

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
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1997

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S SURVEY  
of the  
CUBAN OPERATION  
and  
ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Part 1 of 2 Parts

16 February 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Inspector General Survey of the Cuban Operation  
(dated October 1961)

It is my understanding that you have requested information concerning the distribution of the IG Survey of the Cuban Operation and the DD/P comments on it. At the time the report was written it was understood that copies of the report would be sent to the President's Board and consequently 20 copies were made. However, the only distribution made of the report is as follows:

- Copy 1 - Mr. McCone - 21 November 1961
- 2 - DCI (then Mr. Dulles) - 24 November
- 3 - DDCI (then Gen. Cabell) - 24 November
- 4 - DD/P (then Mr. Bissell) - 24 November
- 5 - IG (Mr. Kirkpatrick)
- 6 - On file in office of Acting IG (Mr. McLean)
- 7 - C/WH (Col. King) - 24 November
- 8 - Mr. Esterline (WH Division) via Col. King - 24 November
- 9 - On file in my office
- 10 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, via Mr. Earman at request of DCI, 18 January 1962
- 11 through 20 - On file in my office

<sup>S/</sup>  
Lyman B. Kirkpatrick

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NOTE

This document contains the items listed below and should not be broken up. This is at the direction of Mr. John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence.

Tab:

1. Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operations; October 1961.
2. Memorandum of transmittal of IG Survey of the Cuban Operation to Mr. John McCone from Inspector General; 20 November 1961.
3. Memorandum of transmittal of IG Survey of the Cuban Operation to DCI from Inspector General; 24 November 1961.
4. DDCI Memorandum for the Record concerning restricted distribution of IG's Report on Cuba; 28 November 1961.
5. Memorandum for the DCI from IG, subject: Report on the Cuban Operation; 1 December 1961.
6. Memorandum prepared by DDCI, subject: The Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation; 15 December 1961.
7. An Analysis of the Cuban Operation by the Deputy Director (Plans), Central Intelligence Agency; 18 January 1962.
8. Letter to Dr. James R. Killian, Jr., Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Board, from DCI, transmitting the IG Survey and the DD/P Analysis of the Cuban Operation; 19 January 1962.
9. Memorandum for Deputy Director (Plans), from C. Tracy Barnes, subject: Survey of Cuban Operation; 19 January 1962.
10. Memorandum for Mr. C. Tracy Barnes from Lyman B. Kirkpatrick referencing Barnes' 19 January memorandum; 22 January 1962.
11. Memorandum for DCI from DD(P) transmitting Mr. Barnes' 19 January memorandum; 27 January 1962.

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12. Memorandum to Mr. Kirkpatrick from Messrs. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (IG Staff officers), subject: The IG's Survey and the DD/P's Analysis of the Cuban Operation; 26 January 1962.
- ✓ 13. Memorandum for Mr. John McCone, DCI, from Allen W. Dulles, subject: The Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation; 15 February 1962.
14. DCI's letter of acknowledgement of Mr. Dulles' 15 February memorandum; 19 February 1962.

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ANNEXES

- A. Basic Policy Plan of 17 March 1960
- B. Briefing Paper of 17 February 1961
- C. Operational Plan of 11 March 1961
- D. Operational Plan of 16 March 1961
- E. Operational Plan of 12 April 1961

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. This is the Inspector General's report on the Central Intelligence Agency's ill-fated attempt to implement national policy by overthrowing the Fidel Castro regime in Cuba by means of a covert paramilitary operation.

2. The purpose of the report is to evaluate selected aspects of the Agency's performance of this task, to describe weaknesses and failures disclosed by the study, and to make recommendations for their correction and avoidance in the future.

3. The report concentrates on the organization, staffing and planning of the project and on the conduct of the covert paramilitary phase of the operation, including comments on intelligence support, training, and security. It does not describe or analyze in detail the purely military phase of the effort.

4. The supporting annexes have been chosen to illustrate the evolution of national policy as outlined in Section F of the body of the report. Annex A is the basic policy paper approved by President Eisenhower on 17 March 1960. Annex B is a paper prepared by the project's operating chiefs for the briefing of President Kennedy in February 1961. Annexes C, D, and E are the planning papers successively prepared during March and April 1961 in the last few weeks before the invasion.

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5. The report includes references to the roles played by Agency officials in Presidential conferences and interdepartmental meetings at which policy decisions affecting the course of the operation were taken, but it contains no evaluation of or judgment on any decision or action taken by any official not employed by the Agency.

6. In preparing the survey the Inspector General and his representatives interviewed about 125 Agency employees of all levels and studied a large quantity of documentary material.

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B. HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

1. The history of the Cuban project begins in 1959 and for the purposes of the survey ends with the invasion of Cuba by the Agency-supported Cuban brigade on 17 April 1961 and its defeat and capture by Castro's forces in the next two days.

2. Formal U.S. Government adoption of the project occurred on 17 March 1960, when, after preliminary preparations by the Agency, President Eisenhower approved an Agency paper titled "A Program of Covert Action Against the Castro Regime" (Annex A) and thereby authorized the Agency to undertake this program:

a. Formation of a Cuban exile organization to attract Cuban loyalties, to direct opposition activities, and to provide cover for Agency operations.

b. A propaganda offensive in the name of the opposition.

c. Creation inside Cuba of a clandestine intelligence collection and action apparatus to be responsive to the direction of the exile organization.

d. Development outside Cuba of a small paramilitary force to be introduced into Cuba to organize, train and lead resistance groups.

3. The budget for this activity was estimated at \$4,400,000.

The breakdown was: Political action, \$950,000; propaganda, \$1,700,000; paramilitary, \$1,500,000; intelligence collection, \$250,000.

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4. This document, providing for the nourishment of a powerful internal resistance program through clandestine external assistance, was the basic and indeed the only U.S. Government policy paper issued throughout the life of the project. The concept was classic. The Cuban exile council would serve as cover for action which became publicly known. Agency personnel in contact with Cuban exiles would be documented as representatives of a group of private American businessmen. The hand of the U.S. Government would not appear.

Preparatory Action

5. Some months of preparation had preceded presentation of this paper to the President. In August 1959 the Chief of the Agency's Paramilitary Group attended a meeting [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to discuss the creation of a paramilitary capability to be used in Latin American crisis situations. At this time Cuba was only one of a number of possible targets, all of which appeared equally explosive. The Chief of the Paramilitary Group prepared a series of staff studies for the Western Hemisphere (WH) Division on various aspects of covert limited warfare and urged the creation of a division paramilitary staff. He also set up a small proprietary airline in [REDACTED] for eventual support use.

6. In September 1959 the WH Division assigned an officer to plan potential Agency action for contingencies which might develop

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in a number of Latin American countries. There was a lack of sufficient readily available operational information on potential target areas, so a requirement, with special emphasis on Cuba, whose Communist control was now becoming more and more apparent, was sent throughout the intelligence community, and resulted in a three-volume operational study.

7. By December 1959 these studies had produced a plan for training a small cadre of Cuban exiles as paramilitary instructors, these in turn to be used for training other Cuban recruits, in a Latin American country, for clandestine infiltration into Cuba to provide leadership for anti-Castro dissidents.

Organization of Branch

8. On 18 January 1960 the WH Division organized Branch 4 (WH/4) as an expandable task force to run the proposed Cuban operation. The initial Table of Organization totaled 40 persons, with 18 at Headquarters, 20 at Havana Station, and two at Santiago Base.

9. The branch also began negotiations for a Panama training site. Its officers reconnoitered the area of Miami, Florida, in search of suitable installations for office space, warehouses, safe sites, recruiting centers, communications center, and bases for the movement of persons, materiel, and propoganda into or out of Cuba.

10. At the same time Headquarters and the Havana Station were conducting a study of Cuban opposition leaders to prepare

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for the formation of a unified political front to serve as the cover instrument for clandestine operations and as a rallying point for anti-Castro Cubans. They were also making a map reconnaissance of the Caribbean, seeking a site for a powerful medium-wave and short-wave radio station.

Preliminary Progress

11. As a result of this intensive activity over a relatively brief period the Agency was able to report considerable preliminary progress and to predict early performance in a number of respects, when it carried its request for policy approval to the President in mid-March of 1960.

12. Among the facts so reported (Annex A) were: That the Agency was in close touch with leaders of three major and reputable anti-Castro groups of Cubans whose representatives, possibly together with others, would form a unified opposition council within 30 days; that the Agency was already supporting opposition broadcasts from Miami, had arranged for additional radio outlets in Massachusetts, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and that a powerful "gray" station, probably on Swan Island, could be made ready in two months; that publication of an exile edition of a confiscated Cuban newspaper had been arranged; that a controlled action group was distributing propaganda inside Cuba, and that anti-Castro lecturers were being sent on Latin American tours.

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13. The President was further informed that an effective intelligence and action organization inside Cuba, responsive to direction by the exile opposition, could probably be created within 60 days and that preparations for the development of an adequate paramilitary force would require "a minimum of six months and probably closer to eight."

Policy Discussions

14. Discussion at high policy levels of the Government had preceded submission of this program to the President. In the last months of 1959 the Special Group, composed of representatives of several departments and agencies and charged by NSC 5412 with responsibility for policy approval of major covert action operations, considered several Agency proposals for exile broadcasts to Cuba. During January and February of 1960 the Director of Central Intelligence informed the Special Group of Agency planning with regard to Cuba, and on 14 March an entire meeting was devoted to discussion of the Agency's program. Concern was expressed over the length of time required to get trained Cuban exiles into action, and there was discussion of U.S. capabilities for immediate overt action if required. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is reported to have said that forces totaling 50,000 men were ready if needed and that the first of them could be airborne within four hours after receipt of orders. Members of the group urged early formation of an exile junta. The Agency announced its

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intention of requesting funds to pursue the program, and no objections were raised by the group.

15. The project to unseat Castro had thus become a major Agency activity with the highest policy sanction, engaging the full-time activity of the personnel of a rapidly expanding operating branch, requiring a great amount of detailed day-to-day attention in higher Agency echelons and entailing frequent liaison with other agencies and departments of the Government.

16. The activities described to the President continued at an accelerated rate, but the financial approach to the project was relatively cautious in the early weeks.

#### Financial Preparations

17. On 24 March 1960 the project was approved by the Director of Central Intelligence in the initial amount of \$900,000 for the rest of Fiscal Year 1960. However, only two weeks later, on 7 April, WH/4 Branch reported that 85% of the \$900,000 had been obligated. By 30 June an additional \$1,000,000 was obligated.

18. In April the Director of Central Intelligence told a meeting of WH/4 personnel that he would recall people from anywhere in the world if they were needed on the project. From January 1960, when it had 40 people, the branch expanded to 588 by 16 April 1961, becoming one of the largest branches in the Clandestine Services, larger than some divisions. Its Table of Organization did not include the large number of air operations personnel who worked

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on the project and who were administered by their own unit, the Development Projects Division (DPD), nor did it include the many people engaged in support activities or in services of common concern, who, though not assigned to the project, nevertheless devoted many hours to it.

19. In the early months of the project there were intensive efforts to organize an exile front group, to get a broad and varied propaganda program under way, to begin a paramilitary program, and to acquire sites in Florida and elsewhere for training and recruiting activities and for office space.

20. The so-called "Bender Group", composed of project political action officers, was set up as a notional organization of American businessmen to provide cover for dealing with the Cubans. After a series of meetings in New York and Miami a nominally unified Frente Revolucionario Democratico (FRD), composed of several Cuban factions, was agreed upon on 11 May 1960.

#### Propaganda Activity

21. Radio broadcasts from Miami into Cuba were continued under the sponsorship of a Cuban group. Preparations were made for exile publication of Avance, whose Havana plant had been seized by Castro. Anti-Castro propaganda operations were intensified throughout Latin America, and a boat for marine broadcasts was purchased. The Swan Island radio station, on which the President had been briefed, was completed and on the air with test signals by 17 May.

