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December 19, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Group (CI)  
2 p.m., Thursday, December 19, 1963

PRESENT: Governor Harriman, Mr. Bell, Mr. Forrestal, General Carter vice  
Mr. McCone, Mr. Sloan vice Mr. Gilpatric, Colonel Higgins vice  
General Taylor, Mr. Nolan vice the Attorney General

Mr. Bowdler and Mr. Herbert were present for Item No. 2.

Mr. Margolies and Mr. Engle were present for Item No. 3.

Mr. Maechling was present for the meeting.

NSC REVIEW  
COMPLETED,  
6/26/2003

1. Intelligence Summary

General Carter reviewed the intelligence memorandum distributed for this item. He stated that a Pathet Lao response can be expected in the area where rightist forces have recently conducted operations. Infiltration into South Viet-Nam of cadres and specialists from North Viet-Nam continues. Increased Viet Cong attacks are anticipated on the third anniversary of the foundation of the National Front (FLN).

Governor Harriman commented that State is preparing a report on conditions in North Viet-Nam and asked that CIA contribute to this report.

General Carter stated that he agreed that progress has been made in improving the efficiency of the police forces [redacted]

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2. Report on Terrorism in Latin American Countries on the Critical List

Mr. Bowdler, Deputy Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, ARA, presented a summary of the State memorandum submitted for this item. He reviewed the current situation and commented on the internal security programs in each country covered in this report. Our programs in these five countries are considered to be generally adequate based on the present threat, the willingness of the Government to act, and the capacity of their forces to absorb our assistance. However, if the levels of terrorism increase, more will have to be done.

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Mr. Bowdler stated that there is a real danger that terrorism may increase [redacted] prestige has diminished [redacted] and he might resort to adopting Castro-type tactics. Satisfactory progress is being made by [redacted] in efforts to control terrorist activities; nevertheless, intelligence capabilities to identify the terrorists are in need of improvement. To assist in improving intelligence capabilities [redacted] a full time advisor has been assigned to the Country Team. [redacted] are encouraging the Government to improve the effectiveness of the police forces as this has been neglected, because of the emphasis placed on the Army. Major efforts to curb terrorism

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[redacted] prior to the election have had some success, but terrorism is expected to continue. U.S. programs designed to improve police capabilities and develop a higher standard of professionalism within the police forces are still receiving priority attention.

General Carter stated that his agency agrees that the current terrorist situation in these countries is not yet serious, but expressed his concern over the adequacy of our programs to meet Communist plans to increase terrorist activities all over Latin America. Mr. Herbert added that a recent intelligence report indicates Castro has given instructions to leftist groups to conduct increased terrorist activities in selected Latin American countries.

Following an exchange of views by the members on what should be done to determine the adequacy of US programs to cope with the reported threat of increased Communist terrorism in the critical list countries, it was the consensus of the Group that although terrorism poses no immediate problem, a potential danger does exist and now is the time to make an assessment of this problem.

The Group agreed that the Latin American Policy Committee be asked to review current and planned programs to counter terrorist activities in countries on the critical list, in light of future developments as estimated by CIA, to determine where programs should be stepped up and how. The assessment should reflect estimated future resource requirements in terms of the threat in each country. In conducting this review, the ability of the country to absorb additional assistance will be considered.

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The Group agreed with Mr. Bell's suggestion that a case study on [redacted] terrorism be prepared. This study should examine lessons learned from all of our efforts to counter terrorism in that country so that the experience gained can be applied to other countries faced with this threat.

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4. Situation [redacted]

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Mr. Margolies cautioned that we should not become too optimistic over the situation [redacted] despite encouraging developments. Ambassador [redacted] reports that the efficiency of the police forces has increased. Mr. Bell stated that he agreed with this observation, but much remains to be done to improve the competence of the police forces.

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[redacted]

The Group approved the proposals contained in the Interagency Working Group's memorandum and agreed that the internal security situation will be reviewed when the Progress Report on the Internal Defense Plan is submitted to the Group on January 16, 1964.

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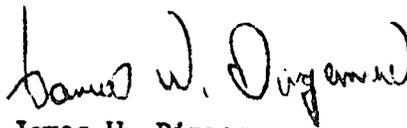
3.

It was agreed that Assistant Secretary Mann should be invited to meet with the Group at an early date, and he should be informed of the reports that have been requested at this meeting.

Miscellaneous

A. After Mr. Forrestal receives a reaction from the White House, the revised terms of reference for the Group will be considered.

B. No meetings are scheduled for December 26, 1963, and January 2, 1964.



James W. Dingeman  
Executive Secretary  
Special Group (CI)

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