CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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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

S/
Lyman B. Kirkpatrick

rcm
Chrono

COPY

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INDEX

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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INSPECTOR GENERAL'S SURVEY

of the

CUBAN OPERATION

October 1961

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Copy No. 1 of 20

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INSPECTOR GENERAL'S SURVEY

of the

CUBAN OPERATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
A.	Introduction	1
B.	History of the Project	3
C.	Summary of Evaluation	34
D.	Evaluation of Organization and Command Structure	36
E.	Evaluation of Staffing	41
F.	Evaluation of Planning	46
G.	The Miami Operating Base	67
H.	Intelligence Support	75
I.	The Political Front and the Relation of Cubans to the Project	81
J.	Clandestine Paramilitary Operations -- Air	98
K.	Clandestine Paramilitary Operations -- Maritime	110
L.	Clandestine Paramilitary Operations -- Training Underground Leaders	125
M.	Security	135
N.	Americans in Combat	140
O.	Conclusions and Recommendations	143

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

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.

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.

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.

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] 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

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 propaganda 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

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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.

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

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.)

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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.

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 WH/4 Branch was still

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

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 attack.

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.

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."

"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.

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

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.

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.

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 Para-military 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.

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 DPD

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

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.

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 DPD 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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

project had to do their day-to-day business. This policy undertainty 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

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.

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

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

"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.

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

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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

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 setfor 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.

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

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

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.

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

instance, I am not quite clear what are the duties of the PM 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

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

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,

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

to providing support in recruiting soldiers and running small boat operations. This tight control meant that the PM officers at the base looked to Headquarters for guidance rather than to the chief of base. The PM and other sections had their own channels to Headquarters, and this led to uncontrolled action and considerable confusion. PM 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

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?"

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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 Democratico (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

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 Loredo. 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

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 Prio 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.

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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 Mosquerra, 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.

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

were all volunteers and deserved to know what kind of a future they were preparing to fight for. Furthermore, the FRD needed a chance to develop the loyalty of the troops who were presumably to install and protect its leaders on Cuban soil as members of a provisional government.

37. This was one example of a high-handed attitude toward Cubans that became more and more evident as the project progressed. Cubans were the basic ingredient for a successful operation and, although the aim of having the exiles direct activities was probably idealistic and unattainable, nevertheless the Agency should have been able to organize them for maximum participation and to handle them properly to get the job done.

An American Operation

38. But with the Americans running the military effort, running Radio Swan, and doing unilateral recruiting, the operation became purely an American one in the exile Cuban mind, and in the public mind as well. In by-passing the Cubans the Agency was weakening its own cover.

39. The official attitude which produced this situation is reflected in the project's progress reports. In November a report noted that the Agency had "plenty of flexibility to choose the Cuban group we would eventually sanction as a provisional government." A January report indicated that the Agency, rather than the Cubans, was making the plans and decisions: "We have

charted five different lists of proposed assignments for any future provisional government of Cuba and are compiling biographic data on those Cubans who might be utilized by us in forming a future Cuban government."

40. The crowning incident which publicly demonstrated the insignificant role of the Cuban leaders and the contempt in which they were held occurred at the time of the invasion. Isolated in a Miami safe house, "voluntarily" but under strong persuasion, the Revolutionary Council members awaited the outcome of a military operation which they had not planned and knew little about while Agency-written bulletins were issued to the world in their name.

41. They had not been puppets in the early days of the project. Some of the Cubans had drawn up detailed operational plans for resistance in areas of Cuba that they knew intimately; others provided cover and support. One wealthy exile even voluntarily went through the assessment routine at Useppa Island along with the young trainees. They had reason to feel that the project was in the nature of a joint venture, at least.

The Military Emphasis

42. But when the project began to shift from a clandestine operation to a military operation, Cuban advice and participation no longer seemed necessary. Cubans who up to about November 1960 had been close to some of the plans and operations were cut out. To the military officers on loan to the

project, the problem was a military one, and their attitude was "to hell with the Revolutionary Council and the political side."

43. The paramilitary and the political action sections of WH/4 were not in effective touch with each other; in effect, they treated their tasks as unrelated, and this was reflected in the field. The diminished relationships with the Cuban leaders were a measure of the extent to which people in the project became carried away by a military operation.

44. The effective utilization of Cubans and cooperation with them was also hampered to some extent because many of the project officers had never been to Cuba, did not speak Spanish, and made judgments of the Cubans on very slim knowledge. (A notable exception was the propaganda section, which was well qualified in this respect.) They considered the Cubans untrustworthy and difficult to work with. Members of the Revolutionary Council have been described to the inspectors as "idiots" and members of the brigade as "yellow-bellied."