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22. The action-cadre instruction training program was being prepared, and \$25,000 worth of sterile arms were being sent to the Panama training base, which was activated 11 May. At the same time Useppa Island, Florida, was acquired as a site for assessment and holding of Cuban paramilitary candidates and for training radio operators. Screening of paramilitary recruits had begun in Miami in April, and the training in Panama began in June.

23. The Miami Base was opened on 25 May in the Coral Gables business district under cover of a New York career development and placement firm, backstopped by a Department of Defense contract, and on 15 June a communications site, with Army cover, was opened at the former Richmond Naval Air Station, which was held under lease by the University of Miami. Safe houses were also acquired in the Miami area for various operational uses. The use of other sites for project activities, in the United States and other countries, was acquired for varying periods as time went on.

24. Project officers were engaged in liaison on numerous matters. In April they reached an agreement with the Immigration and Naturalization Service on special entry procedure for Cubans of interest to the operation. They consulted with Voice of America and the United States Information Agency on propaganda operations. There were many discussions with the Federal Communications Commission on the licensing of Radio Swan and with the Defense Department concerning its cover. The State Department was regularly consulted on political matters.

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Uneasy Front

25. Although Cuban leaders had formed a "front" at Agency urging, it was an uneasy one. They were by no means in agreement, either among themselves or with Agency case officers, on politics or on operations.

26. Power struggles developed early in the life of the FRD. The Cuban leaders wanted something to say about the course of paramilitary operations. As early as May 1960 one of the more prominent leaders was urging an invasion on a fairly large scale from a third country.

27. By June the American press was beginning to nibble at the operation, principally at Radio Swan, some of the stories implying that it was not a completely legitimate commercial venture. Another indication that operational security was less than perfect was a statement by a defected Cuban naval attache that it was common knowledge among exiles in Miami that a certain Cuban leader was backed by the Agency and that "there were entirely too many Americans running around the area waving money."

28. On 22 June the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence briefed the National Security Council on the project. Ultimate objective of the training program, according to the paper prepared for this briefing, was a minimum force of 500 men split into approximately 25 teams skilled in organizing, training and leading indigenous dissident groups, each team to be provided with a radio

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operator. Preparations were under way for creating an exile Cuban air force, and attempts were being made to develop maritime capabilities for support of paramilitary groups.

29. This briefing contained an expression of doubt that a purely clandestine effort would be able to cope with Castro's increasing military capability, pointing out that implementation of the paramilitary phase of operations would be contingent upon the existence of dissident forces who were willing to resist and that such groups had not as yet emerged in strength.

Training in Panama

30. The air training program began to get under way in July 1960 with the screening of Cuban pilot recruits and negotiations with Defense for 12 AD-5s and the Navy being asked to supply 75 instruction and maintenance personnel.

31. In mid-June 29 Cubans had arrived in Panama to begin training in small-unit infiltration.

32. The FRD was resisting Agency attempts to persuade it to move its headquarters to Mexico and was demanding direct contact with the State Department or with some high government official in order to argue its case. It also showed reluctance to become involved in the recruiting of Cuban pilots. It presented a budget for \$500,000 a month, excluding paramilitary costs, but was told it would have to get along on \$131,000 and would get this only if it agreed to move to Mexico. It did agree to furnish 500

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paramilitary candidates and finally gave in on the issue of moving to Mexico. It remained there only a few weeks because of harassment by the Mexican Government, in spite of prior agreements to the contrary. It appears that one reason why the FRD leaders were so reluctant to be based in a third country is that they desired to establish a direct, official channel to the U.S. Government.

Emphasis on Resistance

33. In August WH/4 Branch prepared papers for use in briefing the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, respectively. By about 1 November it was expected to have 500 paramilitary trainees and 37 radio operators ready for action. It was stated that this group would be available for use as infiltration teams or as an invasion force. The briefing paper for the Joint Chiefs made the point that "obviously the successful implementation of any large-scale paramilitary operations is dependent upon widespread guerrilla resistance throughout the area."

34. The paper prepared for the President's briefing identified 11 groups or individuals with whom the Agency had some sort of contact and who claimed to have assets in Cuba. The paper for the Joint Chiefs spoke of the problems of obtaining support bases and trained man power and warned that an exile invasion force might have to be backed up by a contingency force, augmented by U.S. Army Special Forces personnel.

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35. The terms "invasion", "strike", and "assault" were used in these documents although the strike force concept does not seem to have been given any sort of policy sanction until the Special Group meetings which took place toward the end of 1960.

Plan of Operations

36. The Presidential briefing paper of August 1960 outlined the plan of operations as follows:

"The initial phase of paramilitary operations envisages the development, support and guidance of dissident groups in three areas of Cuba: Pinar del Rio, Escambray and Sierra Maestra. These groups will be organized for concerted guerrilla action against the regime.

"The second phase will be initiated by a combined sea-air assault by FRD forces on the Isle of Pines coordinated with general guerrilla activity on the main island of Cuba. This will establish a close-in staging base for future operations.

"The last phase will be air assault on the Havana area with the guerrilla forces in Cuba moving on the ground from these areas into the Havana area also."

37. Expenditures were rapidly running beyond the original estimates. The WH Division estimated operating costs for four weeks starting 1 July at \$1,700,000 and for the fiscal year at approximately \$25,000,000. On 19 August an additional \$10,000,000

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was requested and obtained. About half of this figure was the estimated cost of paramilitary activities, with about another \$2,000,000 estimated for propaganda.

Anti-Castro Broadcasts

38. Propaganda activity had gotten off to an early start and had developed rapidly. After an initial shakedown period Radio Swan had gone on the air first with anti-Trujillo, then with anti-Castro broadcasts. Radio programs were also originating in Miami and [REDACTED]. The newspaper Avance in Exile was being published by the end of the summer, and a second paper and a weekly magazine were planned. There had also been some successful black operations. Most such operations had thus far been conducted without participation by the FRD.

39. By the end of August the FRD had a lawyer team set for a Latin American propaganda tour and was ready with its first broadcast on Radio Swan, which was reported to be getting world-wide reception with many listeners in Cuba. An anti-Castro comic book was being reprinted, and a Spanish-language television program was being prepared in Miami.

40. At the end of August WH/4 Branch was reporting that a machine run search had failed to find any bilingual Agency employee suitable as a Radio Swan announcer. (This search went on for some time. On 28 December the branch reported finding a candidate, but on 18 January 1961 that he had backed out.)

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41. Late September 1960 saw the almost simultaneous occurrence of the first maritime operation and the first air drop over Cuba. The former was successful. The latter, the first of a series of failures, resulted in the capture and execution of a paramilitary agent on whom the project had set great store.

Maritime Operations

42. Several successful maritime operations took place during the latter months of 1960 before severe winter weather began to make them almost impossible. But the project had only one boat regularly available during this period, and the process of supplying and building up a resistance movement through clandestine means began to seem intolerably slow, especially since during this same period Castro's army was reported to have been strengthened with 30 to 40 thousand tons of Bloc arms, and Cuban internal security was being tightened.

43. The strike force concept which, as noted, had already begun to be associated with the project as early as July, began to play an ever greater role in WH/4 planning. This role became dominant in September 1960 with the assignment to the project, as chief of its Paramilitary Staff, of a Marine Corps colonel experienced in amphibious operations.

44. In late October the Nicaraguan Government offered the Agency the use of an air strip and docking facilities at Puerto Cabezas, some 250 miles closer to Cuba than the facilities in

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Guatemala. At about the same time, the Agency requested the Army to supply 38 Special Forces personnel as instructors. Due to prolonged policy negotiations, these trainers did not arrive in Guatemala until 12 January 1961.

Switch in Concept

45. On 4 November 1960 WH/4 took formal action to change the course of the project by greatly expanding the size of the Cuban paramilitary unit and redirecting its training along more conventional military lines. Appropriate orders were sent to the Guatemala Base, which had 475 air and ground trainees on 10 November, and to Miami where recruiting efforts were increased.

46. By this time Miami Base, through liaison with the FRD military staff, had already recruited and dispatched to Guatemala 101 air and 370 paramilitary trainees, plus six specialists (doctors, dentists, and chaplains). The base had also recruited 124 maritime personnel for manning the invasion fleet that was being acquired.

47. By 28 January 1961 the strike force strength was 644, on 3 February it was 685, by 10 March it had risen to 826, by 22 March to 973. On 6 April 1961 brigade strength was reported at 1,390.

48. On 3 November 1960 WH/4 reported it had only \$2,250,000 left for the rest of Fiscal Year 1961, and by 16 December this was almost gone. A supplementary budget estimate was prepared, and an additional \$28,200,000 was obtained from the Bureau of the Budget.

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Freedom Fund Campaign

49. There were also financial problems on a smaller scale. To publicize Radio Swan, and perhaps to enhance its cover, the Cuban Freedom Fund Campaign was organized in November to solicit donations through newspaper advertisements. The radio station, which was budgeted at \$900,000 for Fiscal Year 1961, received \$330 in gifts during the next few weeks.

50. Bohemia Libre, a handsome weekly magazine, budgeted at \$300,000 but actually costing about \$35,000 an issue, had bad luck from the start in seeking advertising and once missed an issue on that account. Additional funds had to be sought for it several times. Yet it developed an audited circulation of 126,000, said to be second only to the Reader's Digest in the Spanish-language field.

51. While the project moved forward, acquiring boats, planes and bases, training men, negotiating with foreign governments, seeking policy clarification, training an FRD security service, publishing magazines and newspapers, putting out radio broadcasts, and attempting to move arms, men and propaganda into Cuba by sea or air, the FRD, in whose name most of this activity was being carried on, was making little progress toward unity.

52. Members would resign in a huff and have to be wheedled back. Each faction wanted supplies to be sent only to its own

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followers in Cuba, while groups inside were reluctant to receive infiltrees sent in the name of the FRD. The FRD coordinator had his own radio boat which made unauthorized broadcasts until halted by the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Provisional Government Plans

53. Tentative plans for a provisional government were first discussed with FRD leaders in December, and this set off a flurry of intrigue and bickering which delayed the recruiting process and did nothing to advance the cause of unity. In mid-January Miami Base reported that "the over-all problem is simply to maintain the Frente (FRD) as an operational facade until military action intervenes and a provisional government can be established." Until the question of how and by whom such a government was to be selected could be answered, the base reported, "we are at political dead center."

54. This dead center remained until very near the target date and was only resolved by an ultimatum to the FRD Executive Committee directing its members to agree on the chairman for a Revolutionary Council or risk the loss of all further support.

55. However, in selective ways the FRD proved to be a responsive and useful instrument. An example of this was the counterintelligence and security service which, under close project control, developed into an efficient and valuable unit in support of the FRD, Miami Base, and the project program.

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56. By mid-March 1961 this security organization comprised 86 employees of whom 37 were trained case officers, the service having graduated four classes from its own training center, whose chief instructor was a [REDACTED] police officer.

Security Activities

57. The FRD's service ran operations into Cuba, many of them successful. It built up a voluminous set of card files on Cuban personalities. One of its most helpful services was reporting on meetings of FRD committees and other anti-Castro groups and on political maneuvering within the FRD hierarchy. It also helped in recruiting for the strike force at a time when the political leaders were sabotaging this effort. Security and counterintelligence teams were also trained for integration with the strike force. These had the primary mission of securing vital records and documents during the invasion and a secondary mission of assisting in establishing and maintaining martial law.

58. The service also carried on radio monitoring and conducted interrogations and debriefings. An indication of its alertness and efficiency is the fact that it supplied Miami Base with its first information on the location of a C-54 plane which was forced down in Jamaica after a mission over Cuba. The chief of the service was largely responsible for personally persuading the crew of the downed plane to return to the training camp.

