

## When U.S. Joint Chiefs Planned Terror Attacks On America

by Edward Spannaus

According to documents that were intended to have been destroyed almost 40 years ago, top levels of the U.S. military proposed carrying out acts of terrorism against the United States in the early 1960s, in order to drag the United States into a war against Cuba.

These documents take on added significance in light of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, which were clearly intended, among other things, to drag the United States into a “Clash of Civilizations” war in the Middle East. Lyndon LaRouche has stressed, these attacks could not have been carried out without complicity from rogue elements in military/security circles inside the United States.

### Operation Northwoods

The first comprehensive published account of the 1962 documents, is contained in James Bamford’s book on the National Security Agency, *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency*, released in late Spring of this year. Bamford concluded that the Joint Chiefs of Staff “proposed launching a secret and bloody war of terrorism against their own country in order to trick the American public into supporting an ill-conceived war they intended to launch against Cuba.”

Bamford’s account is based on documents which were ordered declassified by the Assassination Records Review Board, and subsequently released by the National Archives within the past few years. *EIR* has obtained the relevant documents and has independently reviewed them, and we can confirm that there is no exaggeration in Bamford’s description of these documents as containing proposals for U.S. military agencies to carry out terrorist actions against the United States and attacks on U.S. military facilities.

The time period in question, Winter-Spring of 1962, is bounded by the CIA’s failed Bay of Pigs invasion of April 1961 — an operation which had been set into motion under the

previous Eisenhower Administration — and the Cuba Missile Crisis of October 1962.

The terrorism plan was called “Operation Northwoods,” and was drawn up after President John F. Kennedy had shifted responsibility for dealing with Cuba, in late 1961, from the CIA to the Department of Defense (DOD), in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs. The overall Pentagon project was known as “Operation Mongoose,” and was the responsibility of Edward Lansdale (a CIA man who was Deputy Director of the Pentagon’s Office of Special Operations at the time), and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JSC), Gen. Lyman Lemnitzer, an Eisenhower Administration holdover.

The military planners led by Lemnitzer wanted to launch a full-scale invasion of Cuba to overthrow Castro — and perhaps, as well, they were anxious to show that they could succeed where the CIA had failed. Lemnitzer and others were also extremely distrustful of the new administration — especially after the Bay of Pigs, in which there were allegations that President Kennedy had refused to provide air support at the last minute (although it has since been documented that this was not Kennedy’s decision). The top military brass were accusing the Kennedy Administration of “going soft” on Castro, and their plans for a “pretext” operation to justify an attack on Cuba must be seen in this light.

### Pretexts For Military Invasion

The planning culminated in a series of memoranda and recommendations which were addressed in their final form by Lemnitzer to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, on March 13, 1962 — although it is not certain McNamara ever received them. (Last April, the *Baltimore Sun* quoted McNamara saying, “I never heard of it. I can’t believe the Chiefs were talking about or engaged in what I would call CIA-type operations.”)

Lemnitzer’s covering memorandum states that the Joint



*Top “smoking gun”:* Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer, later NATO Supreme Allied Commander, in 1962 oversaw Armed Forces schemes to carry out acts of deadly terrorism and “irregular warfare”—against the population of the United States.

Chiefs of Staff “have considered” an attached memorandum, which is a “description of pretexts which would provide justification for military intervention in Cuba.” He says that he assumed “that a single agency will be given primary responsibility for developing military and para-military aspects of the basic plan,” and he recommends that this responsibility be assigned to the Joint Chiefs.

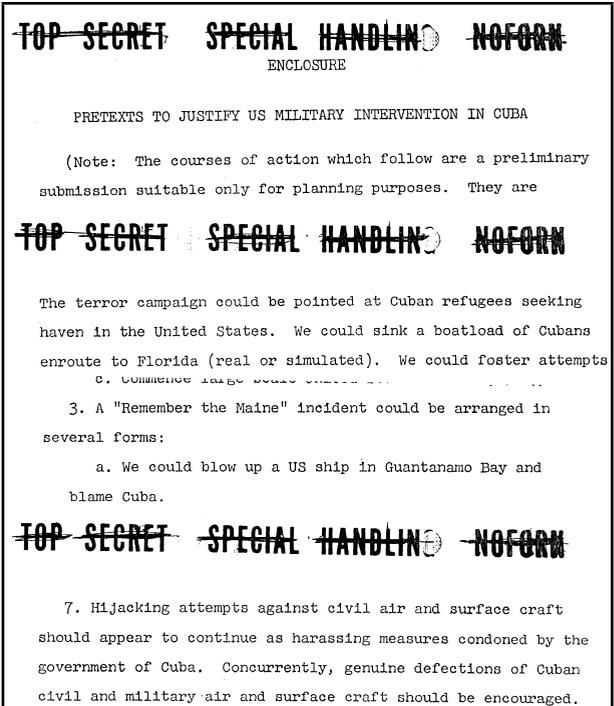
The attached memorandum, entitled “Justification for U.S. Military Intervention in Cuba,” says that it is assumed that a political decision for a U.S. military intervention “will result from a period of heightened U.S.-Cuban tensions which place the United States in the position of suffering justifiable grievances.” World opinion and the United Nations “should be favorably affected by developing the image of the Cuban government as rash and irresponsible, and as an alarming and unpredictable threat to the peace of the Western Hemisphere.”

The proposed pretext actions should take place within the next few months, while it is still likely that the Soviet Union would not intervene, the memorandum declares, noting that there is “as of yet no bilateral mutual support agreement binding the U.S.S.R. to the defense of Cuba,” that Cuba is not yet a member of the Warsaw Pact, and that the Soviets have not yet established major bases in Cuba.

What then follows, is a series of proposals for actions which would be used to provide the justification for U.S. military intervention.

### ‘Blow Up A Ship . . .’

The first proposal is for “a series of well-coordinated incidents” to take place in and around the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; these were to include having friendly Cubans dress in Cuban military uniforms to start riots at the base, blow up ammunition inside the base, to start fires, to burn aircraft on the air base, to sabotage a ship in the harbor, and to sink a ship near the harbor entrance.



*The murderous acts some officers considered, as “pretexts to justify” U.S. invasion of Cuba.*

That was just the start. The next proposal elaborated: “A ‘Remember the *Maine*’ incident could be arranged. . . . We could blow up a U.S. ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba,” or blow up a drone ship in Cuban waters. The memorandum coldly predicted: “Casualty lists in U.S. newspapers would cause a helpful wave of national indignation.”

The memorandum continues:

“We could develop a Communist Cuba terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington. The terror campaign could be pointed at Cuban refugees seeking haven in the United States. We could sink a boatload of Cubans en route to Florida (real or simulated). We could foster attempts on the lives of Cuban refugees in the United States. . . .”

“Exploding a few plastic bombs in carefully chosen spots, the arrests of Cuban agents and the release of prepared documents also would be helpful. . . .”

Among other actions proposed were to use fake Soviet MiG aircraft to harass civil aircraft, to attack surface shipping, and to destroy U.S. military drone aircraft. “Hijacking attempts against civil air and surface craft” were also suggested, and then—the most elaborated plan of all—to simulate the shooting down of a chartered civil airliner in Cuban airspace.

President Kennedy rejected the plan, and Lemnitzer directed that all the pertinent documents be destroyed. Nevertheless, some of the documents did survive, although hidden by heavy classification for decades.

To the astute reader, the potential parallels with recent events should be chilling.