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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

May 5, 1969

MEMORANDUM

TO: ARA - Mr. Charles A. Meyer *AM*  
FROM: INR/DDC - William C. Trueheart *WCT*  
SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee,  
29 April 1969

The minutes of the 303 Committee meeting, dated 1 May 1969, contained the following item:

"1. Feasibility of Covert Operations Against Cuba

a. The Chairman stated that this item had been placed on the agenda as the result of the expressed interest of higher authority in having a review made of past and present covert operations and the feasibility of future operations directed at the Cuban problem.

b. Messrs. Broe and Phillips provided a detailed briefing and responded to questioning on the variety of covert operations conducted during the intervening years since the Bay of Pigs. These involved extensive maritime operations in support of infiltration and exfiltration of both sabotage and intelligence agents, an exile paramilitary force which successfully struck sugar mills, economic warfare operations, exile-oriented radio broadcasts from Swan Island, and false information and deception operations. All of these activities were generally successful in execution but in some cases negative reactions outweighed the successful operations.

c. At present, considerable intelligence and counter-intelligence data is available from a wide variety of human and technical sources. The false information program continues successfully though fluctuating in intensity somewhat because of fluctuations in USSR-Cuban relations. An affirmative response was given to Mr. Mitchell's query as to whether this deception activity could be increased. A unilateral propaganda capability is also maintained with new broadcasting operations being developed.

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E.O. 12958, as amended  
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d. There was considerable discussion on what kinds of covert actions might now be undertaken to increase Castro's problems were the decision taken to do so. It was pointed out that the situation in Cuba today is vastly changed from the early 1960's. Under the guidance of Soviet advisors (present estimate, 3000), the military and security services have become formidable and maintain tight controls. The Soviets have provided ample land, sea and air military hardware and an excellent communications system. There is a lack of human motivation in Cuba to overthrow Castro. The prevailing feeling was that large-scale paramilitary operations could not be kept covert and that sizable sabotage raids could not do enough damage to make them worth the cost, effort and resultant publicity.

e. With a modest expansion in its stand-by maritime capability CIA could undertake a variety of coastal harassment operations which would be wasteful of Cuban energies and manpower. Covert economic warfare operations might also be devised in support of the U.S. overt economic warfare program.

f. The Chairman asked Mr. Helms to prepare a paper on what might be undertaken in the area of covert economic warfare, small scale, tricky sabotage activities, etc. to be weighed against political considerations. After this has been looked at by the Committee he will present it to higher authority for consideration along with the CIA paper dated 26 April 1969."