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59. In the first three months of 1961 the problems faced by the project were many and complex. Although the Army Special Forces instructors had finally arrived in Guatemala the brigade trainee quota was still only half fulfilled and a call went to the training camps for special recruiting teams to be sent to Miami. Meanwhile trainees who had been in the camp for several months had had no contact with the political front and were wondering what sort of a Cuban future they were expected to fight for. Disturbances broke out, and the project leaders persuaded three FRD figures to visit the camp and mollify the men.

Training in the U.S.

60. During this period the Nicaraguan air strip which had been placed at the project's disposal was being made ready for use and two new training sites were activated. Although a definite policy determination on the training of Cubans in the U.S. had never been made, 25 tank operators were successfully trained for the strike force at Fort Knox. Another eleventh-hour training requirement was fulfilled when the project acquired the use of Belle Chase Ammunition Depot near New Orleans. This was used for the training of a company-sized unit hurriedly recruited for a diversion landing and of an underwater demolition team.

61. During the period between the U.S. national elections and the inauguration of President Kennedy the Government's

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policymaking machinery had slowed down. A number of piecemeal policy decisions were vouchsafed, but not all the specific ones the project chiefs were pressing for, for example, authority for tactical air strikes and permission to use American contract pilots.

62. President Eisenhower had given a general go-ahead signal on 29 November and had reaffirmed it on 3 January 1961, but the impending change in administration was slowing matters down. For example, a proposed propaganda drop was turned down on 13 January for this reason. On 19 January, at the Special Group's last meeting before the inauguration, it was agreed that a high-level meeting, to include the new Secretaries of State and Defense, should be set up as soon as possible to reaffirm the basic concepts of the project.

#### Preparations Endorsed

63. Such a meeting was held 22 January, and the project and current preparations were generally endorsed. At a meeting with the new President on 28 January the Agency was authorized to continue present activities and was instructed to submit the tactical paramilitary plan to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for analysis. Shortly thereafter, in an attempt to get a high-level internal review of the plan, it was briefed to Gen. Cabell, Gen. Bull (consultant) and Adm. Wright (ONE). By 6 February the Joint Chiefs had returned a favorable evaluation of the strike plan, together with a number of suggestions.

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64. On 17 February the Agency presented a paper (Annex B) to the President which outlined three possible courses of action against Castro.

65. Noting plans for early formation of a government in exile, the paper described the growing strength of the Castro regime under Bloc support and observed: "Therefore, after some date probably no more than six months away it will become militarily infeasible to overthrow the Castro regime except by the commitment to combat of a sizeable organized military force. The option of action by the Cuban opposition will no longer be open."

66. This paper found the use of small-scale guerrilla groups not feasible and advocated a surprise landing of a military force, concluding that the brigade had a good chance of overthrowing Castro "or at the very least causing a damaging civil war without requiring the U.S. to commit itself to overt action against Cuba."

67. Following presentation of this paper to the President, the project leaders were given to understand that it would be at least two weeks before a decision would be made as to use of the invasion force. They thereupon withheld action to expand the force up to 1,000 for the time being.

Movement of Agents

68. Although the invasion preparations were absorbing most of the project's energies and funds WE/4 Branch was still

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attempting to nourish the underground. There were six successful boat operations, carrying men and materials, in February and 13 in March, and two successful air drops in March. Infiltration of agents was continuing. As of 15 February Miami Base reported the following numbers and types of agents in Cuba: Counterintelligence, 20; positive intelligence, 5; propaganda, 2; paramilitary, 4. As of 15 March the base reported that these numbers had risen, respectively, to 21, 11, 9, and 6.

69. By the invasion date the personnel strength of Miami Base had grown to 160. The intensity of activity there during the latter months of the operation is indicated by the record of a day picked at random -- it happened to be 9 February -- when 21 case officers spent 140 man hours in personal contact with 125 Cubans.

70. Successive changes in the operational plan and postponements of the strike date are discussed later in this report and are documented in Annexes C, D, and E. Detailed policy authorization for some specific actions was either never fully clarified or only resolved at the eleventh hour, and even the central decision as to whether to employ the strike force was still somewhat in doubt up to the very moment of embarkation.

71. During the weeks preceding the invasion the pace of events quickened. In early March the State Department asked the

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Agency not to announce formation of the Revolutionary Council or to commit any untoward act until after the 5-9 March Mexico City Peace Conference. The Cubans conferring in New York disagreed on various aspects of a post-Castro platform. The Guatemala camp was having counterintelligence problems.

Sabotage Action.

72. On 12 March the LCI "Barbara J" successfully launched and recovered a sabotage team in an action against the Texaco refinery in Santiago.

73. During 13-15 March project chiefs were working intensively to prepare a revised plan which would meet policy objections cited by the State Department. On the 15th the new plan was presented to the President.

74. In mid-March ten members were added to the FRD Executive Committee, the politicians continued their platform talks, and 23 March was set as deadline for choice of a chairman. An intensive defection project was started from Miami Base. A survey was started with the object of determining the trainees' knowledgeability of U.S. involvement in the strike preparations. Trainees at Guatemala were impatient, and a number had gone AWOL.

75. Jose Miro Cardona was unanimously elected Chairman of the Revolutionary Council.

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76. In late March the [REDACTED] ostensible owner of the Swan Island radio station, thanked all the sponsors of political programs and advised them that no more tapes would be required; purpose of this action was to clear the way for a unity program during the action phase of the operation. A Radio Swan listener survey had received 1,659 replies from 20 countries. Ships with strike force equipment were arriving in Nicaragua, and the Guatemala camp was still receiving trainees as late as the week of 4 April.

Overflights Suspended

77. Cuban overflights were suspended on 28 March. Two reasons have been given for this suspension: (a) that the aircraft were needed to move the strike force from Guatemala to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, for embarkation on the invasion ships; (b) that the Agency wished to avoid any incident, such as a plane being downed over Cuba, which might upset the course of events during the critical pre-invasion period.

78. For a White House meeting on 29 March papers were prepared on these subjects: (a) The status of the defection program; (b) internal Cuban support which could be expected for the landing operation.

79. On 5 April the B-26 "defection" plan was prepared in an effort to knock out some of Castro's air force before D Day in a manner which would satisfy State Department objections. Project

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chiefs agreed that in event of a policy decision to call off the invasion they would move the troops to sea, tell them that new intelligence made the invasion inadvisable, and divert the force to Vieques Island for demobilization.

80. On 12 April at a meeting with the President it was decided that Mr. Berle would tell Miro Cardona there would be no overt U.S. support of the invasion. The President publicly announced there would be no U.S. support. On 13 April all WH/4 headquarters sections went on 24-hour duty. The Revolutionary Council was assembled in New York and advised that it would be briefed in stages on the military aspects of the project. On 14 April the Council agreed to go into "isolation" during the landing phase of the military operation.

81. The raids on three Cuban airfields were carried out by eight B-26s on 15 April, and destruction of half of Castro's air force was estimated on the basis of good post-strike photography. Afterward, according to plan, one of the pilots landed in Florida and announced that the raids had been carried out by defectors from Castro's own air force. The Council was briefed on the air strike. The diversionary expedition by the force which had been trained in New Orleans failed to make a landing on two successive nights preceding the strike.

82. Immediately before D Day, Radio Swan and other outlets were broadcasting 18 hours a day on medium-wave and 16 hours on short-wave. Immediately after D Day, these totals were increased

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to 55 hours and 26 hours, respectively. Fourteen frequencies were used. By the time of the invasion a total of 12,000,000 pounds of leaflets had been dropped on Cuba.

83. Late on 16 April, the eve of D Day, the air strikes designed to knock out the rest of Castro's air force on the following morning were called off. The message reached the field too late to halt the landing operation, as the decision to cancel the air strike was made after the landing force had been committed.

84. The invasion fleet which had assembled off the south coast of Cuba on the night of 16 April included two LCIs owned by the Agency, a U.S. Navy LSD carrying three LCUs and four LCVPs, all of them pre-loaded with supplies, and seven chartered commercial freighters. All these craft participated in the assault phase, except for three freighters which were loaded with follow-up supplies for ground and air forces. These vessels were armed with 50-caliber machine guns. In addition, each LCI mounted two 75-mm. recoilless rifles.

85. In addition to the personal weapons of the Cuban exile soldiers, the armament provided for combat included sufficient numbers of Browning automatic rifles, machine guns, mortars, recoilless rifles, rocket launchers, and flame-throwers. There were also five M-41 tanks, 12 heavy trucks, an aviation fuel tank truck, a tractor crane, a bulldozer, two large water trailers, and numerous small trucks and tractors.

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86. The invasion brigade comprised 1,511 men, all of them on the invasion ships excepting one airborne infantry company of 177 men. The brigade included five infantry companies, a heavy weapons company, an intelligence-reconnaissance company, and a tank platoon.

87. These troops had been moved by air on three successive nights from the Guatemala training camp to the staging area in Nicaragua where they embarked on the ships which had been pre-loaded at New Orleans. The ships had moved on separate courses from Nicaragua, under unobtrusive Navy escort, to the rendezvous 40 miles offshore in order to avoid the appearance of a convoy. From there they had moved in column under cover of darkness to a point 5,000 yards from the landing area, where they met the Navy LSD. These complicated movements were apparently accomplished in a secure manner and without alerting the enemy.

88. Of the three follow-up ships, one was due to arrive from Nicaragua on the morning of D Day plus 2 and two others were on call at sea south of Cuba. Additional supplies were available for air landing or parachute delivery at airfields in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Florida. At a Defense base in Anniston, Alabama, there were also supplies ready for 15,000 men. Altogether there were arms and equipment available to furnish 30,000 dissidents expected to rally to the invasion force.

89. The landing was to be carried out at three beaches about 18 miles from each other on the Zapata Peninsula. The left flank of the beachhead was Red Beach at the head of Cochinos Bay; Green

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Beach was at the right flank, with Blue Beach at the center. The lodgment to be seized was thus a coastal strip about 40 miles long, separated from the interior by an impassable swamp penetrated only by three roads from the north and flanked by a coastal road from the east.

90. In the early hours of 17 April Cuban underwater demolition teams, each led by an American contract employee, went ashore to mark Red and Blue Beaches. Each of these parties engaged in fire fights with small enemy forces but accomplished their tasks, and the troops began moving ashore in small aluminum boats and LCUs. Before daylight small militia forces were encountered at both beaches. These offered little opposition, and many of the militiamen were quickly captured.

91. Not long after daylight the airborne infantry company was successfully parachuted from C-46 aircraft to four of the five scheduled drop zones where its elements were given the mission of sealing off approach roads.

92. At dawn began the enemy air attacks which the project chiefs had aimed to prevent by the planned dawn strikes with Nicaragua-based aircraft against Castro's fields. Action by Castro's B-26s, Sea Furies, and jet T-33s resulted in the sinking of a supply ship, the beaching of a transport, and damage to an LCI. The plan for a landing at Green Beach was thereupon abandoned, and these troops, with their tanks and vehicles were put ashore at Blue Beach. Shipping withdrew to the south under continuous air att

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93. The air attacks continued throughout the day. The 11 B-26s of the Cuban exile force which were available for close support and interdiction were no match for the T-33 jets. However, at least four of Castro's other aircraft were shot down by machine gun fire from maritime craft, assisted by friendly air support.

94. The first ground attacks by Castro's forces occurred at Red Beach which was hit by successive waves of militia in the morning, afternoon and evening of 17 April. While ammunition lasted these attacks were beaten off with heavy enemy casualties, and several of Castro's tanks were halted or destroyed by ground or friendly air action. On the morning of 18 April, the Red Beach Force, nearly out of ammunition, retired in good order to Blue Beach without being pressed by the enemy.

95. In addition to supporting the ground forces and protecting shipping on 17 April, the friendly B-26s also sank a Castro patrol escort ship and attacked the Cienfuegos airfield. Four of the friendly B-26s were shot down, while three returned safely to Nicaragua, and four landed at other friendly bases.

