

1 February 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : PB/NSC Coordination Staff

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SUBJECT : NFIB Discussion of Status of Analytical Efforts on
the Soviet Brigade in Cuba and Related Issues

1. At the end of the next NFIB meeting you will be discussing the attached paper (Tab A) prepared by NFAC in response to your questions about the state of the Community's analytical effort on the brigade. To prepare for that meeting, I suggest you review the highlighted portions of the paper and read "Notes" on our handling of the brigade (which he provided me informally and is attached at Tab B).

2. The following are some major issues and suggested talking points you might want to consider discussing at the NFIB meeting:

a. What program of research should now be undertaken on Soviet activities in Cuba (and on the Cuban military)?

-The NFAC paper (Tab A) to which you all contributed was very helpful.

-Suggests certain other lines of analytical pursuit that would be worthwhile for all to undertake. e.g:

-The hypothesis in response to question 5b that "the Soviets may now be less concerned with US sensitivities about their activities in Cuba" may be a good starting point. What would the dynamics of the Soviet-Cuban relationship likely be if this proves to be the case?

-Have already asked NFAC to work on an analysis comparing the configuration of the Soviet brigade with Cuban units sent abroad. An in-depth look at Soviet brigades and forward area units (such as used in Afghanistan) would be equally valuable. (DIA to do?)

b. Interagency communication

-Glad to know that major review will take place next month under sponsorship of NIO/USSR-EE.

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c. The post-mortem on the brigade. You might want to describe your perspective on the importance of this effort. (At Tab C is a copy of the terms of reference that you intended to mention at the Community breakfast on 24 January which was cancelled.) [redacted]

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3. Additional actions you might want to consider taking: The response to the questions you posed indicate a heavy reliance on current intelligence to signal when in-depth analytical effort should be undertaken (see answer to question 7). Consequently, [redacted] thesis--"tardy identification (of the brigade) resulted less...from inadequate collection than from inadequate analysis"--could well continue to be true today unless the Community develops a strategy for research (and improvement of analytical methods). Perhaps a follow-up memo to Bruce Clarke, along the following lines, would be useful as a means of getting NFAC to begin to frame a research strategy:

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"Your responses to my questions on the Soviet brigade in Cuba were very helpful and the paper you prepared will get our discussion at NFIB off to a good start. But I was disturbed by the statement in response to question 7 that "the production of finished intelligence on the brigade is keyed to the receipt of significant new information on Soviet activities in Cuba." Aren't we falling into the same trap that caused problems in the first place: i.e. failure to question analytical assumptions and heavy reliance on current intelligence cause us to look at an issue. I'd appreciate your thoughts on the kind of research program we should undertake on the brigade and the Soviet-Cuban relationship in general." [redacted]

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Attachments
As stated