Analysis of Security Implications Regarding the Establishment of Communist Bases in the Western Hemisphere

NOTE: The term "bases" is used here in a broad sense; that is, a locality from which military or quasi-military operations are projected or supported.

1. Increases in Soviet strategic power and the ability to project that power have important implications for the security of the Western Hemisphere. The Soviets have shown an increasing interest in the hemisphere, as indicated by their expanded efforts to establish diplomatic and trade missions and an increase in their naval and air activities. At this time, the most probable major Soviet requirement would be for facilities for support of missile-launching submarines. Cuba could provide such facilities for future Soviet operations in the At-lantic and the Caribbean area. If Soviet military operations were ex-tended to the southeastern Pacific, or South Atlantic, support facilities on the South American Continent would significantly enhance these operations.

2. For the next few years, Soviet military activity in Latin America, apart from Cuba, will likely be confined to foot-in-the-door operations; quasi-military bases for ships and aircraft; port and airfield visits and military exercises designed to show the flag and to demonstrate support for sympathetic regimes; military aid and arms sales to supplant US efforts; scientific facilities to assist in space tracking, navigation, and communications; and cooperation with friendly Latin American countries for support of Antarctic operations.

3. A naval support facility capable of supporting Soviet surface combatants, as well as nuclear submarines, is being constructed at Cienfuegos, Cuba. Since September 1970, Soviet surface combatants and support ships have periodically visited the facility, and work on the facility continues although at a slower pace. Should the Soviets choose to use the facility, such use would approximately double the patrol time of their submarines off the Atlantic coast. If the United States continues to exert pressure against Soviet submarine support facilities, it is unlikely that the Soviets will seek to utilize Cuba as a base except to support their fleet visits and exercises in the Caribbean and to support their long-range reconnaissance aircraft.

4. A number of recent developments in Latin America give rise to concern that significant changes in hemispheric political orientation and power relationships are developing. Recent examples include the emergence of a strongly nationalistic and leftist-leaning (though not Communist) government in Peru, Bolivia's inclination to the left, and most importantly the inauguration of an avowed Marxist, Salvador Allende, as President of Chile. In the latter case, Allende is moving rapidly against little opposition to transform Chile into a Marxist-socialist state. He has recognized Cuba and is expected to recognize other Communist states. There are also unconfirmed reports of plans for the establishment of a Soviet commercial shipping arrangement which would include providing Chile with merchant vessels and a Soviet-manned merchant marine facility in Valparaiso, and such a facility could easily support combatants and [formalize?] the support base for Soviet operations in the southeastern Pacific. Commercial air routes involving Chile, Peru, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe are also under consideration. Better relations with Communist nations will likely lead to development of Chile as a base of support for intelligence, subversive and insurgent activities which would constitute a danger to the hemisphere.

5. Soviet establishment or use of military bases in the Western Hemisphere would have serious security implications for the United States to include:

a. Significant improvement of the Soviet submarine launched missile capability through simplified submarine support and increased on station time.

b. Increased Soviet capability to [interdict?] lines of communication, particularly the strategic Panama Canal and Cape Horn routes, e.g., CVAs and supertankers are too large to transit the Canal.

c. Increased Soviet capability to interdict the flow of strategic materials from Latin America to the United States.

d. Increased capabilities for Soviet support of subversion and insurgent activities.

e. Increased Soviet intelligence collecting capability to include reconnaissance, COMINT, HUMINT and monitoring space events, satellite activities and missile testing.

f. Increased Soviet military influence in the subject country at the expense of US military influence.

g. Extension of Soviet military assistance to the subject country including the establishment of a training and advisory group.

h. Expanded communications facilities for Soviet command and control.

i. Increased hemispheric instability generated by an arms race or conflict.

j. Impairment leading to possible disintegration of hemispheric security arrangements.

k. Increased Soviet capability to support the establishment and maintenance of Communist governments in Latin America.

l. Increased Soviet bargaining power vis-à-vis United States security interests.

6. The formulation and implementation of a US policy to prevent the establishment of a foreign Communist base in the Western Hemisphere should evaluate the following considerations.

a. There is no general principle or rule of international law which prohibits a sovereign state from permitting the establishment of foreign military or quasi-military bases on its soil. However, treaties or agreements may prohibit or limit the unilateral exercise of sovereignty by a state in this respect.

b. US policy in this area has been based traditionally on the principle of the Monroe Doctrine. The legitimacy of the unilateral application of the doctrine has been eroded both by events and a significant number of inter-American agreements to which the United States is a signatory. Nevertheless, it stands as a reminder to other states that foreign intervention in the hemisphere, in matters affecting US national security, is unacceptable.

c. The unilateral enunciation of a US policy against establishment of Communist bases in the Western Hemisphere could be construed as intervention in the internal affairs of the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS). Nevertheless, the 1968 Treaty of Tlatelolco, to which many Latin American countries are parties, prohibits the possession of nuclear weapons in the territories of the parties and the establishment of a foreign military base with nuclear capability. Cuba is not a party to the treaty. Chile signed the treaty but has not yet ratified it. The establishment of bases, particularly with a nuclear capability, would endanger the peace of America within the meaning of the Caracas Resolution (No. 93) of 1954 and the Punta del Este Resolution of January 1962. The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty 1947) establishes a consultative mechanism to decide on measures to be taken in cases of extracontinental aggression which might endanger the peace of the hemisphere and recognizes the inherent right of every state to take reasonable and proportionate measures to deal with a threat to its existence. The OAS provides one vehicle to “take such action as is necessary, including the use of armed forces, to deal with any situations which might endanger the peace of America.”

7. In light of the potential threat and the lack of a current, well-defined policy to cope with it, the United States should formulate such a policy. The policy with implementing courses of action should be designed to prevent the establishment of foreign Communist bases in the Western Hemisphere. Implementing courses of action should include political, economic, psychological, and military measures. While such actions should complement and support each other, the political actions should receive primary emphasis in the early stages. They should precede other actions as a U.S. warning to both the foreign Communist government and the subject country government that the establishment of a Communist base in the Western Hemisphere is unacceptable. Since a detailed treatment of political and economic actions is beyond the scope of this paper, it focuses on military courses of action. Such actions, selected on the basis of appropriateness to a particular situation, could be directed against the subject country or the foreign Communist country or both to prevent the establishment of a Communist base or effect its removal. The desired means for applying military force in the Western Hemisphere would be under the auspices of the OAS. Failing this, force should be applied by some other multilateral arrangement; and unilaterally only as a last resort.