96. Attempts were made to resupply the brigade with ammunition by air drops. On the night of 17-18 April one C-54 drop was made at Red Beach and three at Blue Beach, and on the following night Blue Beach received two drops. Preparations for resupply by sea had to be cancelled due to enemy air action.

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97. At Blue Beach the enemy ground attacks, supported by aircraft, began from three directions on the afternoon of 18 April. Six friendly B-26s, two of them flown by Americans, inflicted heavy damage on the Castro column moving up from the west, using napalm, bombs, rockets, and machine gun fire to destroy several tanks and about 20 troop-laden trucks. Air support to the Blue Beach troops was continued on the morning of 19 April, when three friendly B-26s, including two piloted by Americans, were shot down by Castro T-33s. Jet cover from the Navy aircraft carrier "Essex" had been expected to protect the 19 April sorties, but a misunderstanding over timing hampered its effectiveness.

98. In spite of this air action, however, and in spite of a reported 1,800 casualties suffered by the Castro forces, the brigade's ability to resist depended in the last resort on resupply of ammunition, which had now become impossible. On the night of 18 April, when failure appeared inevitable, the Cuban brigade commander refused an offer to evacuate his troops. And on the morning of 19 April, with ammunition rapidly running out, the brigade was still able to launch a futile counterattack against the forces relentlessly moving in from the west.

99. In the last hours of resistance the brigade commander sent a series of terse and desperate messages to the task force command ship pleading for help:

"We are out of ammo and fighting on the beach. Please send help. We cannot hold."

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"In water. Out of ammo. Enemy closing in. Help must arrive in next hour."

"When your help will be here and with what?"

"Why your help has not come?"

100. The last message was as follows: "Am destroying all equipment and communications. Tanks are in sight. I have nothing to fight with. Am taking to woods. I cannot repeat cannot wait for you."

101. An evacuation convoy was headed for the beach on the afternoon of 19 April. When it became known that the beachhead had collapsed the convoy reversed course.

102. During the next few days two Americans and a crew of Cuban frogmen succeeded in rescuing 26 survivors from the beach and coastal islands.

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C. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

1. In evaluating the Agency's performance it is essential to avoid grasping immediately, as many persons have done, at the explanation that the President's order cancelling the D-Day air strikes was the chief cause of failure.

2. Discussion of that one decision would merely raise this underlying question: If the project had been better conceived, better organized, better staffed and better managed, would that precise issue ever have had to be presented for Presidential decision at all? And would it have been presented under the same ill-prepared, inadequately briefed circumstances?

3. Furthermore, it is essential to keep in mind the possibility that the invasion was doomed in advance, that an initially successful landing by 1,500 men would eventually have been crushed by Castro's combined military resources strengthened by Soviet Bloc-supplied military materiel.

4. The fundamental cause of the disaster was the Agency's failure to give the project, notwithstanding its importance and its immense potentiality for damage to the United States, the top-flight handling which it required -- appropriate organization, staffing throughout by highly qualified personnel, and full-time direction and control of the highest quality.

5. Insufficiencies in these vital areas resulted in pressures and distortions, which in turn produced numerous

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serious operational mistakes and omissions, and in lack of awareness of developing dangers, in failure to take action to counter them, and in grave mistakes of judgment. There was failure at high levels to concentrate informed, unwavering scrutiny on the project and to apply experienced, unbiased judgment to the menacing situations that developed.

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D. EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND STRUCTURE

1. The project was organized at the level of an operating branch, the fourth echelon in the organization of the Agency, in the Western Hemisphere Division. Its chief, a GS-15, was not given the independence and the broad, extensive powers of a task force commander. Instead, he had to apply constantly for the decision of policy questions and important operational problems to the Deputy Director (Plans) (DD/P), who was in fact directing the project, although this was only one of his many responsibilities. The DD/P delegated much of his responsibility to his Deputy for Covert Action, especially the handling of policy matters involving contact with non-Agency officials. The office of the DD/P and the offices of the project were in different buildings. Consideration was given by the DD/P in late 1960 to raising the project out of WH Division and placing it directly under his Deputy for Covert Action, but this was not done.

2. The Chief of WH Division was in the chain of command between the chief of the project and the DD/P but only in a partial sense. He exercised his right to sign the project's outgoing cables until the week of the invasion even though the project's own signal center was activated at the end of December 1960. He supervised the staffing activities and attended some of the meetings of the Special Group. But the DD/P and his deputy dealt directly with the project chief, and gradually the Chief of WH Division began to play only a diminished role.

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3. The DD/P, in turn, reported to the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI) who usually represented the Agency at the meetings of the 5412 Special Group.

4. The Director delegated his responsibility for major project decisions to a considerable extent. He relied on the DDCI, an Air Force general, for policy matters involving air operations. For military advice he relied on the military officers detailed to the project. This reliance deprived the Director of completely objective counsel, since the project's military personnel were deeply involved in building up the strike force and the DDCI was taking an active role in the conduct of air operations.

Fragmentation of Authority

5. Thus, the project lacked a single, high-level full-time commander possessing stated broad powers and abilities sufficient for the carrying out of this large, enormously difficult mission. In fact, authority was fragmented among the project chief, the military chief of the project's Paramilitary Staff, and several high-level officials, whose wide responsibilities elsewhere in the Agency prevented them from giving the project the attention it required. There were too many echelons; the top level had to be briefed by briefers who themselves were not doing the day-to-day work.

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6. Three further extraordinary factors must be mentioned:

(1) The Chief of Operations of the Clandestine Services (COPS), who is the DD/P's chief staff advisor on clandestine operations, played only a very minor part in the project. On at least two occasions COPS was given express warning that the project was being perilously mismanaged, but he declined to involve himself with the project.

(2) The three Senior Staffs, the Agency's top-level technical advisors in their respective areas, were not consulted fully, either at the important formative stages of the project or even after grave operational difficulties had begun to develop; instead, they allowed themselves to be more or less ignored by the chief of the project and his principal assistants. This state of affairs is partly attributable to the inadequate managerial skill and the lack of experience in clandestine paramilitary operations of the WH/4 chiefs; it was not corrected by the DD/P or his deputy or by the Chief of WH Division.

(3) There was no review of the project by the Agency's Project Review Committee, which would at least have allowed the views of the most senior review body in the Agency to be heard.

Independence of DFD

7. Still another important factor in the diffusion of direction and control was the insistence of the Agency's air arm, the Development Projects Division (DPD), on preserving

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its independence and remaining outside the organizational structure of the project, in which it had a vital, central role, including air drops to the underground, training Cuban pilots, operation of air bases, the immense logistical problems of transporting the Cuban volunteers from Florida to Guatemala, and the procuring and servicing of the military planes. The project chief had no command authority over air planning and air operations. The DPD unit established for this purpose was completely independent.

8. The result was a divided command dependent upon mutual cooperation. There was no day-to-day continuing staff relationship, which is essential for properly coordinated operations. Headquarters of the two units were in different buildings far away from each other. The chiefs of air operations in Guatemala and Nicaragua were DPD representatives, independent of the WH/4 chiefs of these bases, and the Headquarters confusion was compounded in the field.

9. In October 1960, shortly after his assignment to the project, the paramilitary chief noted coordination difficulties between WH/4 and DPD. He pointed out that the organizational structure was contrary to military command principles, to accepted management practices, and to the principles enunciated by the DD/P himself in 1959, and recommended that the DPD unit be integrated into WH/4, under command of its chief.

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Failure of Integration Effort

10. The DD/P rejected this recommendation as not being the most efficient solution for technical reasons. The insufficiently effective relationship between the project and the DFD unit was one of the gravest purely organizational failures of the operation. The DD/P has subsequently confirmed this conclusion and has ascribed this lack of effectiveness to personality frictions and to the "classic service rivalry." (We would note that this does not exist in present-day combined commands.)

11. The organizational confusion was augmented by the existence of a large forward operating base in the Miami area, which in turn had loose control over several sub-bases. The mission of this base was vaguely defined and not well understood. In theory the base had a supporting role; actually it was conducting operations which for the most part paralleled similar operations being conducted by WH/4 from Headquarters. This divided effort was expensive, cumbersome, and difficult to coordinate. In some cases the efforts of the two elements were duplicating or conflicting or even competing with each other.

12. The upshot of this complex and bizarre organizational situation was that in this tremendously difficult task the Agency failed to marshal its forces properly and to apply them effectively.

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E. EVALUATION OF STAFFING

1. In April 1960 the Director of Central Intelligence stated that he would recall from any station in the world personnel whose abilities were required for the success of the project. This recognition of the need for high-quality personnel is nowhere reflected in the history of the project. The DD/P's Deputy for Covert Action advised his subordinates that the Director's words did not mean that the project was to be given carte blanche in personnel procurement but that officers could be adequately secured through negotiation.

2. In actual fact, personnel for the project were secured by the customary routine method of negotiation between the project and the employee's office of current assignment; no recourse was had to directed assignment by the Director of Central Intelligence. The traditional independence of the 55 individual division and branch chiefs in the Clandestine Services remained unaffected by the Director's statement. The lists prepared by the project for the purpose of negotiation for personnel naturally reflected the preferences of the chief of the project and the willingness of the person in question to accept the assignment. In many cases, the reason for assigning a given person to the project was merely that he had just returned from abroad and was still without an assignment.

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3. The basic mistake was made of filling the key spots early, without realizing how much the project would grow and that it should be staffed for a major effort. In some cases, officers originally selected to supervise five persons ultimately had to supervise 15 or 20 times as many. Of the three GS-16 officers assigned to the project, none was given top-level managerial responsibilities. The result of all these factors was that none of the most experienced, senior operating officers of the Agency participated full time in the project.

An Indication of Quality

4. An interesting insight into the quality of the personnel of WH/4 is afforded by the initial "Relative Retention Lists" prepared in April 1961 by the divisions and senior staffs of the Clandestine Services and other Agency units pursuant to the requirements of Regulation 20-701 (Separation of Surplus Personnel). Each such unit was required to group its officers in each grade into ten groups, on the basis of the performance and qualifications of each one. (Under the prescribed procedure, these lists are to be reviewed at several levels before becoming definitive.)

5. Of the 42 officers holding the principal operational jobs in WH/4 in grade GS-12 through GS-15, 17 officers were placed in the lowest third of their respective grade, and 9, or 21% in the lowest tenth. The ratings of 23 of these 42 were made by WH Division, which placed seven in the lowest third, and 19 were rated by other units, which together placed ten in the lowest third.

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6. It is apparent from these ratings that the other units had not detailed their best people to WH/4 but had in some instances given the project their disposal cases.

7. Furthermore, although the project eventually included the large number of 588 personnel, there were long periods in which important slots went unfilled, due to difficulty in procuring suitable officers. For example, the counterintelligence officer of the Miami Base was never supplied with a case officer assistant, there was a long period in which the project professed inability to find a CI officer for the Guatemala Base, and months were spent in search of an announcer for Radio Swan. Few Clandestine Services people were found who were capable of serving as base chiefs; the support services had to supply most of them. All of the paramilitary officers had to be brought from outside WH Division, or even from outside the Agency. (Air operations presented no staffing problem for WH/4, since DPD supplied its own people.)

8. There were in fact insufficient people to do the job during the latter stages of the project. Personnel worked such long hours and so intensively that their efficiency was affected. Personnel shortages were one of the reasons why much of the work of the project was performed on a "crash" basis.

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Scarcity of Linguists

9. Very few project personnel spoke Spanish or had Latin-American background knowledge. In a number of instances those senior operating personnel in the field stations that did speak Spanish had to be interrupted in their regular duties merely in order to act as interpreters. This lack occurred in part because of the scarcity of Spanish linguists in the Agency and in part because WH Division did not transfer to the project sufficient numbers of its own Spanish speakers.

10. There were many other examples of improper use of skilled personnel. In many instances, case officers were used merely as "handholders" for agents and technical specialists were used as stevedores. Some of the people who served the project on contract turned out to be incompetent.

11. Staffing of the project was defective because the whole Clandestine Services staffing system, with absolute power being exercised by the division and branch chiefs, is defective. Each division seeks to guard its own assets; scanty recognition is given to the respective priorities of the various projects.

12. In spite of the foregoing, there were a great many excellent people in the project who worked effectively and who developed considerably in the course of their work. It should also be emphasized that, almost without exception, personnel

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worked extremely long hours for months on end without complaint and otherwise manifested high motivation, together with great perseverance and ingenuity in solving the manifold problems that the project constantly raised. It should be stated that in general the support people sent to the project by the support component were of excellent quality and effective performance.

13. Unfortunately, however, while many persons performed prodigies of effort, these were often directed towards overcoming obstacles which better organization and management would have eliminated. Such efforts were especially necessary (a) in support of the chimera of "non-attributability" of the operation; (b) in negotiating with the Armed Services for equipment, training personnel, etc., which the Agency should have been able to request as of right; and (c) in providing the support for an overt military enterprise that was too large for the Agency's capabilities.

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F. EVALUATION OF PLANNING

1. Before proceeding to an evaluation of the Agency's planning, the over-all policy decisions of the United States Government with reference to the Cuban operation will first be stated in summary form. These decisions not only constituted the background against which Agency planning was conducted but also presented numerous important factors that limited or otherwise determined its scope.

2. We will next endeavor to point out the various occasions on which we believe that the Agency officials responsible for the project made serious planning errors, both of commission and of omission, which affected the project in vital respects.

3. Between the plan approved by President Eisenhower on 17 March 1960 (Annex A) and the invasion plan actually carried out on 17 April 1961 (Annex E) there was a radical change in concept. Originally the heart of the plan was a long, slow, clandestine build-up of guerrilla forces, to be trained and developed in Cuba by a cadre of Cubans whom the Agency would recruit, train and infiltrate into Cuba.

4. But thirteen months later the Agency sponsored an overt assault-type amphibious landing of 1,500 combat-trained and heavily armed soldiers. Most of them were unversed in guerrilla warfare. They were expected to maintain themselves

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for a period of time (some said a week) sufficient to administer a "shock" and thereby, it was hoped, to trigger an uprising.

Discard of Original Plan

5. By November 1960 the original planning paper (Annex A) had for practical purposes ceased to exist as a charter for Agency action. By that date the Special Group had come to be unanimously of the opinion that the changed conditions, chiefly Castro's increased military strength through Soviet support and the increased effectiveness of his security forces, had made the original covert activities plan obsolete.

6. The Special Group had, however, not yet agreed on a substitute plan and strong doubt was expressed whether anything less than overt U.S. forces would suffice to obtain Castro's downfall. But there appeared to be agreement that, whatever the ultimate decision, it would be advantageous for the United States to have some trained Cuban refugees available for eventual use, and that CIA should continue to prepare such a force.

7. At the end of November 1960, the Agency presented a revised plan to President Eisenhower and his advisors. This included (a) infiltration into Cuba by air of 80 men in small paramilitary teams, after reception committees had been prepared by men infiltrated by sea; (b) an amphibious

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landing of a team of 650-700 men with extraordinarily heavy firepower; (c) preliminary air strikes against military targets. CIA stated that it believed it feasible to seize and hold a limited area in Cuba and then to draw dissident elements to the landing force, which would then gradually achieve enough stature to trigger a general uprising. At this stage of the planning, clandestine nourishment of resistance forces was still an important element, though now overshadowed by the overt strike force concept.

8. President Eisenhower orally directed the Agency to go ahead with its preparations with all speed. But this meeting occurred during the U.S. political interregnum and the proposed target date was later than 20 January 1961, so that in effect the President's instructions were merely to proceed and to keep the preparations going until the new Administration should take office and should make the definitive decisions, especially whether and under what circumstances the landing should take place.

Search for Policy Decisions

9. As an example of the decision-making process, at the meeting of the Special Group held 8 December 1960 the Agency requested authorization (a) to make propaganda leaflet flights over Cuba; (b) to screen non-official U.S. personnel for use in maritime operations; (c) to resupply Cuban resistance

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elements from U.S. air bases at the rate of two flights a week. Only the first authorization was given at that time.

10. In mid-January 1961 various major policy questions were, at CIA's request, under discussion by the Special Group. These included: (a) use of American contract pilots for tactical and logistical air operations over Cuba; (b) use of a U.S. air base for logistical flights to Cuba; (c) commencement of air strikes not later than dawn of the day before the amphibious assault and without curtailment of the number of aircraft to be employed from those available; (d) use of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, as an air-strike base and maritime staging area.

11. In the end only one of these policy questions was resolved in the affirmative, that with regard to the use of Puerto Cabezas. It should be especially noted that the project's paramilitary chief had strongly recommended that the operation be abandoned if policy should not allow adequate tactical air support.

#### Conflicting Views

12. The raising of these questions and the failure to resolve many of them demonstrates the dangerous conflict between the desire for political acceptability and the need for military effectiveness. It also indicates the fluctuating policy background against which the officers running the

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project had to do their day-to-day business. This policy uncertainty was, in several respects, never satisfactorily resolved right up to the very hour of action, and many problems arose out of the changing limitations to which authority to do certain things was subjected in the name of political necessity.

13. Thus, during the months immediately preceding the inauguration on 20 January 1961, the Agency was recruiting and training Cuban troops and otherwise proceeding with a changed plan not yet definitely formulated or reduced to writing, with no assurance that the invasion, which was now the essence of the plan, would ultimately be authorized by the new Administration. The Agency was driving forward without knowing precisely where it was going.

14. The first formal briefing of President Kennedy and his advisors took place on 28 January 1961. (He had received briefings on earlier occasions, even before his election.) At this meeting there was a presentation, largely oral, of the status of preparations, and President Kennedy approved their continuation. But there was still no authorization, express or implied, that military action would in fact eventually be undertaken.

15. In the ensuing weeks, the Director of Central Intelligence and the Deputy Director (Plans), accompanied in

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some instances by other Agency representatives, attended a number of meetings with the new President and his advisors. (The paper prepared for a 17 February meeting is appended as Annex B.) In the course of these meetings, the Agency presented three informal planning or "concept" papers, dated 11 March 1961, 16 March 1961 and 12 April 1961, each a revision of its predecessor (Annexes C, D and E, respectively). These papers served chiefly as the bases for oral discussions at these meetings.

Successive Alterations

16. According to our information, the revised concept, as exposed by the paper of 12 April 1961, was apparently acceptable to the President although he indicated he might order a diversion. Before that he had authorized the Agency to proceed with mounting the operation, but had reserved the right to cancel at any time. The President was advised that noon on the 16th was the last hour for a diversion. The DD/P checked with Mr. Bundy shortly after noon on the 16th, and no diversion being ordered, authorized the landing to proceed.

17. These three papers disclose that, starting with the World War II commando-type operation outlined in the 11 March 1961 paper (Annex C), the plan had been swiftly and successively altered to incorporate four characteristics which had been deemed essential in order to ensure that the operation would look like an infiltration of guerrillas in support of an internal revolution and would therefore be politically acceptable.

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18. The four characteristics were:

- a. an unspectacular night landing;
- b. possibility of conducting air operations from a base on seized territory;
- c. a build-up period, after the initial landing, to precede offensive action against Castro's forces, and
- d. terrain suitable for guerrilla warfare in the event the invasion force could not hold a lodgment.

19. The airfield requirement obliged the planners to shift the invasion site from Trinidad to Zapata. The former area was close to the Escambray Mountains and therefore offered better guerrilla possibilities, but only the latter had a suitable airfield.

20. The third paper also introduced a plan for a guerrilla-type, diversionary landing in Oriente Province two days before the strike and provided that supplies should be landed at night during the initial stages. It also provided for air strikes on military objectives at dawn of D Day as well as on D Day minus 2.

#### Guerrilla Role

21. Close reading of the three papers also discloses that the invasion was no longer conceived as an effort to assist Cuban guerrilla forces in a coordinated attack. The papers make no claim that significant guerrilla forces existed with

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whom -- after evaluative reports from our own trained agents, confirming their strength, sufficiency of arms and ammunition, and their readiness -- we had worked out plans for a coordinated, combined insurrection and attack against Castro. As the 12 April 1961 paper expressly states, the concept was that the operation should have the appearance of an internal resistance.

22. With reference to the strength of the resistance in Cuba, the 11 March 1961 paper refers to an estimated 1,200 guerrillas and 1,000 other individuals engaging in acts of conspiracy and sabotage, but it makes no claim of any control exercised by the Agency or even that coordinated plans had been made and firm radio communications established.

23. The 12 April 1961 paper states the estimate at "nearly 7,000 insurgents" (without specifying the number of guerrillas included therein), who were "responsible to some degree of control through agents with whom communications are currently active." It locates these in three widely separate regions of the island and states that the individual groups are small and very inadequately armed and that it was planned to supply them by air drops after D Day, with the objective of creating a revolutionary situation.

24. The foregoing language suggests existence of 7,000 insurgents but refrains from claiming any prospect of immediate help from trained guerrilla forces in being. The term

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"insurgents" seems to have been used in the sense of "potential" insurgents or mere civilian opponents of Castro. A statement about military and police defectors was similarly vague; the Agency was in touch with 31 such persons whom it hoped to induce to defect after D Day.

Arrests of Agents

25. These tacit admissions of the non-existence of effective, controlled resistance in Cuba correspond to the intelligence reports which clearly showed the unfavorable situation resulting from the failure of our air supply operations and the success of the Castro security forces in arresting our agents, rolling up the few existing nets, and reducing guerrilla groups to ineffectiveness.

26. It is clear that the invasion operation was based on the hope that the brigade would be able to maintain itself in Cuba long enough to prevail by attracting insurgents and defectors from the Castro armed services, but without having in advance any assurance of assistance from identified, known, controlled, trained, and organized guerrillas. The Agency hoped the invasion would, like a deus ex machina, produce a "shock", which would cause these defections. In other words, under the final plan the invasion was to take the place of an organized resistance which did not exist and was to generate organized resistance by providing the focus and acting as a catalyst.

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27. The Agency was matching the 1,500-man brigade, after an amphibious landing, against Castro's combined military forces, which the highest-level U.S. intelligence (USIB reports entitled "The Military Buildup in Cuba", dated 30 November 1960 and 9 February 1961, respectively) estimated as follows: The Revolutionary Army - 32,000 men; the militia - 200,000 men; employing more than 30 to 40 thousand tons of Bloc-furnished arms and heavy materiel of the value of \$30,000,000.

28. It is difficult to understand how the decision to proceed with the invasion could have been justified in the latter stages of the operation. Under the Trinidad plan (Annex C), access to the Escambray Mountains for possible guerrilla existence might have constituted some justification for the enormous risks involved. This justification did not apply to the Zapata area which was poor guerrilla terrain and offered little possibility for the break-out of a surrounded invasion force. The lack of contingency planning for either survival or rescue of the brigade has never been satisfactorily explained.

29. The argument has been made that the Agency's theory of an uprising to be set off by a successful invasion and the maintenance of the battalion for a period of a week or so has not been disproved. It was not put to the test, this argument goes, because the cancelled D-Day air strikes were essential

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to the invasion's success. Such an argument fails in the face of Castro's demonstrated power to arrest tens of thousands of suspected persons immediately after the D-Day-minus-2 air strikes and the effectiveness of the Castro security forces in arresting agents, as demonstrated by unimpeachable intelligence received.

Views of Joint Chiefs

30. Agency participants in the project have sought to defend the invasion plan by citing the approval given to the plan by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). To this argument, members of the JCS have replied, in the course of another inquiry, (1) that the final plan was presented to them only orally, which prevented normal staffing; (2) that they regarded the operation as being solely CIA's, with the military called on to furnish various types of support and the chief interest of the JCS being to see to it that every kind of support requested was furnished; (3) that they went on the assumption that full air support would be furnished and control of the air secured and on the Agency's assurances that a great number of insurgents would immediately join forces with the invasion forces; and (4) that, in the event the battle went against them, the brigade would at once "go guerrilla" and take to the hills.

31. The Agency committed at least four extremely serious mistakes in planning:

- a. Failure to subject the project, especially in its latter frenzied stages, to a cold and objective appraisal

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by the best operating talent available, particularly by those not involved in the operation, such as the Chief of Operations and the chiefs of the Senior Staffs. Had this been done, the two following mistakes (b and c, below) might have been avoided.

b. Failure to advise the President, at an appropriate time, that success had become dubious and to recommend that the operation be therefore cancelled and that the problem of unseating Castro be restudied.

c. Failure to recognize that the project had become overt and that the military effort had become too large to be handled by the Agency alone.

d. Failure to reduce successive project plans to formal papers and to leave copies of them with the President and his advisors and to request specific written approval and confirmation thereof.

32. Timely and objective scrutiny of the operation in the months before the invasion, including study of all available intelligence, would have demonstrated to Agency officials that the clandestine paramilitary operations had almost totally failed, that there was no controlled and responsive underground movement ready to rally to the invasion force, and that Castro's ability both to fight back and to roll up the internal opposition must be very considerably upgraded.

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33. It would also have raised the question of why the United States should contemplate pitting 1,500 soldiers, however well trained and armed, against an enemy vastly superior in number and armament on a terrain which offered nothing but vague hope of significant local support. It might also have suggested that the Agency's responsibility in the operation should be drastically revised and would certainly have revealed that there was no real plan for the post-invasion period, whether for success or failure.

Existence of Warnings

34. The latest United States Intelligence Board, Office of National Estimates, and Office of Current Intelligence studies on Cuba available at that time provided clear warning that a calm reappraisal was necessary.

35. But the atmosphere was not conducive to it. The chief of the project and his subordinates had been subjected to such gruelling pressures of haste and overwork for so long that their impetus and drive would have been difficult to curb for such a purpose. The strike preparations, under the powerful influence of the project's paramilitary chief, to which there was no effective counterbalance, had gained such momentum that the operation had surged far ahead of policy. The Cuban volunteers were getting seriously restive and threatening to get out of hand before they could be committed. The Guatemalan Government

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was urging the Agency to take away its Cubans. The rainy season was hard upon the Caribbean. The reappraisal never happened, though these very factors which helped prevent it should have warned the Agency of its necessity.

36. These adverse factors were compounded and exacerbated by policy restrictions that kept coming one upon another throughout a period of weeks and right up until the point of no return. These caused successive planning changes and piled up more confusion. Rapidly accumulating stresses, in our opinion, caused the Agency operators to lose sight of the fact that the margin of error was swiftly narrowing and had even vanished before the force was committed. At some point in this degenerative cycle they should have gone to the President and said frankly: "Here are the facts. The operation should be halted. We request further instructions."

Consequences of Cancellation

37. Cancellation would have been embarrassing. The brigade could not have been held any longer in a ready status, probably could not have been held at all. Its members would have spread their disappointment far and wide. Because of multiple security leaks in this huge operation, the world already knew about the preparations, and the Government's and the Agency's embarrassment would have been public.

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38. However, cancellation would have averted failure, which brought even more embarrassment, carried death and misery to hundreds, destroyed millions of dollars' worth of U.S. property, and seriously damaged U.S. prestige.

39. The other possible outcome -- the one the project strove to achieve -- was a successful brigade lodgment, housing the Revolutionary Council but isolated from the rest of Cuba by swamps and Castro's forces. Arms were held in readiness for 30,000 Cubans who were expected to make their way unarmed through the Castro army and wade the swamps to rally to the liberators. Except for this, we are unaware of any planning by the Agency or by the U.S. Government for this success.

40. It is beyond the scope of this report to suggest what U.S. action might have been taken to consolidate victory, but we can confidently assert that the Agency had no intelligence evidence that Cubans in significant numbers could or would join the invaders or that there was any kind of an effective and cohesive resistance movement under anybody's control, let alone the Agency's, that could have furnished internal leadership for an uprising in support of the invasion. The consequences of a successful lodgment, unless overtly supported by U.S. armed forces, were dubious.

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The Choice

41. The choice was between retreat without honor and a gamble between ignominious defeat and dubious victory. The Agency chose to gamble, at rapidly decreasing odds.

42. The project had lost its covert nature by November 1960. As it continued to grow, operational security became more and more diluted. For more than three months before the invasion the American press was reporting, often with some accuracy, on the recruiting and training of Cubans. Such massive preparations could only be laid to the U.S. The Agency's name was freely linked with these activities. Plausible denial was a pathetic illusion.

43. Insistence on adhering to the formalities imposed by a non-attributability which no longer existed produced absurdities and created obstacles and delays. For example, the use of obsolete and inadequate B-26 aircraft, instead of the more efficient A-5s originally requested, was a concession to non-attributability which hampered the operation severely. A certain type of surgical tent requested for the landing beach was not supplied because it could be traced to the U.S. A certain modern rifle was not supplied, for the same reason, although several thousand of them had recently been declared surplus. In the end, as could have been foreseen, everything was traced to the U.S.

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44. U.S. policy called for a covert operation and assigned it to the agency chartered to handle such things. When the project became blown to every newspaper reader the Agency should have informed higher authority that it was no longer operating within its charter. Had national policy then called for continuation of the overt effort under a joint national task force, vastly greater man-power resources would have been available for the invasion and the Agency could have performed an effective supporting role. The costly delays experienced by the Agency in negotiating for support from the armed services would have been avoided.

Piecemeal Policy

45. In the hectic weeks before the strike, policy was being formed piecemeal and the imposition of successive restrictions was contracting the margin of error. The last of these restrictive decisions came from the President when the brigade was already in small boats moving toward the Cuban shore. Had it come a few hours earlier the invasion might have been averted and loss of life and prestige avoided.

46. If formal papers outlining the final strike plan in detail and emphasizing the vital necessity of the D-Day air strikes had been prepared and left with the President and his advisors, including the Joint Chiefs, with a request for written confirmation that the plan had received full

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comprehension and approval, the culminating incident which preceded the loss of the Cuban brigade might never have happened.

47. We are informed that this took place as follows: On the evening of 16 April the President instructed the Secretary of State that the D-Day strikes set for the following morning should be cancelled, unless there were overriding considerations to advise him of. The Secretary then informed the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, the Director being absent from Washington, and the Deputy Director (Plans) of this decision, offering to let them call the President at Glen Ora if they wished. They preferred not to do so, and the Secretary concluded from this that they did not believe the strikes to be vital to success.

A Civilian Decision

48. Earlier that evening the project chief and his paramilitary chief had emphatically warned the DD/P to insist that cancellation of the strikes would produce disaster. Thus the DD/P, a civilian without military experience, and the DDCI, an Air Force general, did not follow the advice of the project's paramilitary chief, a specialist in amphibious operations. And the President made this vital, last-minute decision without direct contact with the military chiefs of the invasion operation.

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49. The President may never have been clearly advised of the need for command of the air in an amphibious operation like this one. The DD/P was aware that at least two of the President's military advisors, both members of the Joint Chiefs, did not understand this principle. This might well have served to warn the DD/P that the President needed to be impressed most strongly with this principle, by means of a formal written communication, and also have alerted him to the advisability of accepting the Secretary's invitation to call the President directly.

50. If the project's paramilitary chief, as leader of the overt military effort, had accompanied the DDCI and the DD/P to the meeting with the Secretary he might have brought strong persuasion to bear on the decision.

51. This fateful incident, in our opinion, resulted in part from failure to circulate formal planning papers together with requests for specific confirmation.

#### Shifts in Scope

52. The general vagueness of policy and direction permitted a continual shifting of the scope and scale of the project, that is, the type of operational planning commonly referred to as "playing it by ear," and this in turn led to various kinds of difficulties about people, money, supplies and bases.

53. A staffing guide prepared in May 1960 listed a total of 235 personnel required for the foreseeable future (107 being

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on board). By September, the strength had been built up to 228. In October another staffing guide listed a total of 363 positions. By the end of the project, 588 people were working in WH/4. There were 160 people in the Miami area alone.

54. The original plan contemplated 200 to 300 Cubans as a contingency force. By mid-July, a force of 500 was being considered. In early November, the plan was to use 1,500 men, and there was talk of as many as 3,000. In early December, a brigade of 750 was agreed upon. Its strength was built up to 664 by the end of January. By 17 March the ground forces in training numbered 973. By 28 March equipment for 1,600 men had been ordered, and the actual brigade strength on 6 April was 1,390. Such changes made it very difficult for the supporting components, particularly the Office of Logistics and Development Projects Division, who were not given much lead time.

55. The original estimate for the project anticipated expenditures to the total of \$4,400,000 during the two fiscal years, 1960 and 1961. On 24 March 1960, \$900,000 was released for the balance of Fiscal Year 1960. This amount was expended within a month and an additional million dollars released to carry the project to the end of June.

56. In August, a budget was presented for Fiscal Year 1961 which amounted to \$13,000,000. By December, \$11,300,000 had

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been obligated and an additional \$28,200,000 was requested and authorized. In May 1961, an additional \$5,000,000 was requested to meet obligations incurred. The total amount of money for this project for Fiscal Years 1960/61, instead of \$4,400,000, was more than \$46,000,000.

57. When the project started, it was not realized that bases would be needed at Useppa Island, Key West, Miami, and Opa-locka, Florida; New Orleans, Puerto Rico, Panama, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, as well as innumerable safe houses and other facilities. Consequently the project suffered, because many of these facilities were not ready when needed. The WH Division launched into a large paramilitary project without the bases, the boats, the experienced paramilitary personnel, or a complete and sufficient plan, and never really caught up.

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G. THE MIAMI OPERATING BASE

1. The confused relationships between WH/4 headquarters and the forward operating base in the Miami area were a significant factor in the over-all performance of the project mission. The base was activated in late April 1960 and was put in Miami mainly because it was the chief center of Cuban refugees in the United States.

2. From the beginning, the DD/P and his associates took a firm stand against allowing this base to become more than a small support organization, and until September 1960 the base did little except carry on liaison with the Cuban exile organizations and U.S. law enforcement agencies. For example, there was only one paramilitary officer at the base during this period.

3. The DD/P's Chief of Operations wrote in June 1960:

"I recognize your need for some operational personnel in the Miami area to service and conduct certain activities there. I am firmly opposed, however, to the growth of an organization which would represent a second headquarters or intermediate echelon there." At this same time, the DD/P's Assistant for Covert Action emphasized that the function of the forward operating base should be one of coordination, with command remaining in Headquarters.

4. In August the DD/P wrote that he was worried about Miami and wanted to be sure that "we are not duplicating there any functions that are being performed in Headquarters. For

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instance, I am not quite clear what are the duties of the FM types there since this component is neither a headquarters nor a training installation nor even a forward command post." And in another memo in November, he again urged that WH/4 be especially careful to avoid any duplication of effort between Miami and Headquarters.

Duplication of Effort

5. By this time there was plenty of duplication. Headquarters and the Miami Base had become engaged in many parallel or overlapping operations and were even competing with each other. Both components were handling all kinds of agents and in some cases the same ones. The only activity that Miami did not get into was air operations, but even here it necessarily had a role in many of the clandestine air drops.

6. There was a general feeling at Headquarters that the forward base existed solely for support and that Headquarters was in the best position to handle operations because it had ready access to policy guidance and fast radio communications to and from all elements. This view ignored the fact that much of the communication with Cuba was only by secret writing and couriers; that Miami was the main source of information, politicians, agents, and soldiers for the project; that it was the logical location for infiltration and exfiltration; that the base, through the maintenance of effective liaison, had the

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complete cooperation of the local FBI, the Border Patrol, Immigration, Coast Guard, FCC, Customs, Navy, and police officials.

7. Except for the Director of Central Intelligence, who visited the base, top Agency officials concerned with the project did not have first-hand knowledge of what was being done and what could be done at Miami. The limitations they placed on base activities had serious consequences. For example, when the resistance organizers being trained in Guatemala were ready to go into Cuba in September, the maritime capability to infiltrate them did not yet exist. By the time the base had built up some capabilities in various lines, valuable months had been lost.

#### The Miami View

8. On the other hand, there was a general feeling at the base that it should be a "station", conducting operations just as Havana was able to do (up to the date when diplomatic relations were broken off), with Headquarters providing support, guidance and policy. This view failed to realize that a station with several hundred people would have been very difficult to conceal, that it would have cost a million dollars to move everyone to Miami, and that Headquarters would have gotten into the operations anyhow, due to the easy access to Miami from Washington, especially by telephone.

9. The letter of instructions to the base chief, dated 6 October 1960, was pretty vague. It stated that he would have

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authority over all project personnel and responsibility for the supervision of any project activities conducted through the Miami area from other areas. It authorized him to use personnel, materiel, facilities and funds for the accomplishment of the over-all Agency mission. He was made responsible to the chief of the project.

10. The first intelligence (FI) case officer reported to the base in September 1960 and proceeded to acquire, train and direct agents. At the time of the invasion, the Miami Base had 31 FI agents in Cuba, all of whom were reporting and all of whom had been recruited by the base.

The CI Section

11. The counterintelligence (CI) section began to function in mid-July 1960. By the time of the strike, this section had 39 carefully selected, highly educated Cubans trained as case officers to form a future Cuban Intelligence Service; also, 100 selected Cubans trained as future CI officials and civil government officials; also, a reserve of 100 older non-political individuals trained as a reserve intelligence corps.

12. The paramilitary (PM) section was opened in late June 1960 with one officer. His job was to conduct liaison with the Cuban leaders in order to obtain recruits for the Guatemala camps. A second PM officer reported in August, and at this time there was a beginning of an attempt to infiltrate arms,

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ammunition and personnel into Cuba clandestinely by boat. (These were the "PM types" whose duties had mystified the DD/P.) There were also two maritime "types" who were training the crew of a borrowed small boat for clandestine trips.

13. By 15 November 39 people had been assigned to the Miami base in addition to 44 people from the Agency's Office of Communications. In addition to support elements, there were sections for propaganda, FI, CI, political action, and PM.

14. By 15 April 1961, the base and its sub-base had 160 persons assigned, as follows:

10	FI
5	CI
2	Political Action
7	Propaganda
25	Support
26	PM
14	Security
68	Communications
3	Miscellaneous

15. While the Havana Station was still operating, Miami Base was in close touch with it by courier and secure communications. When Havana Station was closed, Miami expected to take over the stay-behind assets, such as they were. However, Headquarters took over their control. Miami concentrated on the training and infiltration of agents.

#### PM Support Role

16. In PM activities, control was tightly held by Headquarters, and the PM section of the base was limited pretty much

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to providing support in recruiting soldiers and running small boat operations. This tight control meant that the FM officers at the base looked to Headquarters for guidance rather than to the chief of base. The FM and other sections had their own channels to Headquarters, and this led to uncontrolled action and considerable confusion. FM officers in Key West, a sub-base of Miami, also sometimes communicated directly with Headquarters.

17. There are alleged to have been cases in which a Headquarters decision was conveyed to the Miami Base by three persons simultaneously, each over the telephone. The result of this was that the base had an enormously high phone bill and the base chief often was not informed of events until after they were over, if at all.

18. The Miami case officers retained their agents as long as the agents were reporting by secret writing. Once the agents reported by radio, they were taken over by Headquarters. This was resented by the Miami case officers, who felt that they were in the best position to know the agents, having recruited and trained them.

19. Case officers in Headquarters, on the other hand, felt that Miami case officers tried to steal their agents when they passed through the Miami area. One agent who visited Headquarters received promises of money and support which went

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far beyond what the case officer in Miami had offered. The base was not informed of these promises until the agent mentioned them. For the next several months, this particular agent was unmanageable and would not even meet with the Miami case officer. This was naturally viewed as Headquarters meddling.

Examples of Confusion

20. Case officers in Miami also felt that they were unduly handicapped in that Headquarters was not only competing with them but also reviewing their actions, which was something like playing a game with the umpire on the other team. It is doubtful that a reviewing component can maintain objectivity when it is also competing with the component whose activities it is reviewing.

21. Numerous examples could be cited to illustrate the confusion that existed. The divided control over maritime operations is discussed elsewhere in this paper. There was an expensive fiasco over some special lubricating oil additive intended for sabotage use in Cuba. The organizational arrangement made necessary hundreds of telephone calls and cables which otherwise would not have been sent, and the areas for uncertainty and misunderstanding were still considerable. For example, a Miami cable of 15 February referred to an agent message and asked, "Does Headquarters intend to answer and arrange this operation?"

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22. The general situation also led to an extraordinary number of temporary-duty trips back and forth between Washington and Miami. These were not only expensive but added a great many problems in the way of support and security.

23. In December 1960 the base chief pointed out to Headquarters that the base needed "clarification and specification of the requirements it is expected to fulfill and tasks that it is expected to perform, together with the investment of sufficient authority and discretion for the operational action which may be involved." In March 1961 he pointed out that "the base would welcome more precise requirements for its agents than had been received up to that time in the interests of making efficient use of them."

24. In May 1961 he wrote a memorandum on control of denied-area operations which pointed out that future operations should either be controlled from Headquarters or from a forward operating base, but that the divided control which had existed during the project had resulted in parallel, sometimes duplicative and conflicting efforts and in operational relationships which were competitive, without purpose, and sometimes counter-productive.

25. The inspectors agree that this divided effort represented an ineffective and uneconomical use of time, money, and materiel, and less than maximum utilization of Agency employees, plus unexploited, delayed or poorly coordinated use of Cuban agents and assets.

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H. INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT

1. The WH/4 Branch had not only the responsibility for the Cuban project but also the normal area duties of a geographical unit in the Clandestine Services. Besides being considered a task force with the mission of overturning the Castro government, it also had the Headquarters desk responsibility for Cuba, including support of Havana Station and Santiago Base until the break in diplomatic relations.

2. This arrangement required WH/4's intelligence (FI) section to collect intelligence on Cuba not only for the task force, with its special requirements, but also for the entire U.S. intelligence community, with its diverse and long-range needs.

3. The section was plagued with personnel shortages from the start, but as long as the U.S. Embassy in Havana remained open, thus assuring communications, it received and processed a good yield of intelligence from Cuba, chiefly on political, economic, and Communist Party matters. Late in 1960 the section was directed to place emphasis on military information, but it found that its agents in Cuba lacked access to high-level military sources.

4. The FI section transmitted copies of all the reports it processed to the paramilitary section as well as to the rest of its regular intelligence customers.

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The Net in Havana

5. The section devoted considerable effort to supporting Havana Station in preparing its agents for stay-behind roles in the event of a break in diplomatic relations. When the embassy finally closed on 3 January 1961 the station had a single net for positive intelligence. It comprised some 27 persons, 15 of whom were reporting agents and the rest radio operators, cutouts and couriers. The principal agents and one of the radio operators were U.S. citizens and thus had doubtful status after the break in relations.

6. In September 1960 as the military invasion concept was beginning to gain ascendancy in project planning, the chief of the project created a G-2 unit. But instead of placing this unit directly under himself as a project-wide unit and making its chief a member of his immediate staff, he put it in the paramilitary section under the aggressive Marine Corps colonel who became the paramilitary unit chief at about that time.

7. As chief of this low-echelon intelligence unit, whose analyses were to have important influence on an action vitally affecting national security and prestige, WH/4 brought in an officer of undoubted ability but of limited experience in paramilitary and FI operations. It was a grave error to place this G-2 unit in such a subordinate position in the project, and this error produced the serious consequences described below.

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Function of G-2 Unit

8. The paramilitary G-2 unit consisted of four officers and several secretaries. Its principal function was to prepare intelligence annexes to the successive invasion plans. Its sources of information included, in addition to the FI section's reports, photographic intelligence, cartographic intelligence, Special Intelligence, armed services reports, and messages received from the paramilitary section's own agents in Cuba. Reports from the armed services were procured rapidly through direct informal liaison rather than through the usual slower channels.

9. In various ways the functioning of the regular FI section, which was directly under the project chief, was adversely affected by the paramilitary G-2 unit.

10. The PM unit absorbed the available personnel. The chief of the FI section was not invited to attend WH/4 staff meetings, and for security reasons, he never had access to WH/4's war room. During the final weeks the FI section was not permitted to examine the PM section's incoming operational cables for possible positive intelligence content. The FI section chief did not have a clearance for photographic intelligence.

Lack of Liaison

11. There was no close liaison between the two sections, and this resulted in some duplication in preparation of reports

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requested by the DD/P, because neither section would learn of the requests made of the other. Until the end of 1960 the two sections were housed in different buildings.

12. The most serious consequence of the third-echelon position of the G-2 unit was that it concentrated in the hands of the unit chief the dual function of receiving all the information available from Government-wide sources, including that from the agents of his own paramilitary section, and of interpreting all these data for the purpose of supplying intelligence support to the various invasion plans.

13. Interpretation of intelligence affecting the strike force aspect of the operation was thus entrusted to officers who were so deeply engaged in preparations for the invasion that their judgments could not have been expected to be altogether objective. This circumstance undoubtedly had a strong influence on the process by which WH/4 arrived at the conclusion that the landing of the strike force could and would trigger an uprising among the Cuban populace. This conclusion, in turn, became an essential element in the decision to proceed with the operation, as it took the place of the original concept, no longer maintainable, that the invasion was to be undertaken in support of existing and effective guerrilla forces.

14. Irrespective of the validity of that conclusion, it is clear that the interpretative analysis should have been made not

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by the persons who were working day and night to prepare the invasion but by an objective and disinterested senior interpretation specialist from the Agency's FI Staff or from its Office of Current Intelligence.

Intelligence Support Vacuum

15. Another serious error in the field of intelligence support was that Miami Base received almost no intelligence support from the Headquarters G-2 section. This may be attributed to the facts that the paramilitary chief was almost completely preoccupied with the strike force preparations and that his subordinate G-2 was not given project-wide responsibilities and to the rigid security restrictions under which the paramilitary section was expected to operate, as well as to the general confusion in the organizational position of the Miami Base.

16. This serious support vacuum at Miami was compounded because the base, in spite of its large size and the fact that it was deeply engaged in its own operations in Cuba, had no intelligence support section. There was no single officer or unit charged with responsibility for interpreting the considerable amount of intelligence derived directly from base sources and from Special Intelligence.

17. Furthermore no photographic intelligence was available to Miami Base, which had no officer with a clearance entitling

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him to receive it. There was substantially no intelligence support covering the Cuban beach areas or the political situation inside Cuba. There was no analysis or interpretation of Special Intelligence, and there was no mechanism to call critical material to anyone's attention.

18. The result of this highly defective state of affairs was that individual Miami case officers were forced to rely upon their own interpretation of the separate intelligence reports, instead of having this material interpreted for them by specialists. They were not given a number of other items of operational intelligence which were in existence in the G-2 unit of the paramilitary section at Headquarters.

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I. THE POLITICAL FRONT AND THE RELATION OF CUBANS TO THE PROJECT

1. The Cuban opposition front, as conceived by the Agency in consultation with the State Department, was to have the following characteristics:

- a. Full restoration of the 1940 Cuban constitution.
- b. Return to the basic principles of the revolution, as enunciated in the 1958 Caracas Declaration.
- c. Pro-Western and strongly anti-Communist orientation.
- d. Political complexion ranging from a little to the right of center to somewhat left of center.
- e. Ability to muster the broadest possible support from the Cuban population.

2. The functions of such a front organization were conceived to be:

- a. A cover for covert action against the Castro regime.
- b. A catalyst and a rallying point for anti-Castro groups variously reported to number 178, 184, or 211.
- c. A possible nucleus for a provisional government of Cuba following Castro's downfall.

3. The terms of reference thus excluded followers of the former dictator, Fulgencio Batista. They also excluded extreme leftists.

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4. Exclusion of the Batistianos and other ultra-conservatives caused one kind of problem. Many of the exiles had been Batista followers. Many of them were rich and had assets, such as boats and followers, which could be used. Some had military experience. Some of them had American friends who were influential enough to urge their claims to consideration upon the White House.

The Leftist Fringe

5. Exclusion of the far-left fringe caused another kind of problem. It was hard to tell how far left some persons were. And some of those whose political acceptability was questionable nevertheless claimed such substantial following inside Cuba that it was difficult to ignore them.

6. In forming the Frente Revolucionario Democrático (FRD) the Agency focussed its attention principally on personalities and groups who had either participated in Castro's government or supported his revolution but had become disillusioned and gone into opposition.

7. In early 1959 the Havana Station was already assessing a wide variety of anti-Castro personalities with whom it was in contact. In mid-1959 a station agent was exploring the possibility of covert support to the Montecristi Movement of Justo Asencio Carrillo Hernandez.

8. In the mid-1950s the Montecristi group had been active against Batista, who exiled Carrillo. He returned after the

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revolution to take an important banking post but found Castro's Communist tendencies intolerable and went into opposition again. His group is described as liberal and progressive but rejecting any accommodation with Communism.

The Organizing Committee

9. Carrillo was one of several Cuban figures whom the Agency induced to defect in late 1959 or the early months of 1960. Others were Manuel Francisco Artime Buesa, Jose Ignacio Rasco Bermudez, and Manuel Antonio Varona Loreda. It was these four who, after long negotiations, formed the organizing committee of the FRD in May 1960.

10. Artime, who is still under 30, joined Castro's movement as an anti-Batista student. Under instructions from the Catholic Church he organized a group of 4,000 Catholic Action students to gain the farmers' help against Batista. The view has been expressed that he was the Jesuits' penetration of the 26 July Movement. Castro gave him a high post in National Agrarian Reform Institute (INRA) from which he resigned after ten months to form the Movement to Recover the Revolution (MRR), composed in part of his former Catholic Action followers. This exile opposition group provided a large proportion of the recruits for the strike force.

11. Rasco, a college and university classmate of Castro's, is a lawyer and history professor, described as a nice young

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intellectual without much talent for action. In the fall of 1959 he became the first president of the Christian Democratic Movement (MDC), an anti-Communist Catholic group which Castro drove underground in April 1960 at which time Rasco fled the country.

12. Varona's career in government and in opposition politics goes back to the 1920s. During the regime of President Prío Socarras he held several important posts, including that of prime minister, and was responsible for anti-Communist policies and measures. He collaborated with Castro until the Communist pattern of the new regime became evident, coming to the U.S. in April 1960. Before leaving Havana he had presented a plan for Castro's overthrow, including a unified opposition and U.S. aid for developing propaganda and military capabilities.

#### The Political Spectrum

13. Varona was representative of the older opposition parties (Autentico and Ortodoxo) which had survived both Batista and Castro and which were roughly in the middle of the political spectrum. Artime's group also occupied a centrist position, but its membership was drawn from the younger generation on Cubans. Carrillo and Rasco appeared to be a little left and a little right of center, respectively.

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14. Thus the original group of organizers represented a fairly broad range of political views. They were joined in June 1960 by Aureliano Sanchez Arango who claimed leadership of the AAA group, the initials possibly representing Asociacion de Amigos de Aureliano. Both Sanchez Arango and Varona claimed to have considerable following in the Cuban labor field. Sanchez Arango and his followers appeared to have some general knowledge of the use of clandestine techniques.

15. These five associated themselves in issuing a manifesto at Mexico City on 22 June 1960. This document called upon Cubans, other Latin Americans and the world at large to help the FRD overthrow Castro's dictatorship. The FRD pledged itself to establish a representative democratic government with full civil liberties under the 1940 Cuban constitution. It pledged free general elections within 18 months of establishment of a provisional government. It proposed to ban the Communist party and institute a program of social and economic progress for all classes of Cubans.

16. Varona's maturity and experience led to his selection as coordinator, in effect, general manager, of the FRD. This immediately precipitated the resignation of Sanchez Arango and in turn led to the beginning of a problem in establishing and maintaining FRD unity which the project never fully solved.

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Change in Policy

17. The FRD had originally been conceived as the channel through which all of the project's aid to the Cuban cause would flow. However, Sanchez Arango's walkout threatened a loss of assets and capabilities which the project wanted to preserve. The result was expressed as follows in a briefing prepared by WH/4 for CINCLANT in November 1960:

"In October we made a change in operational policy. Heretofore we had kept our efforts centered on the FRD; however, we will now consider requests for paramilitary aid from any anti-Castro (and non-Batista) group, inside or outside Cuba, which can show it has a capability for paramilitary action against the Castro regime. We feel that the combination of our controlled paramilitary action under the FRD aegis and the lesser-controlled operations of other Cuban revolutionaries will bring about a considerable acceleration of active anti-Castro expressions within Cuba. We will, in any event, have the lever of support as a mechanism for influencing the ultimate emergence of one individual or group as the primary figure in the anti-Castro community."

18. Because of the gregariousness of Cuban exiles, the project was unable to prevent this change in policy from becoming known to the FRD executive committee. When the

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Bender Group, now generally understood by Cubans and many others to represent the CIA, began responding to requests from and giving support to defectors from the FRD and to groups which the FRD considered politically unacceptable, the organization which was supposed to be a world-wide symbol of Cuban freedom and which was being groomed as the nucleus of the next government of Cuba naturally felt that its prestige had been undermined.

Diffusion of Effort

19. This complicated relations between project case officers and the FRD leaders. It also appears to have resulted in some diffusion of effort in the attempts at clandestine infiltration of arms and paramilitary leaders into Cuba. It seriously hampered progress toward FRD unity, sharpened internal FRD antagonisms, and contributed to the decline in strike force recruiting efforts.

20. The composite political complexion of the FRD shifted a little to the right in August 1960 with the joining of Ricardo Rafael Sardinia, who headed an organization called the Movimiento Institucional Democratico (MID).

21. A source of friction between the FRD and its project sponsors was the effort to induce it to set up its headquarters outside the U.S. The Cuban leaders were finally persuaded by financial leverage to move to Mexico City where the Mexican

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Government had agreed to be hospitable. Housing and office space were arranged for the executive committee members and their families and for a project case officer and his secretary. [REDACTED] in Mexico City was reactivated for support duties, such as [REDACTED] and the move was made.

22. However, the Mexican Government appears not to have kept its word, and the Cubans were subjected to surveillance and other harassment. Within a few weeks it became evident that the situation was intolerable, and everybody moved back to Miami, which is where the Cubans wanted to be in the first place.

The Bender Group

23. The man responsible for laying the groundwork of the FRD, arranging a long series of meetings among the Cubans, and persuading them to merge their differences and issue a joint manifesto, was the chief of the project's political section. He was known to the Cubans and inevitably to the press as "Frank Bender". The Bender Group, for reasons of plausible denial, purported to be composed of U.S. businessmen who wanted to help overthrow Castro. The Cubans do not seem to have cared whether this was true or not, but the guise irritated them because they wanted to be in direct touch with the U.S. Government at the highest level possible.



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24. Bender's linguistic accomplishments did not include Spanish and this may have diluted his effectiveness in dealing with Cubans.

25. After the FRD was launched the handling of purely FRD affairs in Mexico City and later in Miami was turned over to a case officer with fluent Spanish and long experience in Latin American affairs.

26. However, Bender continued to be identified with the project. The FRD leaders' antagonism toward the Bender Group was sharpened when, at the time of the change in operational policy noted above, WH/4 assigned Bender the responsibility of dealing with Cuban individuals and groups outside of the FRD framework.

The Rubio Padilla Group

27. One of the outside groups the project continued to work with was the Action Movement for Recovery (MAR), headed by Juan Rubio Padilla. Use of this conservative group of rich landlords was strongly advocated by William D. Pawley, an influential Miami businessman. A paper prepared by WH/4 for the Director of Central Intelligence's use in briefing Senator Kennedy in July 1960 stated MAR's claims to a widespread resistance organization needing only arms and ammunition and orders to go into action and called the MAR relationship a most encouraging development.

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28. However, Rubio was too conservative for the FRD's taste, and the MAR was never incorporated into the FRD.

29. An organization which resisted incorporation in the FRD until March 1961 and which meanwhile had a stormy relationship with the Bender Group was the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (MRP), headed by Manuel Antonio Ray Rivero. Ray had been Castro's minister of public works until he lost his job to a Communist. He arrived in this country in November 1960 and agreed to accept assistance from the Bender Group but wished to maintain his freedom of choice. The project's unilateral use of Ray resulted in some successful maritime operations.

30. Bender's efforts to get Ray to join the FRD produced strained relations, but in December Ray agreed to accept military aid through the FRD. Ray's program appeared to be identical with Castro's but without Communism and without hostility to the United States. Ray became less intransigent as time went on and in February and March 1961 was participating in talks with Bender and Varona on the formation of the Revolutionary Council which he ultimately joined. There seems to be no substance to allegations in the press that Ray was ignored. In fact, his unsubstantiated claims to wide underground resources are said to have been received uncritically by some project personnel.

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Contact with Batistianos

31. Another allegation which gained some currency was that the project was supporting and otherwise using former associates and supporters of Batista. At one point WH/4 did have contact with one ex-Batista leader, Sanchez Mosquera, and gave some support to his group, but this effort was soon called off. There were also attempts by Batistianos to penetrate the project's military effort, but these were resisted. The FRD's own intelligence section was active in attempting to screen out Batistianos. The strike force contained some members of the former Cuban Constitutional Army, which existed under Batista, but these were recruited as soldiers not as politicians.

32. The brigade officers seem to have been clean of the Batista taint. However, the FRD, for whom they were supposedly fighting, justly complained that it had had no hand in their selection.

33. Jose Miro Cardona, a distinguished lawyer who turned to politics late in his career, was the first Cuban prime minister after the Castro revolution, was later ambassador to Spain, and was ambassador-designate to the United States when he broke with Castro, took asylum in the Argentine Embassy, and was eventually granted safe conduct to this country (in October 1960) where he became the FRD's secretary-general for public relations.

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34. Under the guidance of Bender he became a strong force for unity in the FRD during its most difficult period, the virtual political interregnum before the inauguration of President Kennedy. Miro was influential in bringing Ray into the Revolutionary Council which was formed on 20 March with Miro as chairman.

Visit to Training Camp

35. Miro, with other Council members, visited the strike force in Guatemala on 29 March in a much-needed effort to spur troop morale. There had been far too little contact between the FRD and the soldiers being trained in its name. Artime, Varona, and Antonio Jaime Maceo Mackle had been there in February in an attempt to calm mutinous spirits. The last previous visit had been made in the fall of 1960 by Col. Eduardo Martin Elena, head of the FRD's military staff and a former constitutional Army officer. Martin Elena antagonized the trainees, and with the beginning of straight military training under a U.S. Army officer, who had no interest in Cuban politics, a ban was placed on visits to the camp by Cuban politicians.

36. This was probably a mistake and an unreasonable interference in the Cubans' management of their own affairs. Controlled contact between the FRD and the troops could have done much to improve the morale and motivation of the troops and make the training job easier. There was nobody in the Guatemala camp who could answer the political questions of the trainees, who

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