45. However, many staff employees in the project realized that the Cubans would have to be dealt with realistically and allowances made for their differences and weaknesses. In some instances, case officers achieved quite remarkable rapport with the Cubans they were handling. These officers were ones

who had had considerable experience in dealing with foreign nationals in various parts of the world, and the results showed it.

Dealing with Cubans

46. Some military officers on loan to the project were less successful in dealing with Cubans. They simply gave military orders to these foreign nationals and expected to be obeyed.

47. Some of the contract employees, such as ships' officers, treated the Cubans like dirt. This led to revolts, mutinies, and other troubles. Some very able Cubans withdrew from the project because of the way they were treated.

48. The inspecting team has received a definite impression that this operation took on a life of its own, that a number of the people involved became so wrapped up in the operation as such that they lost sight of ultimate goals.

49. There is a substantial question whether any operation can be truly successful when the attitudes toward the other people are so unfavorable. There does not seem to be much excuse for not being able to work with Cubans. If this nationality is so difficult, how can the Agency possibly succeed with the natives of Black Africa or Southeast Asia?

50. The Agency, and for that matter, the American nation is not likely to win many people away from Communism if the Americans treat other nationals with condescension or contempt,

ignore the contributions and the knowledge which they can bring to bear, and generally treat them as incompetent children whom the Americans are going to rescue for reasons of their own.

J. CLANDESTINE PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS -- AIR

1. The first attempt at a clandestine air drop over Cuba took place on 28 September 1960. (By coincidence this was the same night as the first maritime operation.) A 100-man arms pack was dropped for an agent rated as having considerable potential as a resistance leader. The crew missed the drop zone by seven miles and dropped the weapons on a dam. Castro forces scooped them up, ringed the area, caught the agent and later shot him. The airplane got lost on the way back to Guatemala and landed in Mexico. It is still there.

2. This operation might have indicated an unpromising future for air drops. In fact, its failure was influential in persuading the chiefs of the project of the futility of trying to build up an internal resistance organization by clandestine means, and within the next few weeks the operational emphasis was beginning its fateful swing toward the overt strike-force concept. To this extent the portent of failure was heeded, but it did not suffice either to halt the air drops or to ensure arrangements for their success. The attempts went on and on with results that were mostly ludicrous or tragic or both.

3. On 26 December 1960, Headquarters received word that a Cuban agent, who had been given Agency training in this country, wanted an air drop of not more than 1,500 pounds of demolition and sabotage materiel and weapons. He clearly specified the

layout and the location of the drop zone, and also the amounts and kinds of materiel desired. WH/4 cabled this requirement to the air base in Guatemala, where all the flights originated. However, the Development Projects Division (DPD) then cabled Guatemala that arms and ammunition would be dropped with food to make a maximum load, also 200 pounds of leaflets for a drop elsewhere. This cable was not coordinated with WH/4, which sent a message to the agent the following day stating that a cargo drop would take place as requested and that the weight would be 1,500 pounds.

Rice and Beans

4. A drop was made on 31 December. The 15-man reception team received, not only 1,500 pounds of materiel which was different from the original request because the specific items could not be packed in waterproof containers in time, but also 800 pounds of beans, 800 pounds of rice and 160 pounds of lard.

5. This was the only drop to this Cuban agent. He was so vexed with the drop that he came out of Cuba specifically to make a complaint and to cancel a succeeding drop which had been planned. He stated that he would not accept another drop, no matter what the cargo was. He pointed out that the Agency had endangered his safety by dropping cargo which he had not asked for, did not need, and could not handle. Furthermore, the aircraft had stayed in the vicinity too long, had flown with its landing lights on, had circled around and made numerous U-turns and even dropped

propaganda leaflets on his property. He decided the Agency lacked the professional competence to make clandestine air drops.

6. This operation was recorded as "successful" by the Agency because cargo was actually delivered to the people it was meant for. There were four such "successes" in all, out of 30 missions flown up to 21 April 1961. (The Fiscal Year 1961 budget called for 105 air drops.) The first of these took place on 30 December after numerous attempts beginning in mid-October. There were 13 unsuccessful attempts during January and February. The third success took place on 3 March, when three agents were dropped (previous attempts to drop them had been made on 7 February and 27 February). The fourth successful drop was on 29 March.

The Successful Drops

7. Except for the rice-and-beans drop, the successful drops were all to an agent who had been trained in air reception procedures by staff personnel at Headquarters.

8. The three cargo drops known to be successful were all made in the Pinar del Rio Province. In other words, practically all the supplies went to one small area of western Cuba. Small amounts are thought to have been received in Camaguey and Oriente, but none in Matanzas or Havana. Ten missions were flown into the Escambray at the request of an agent who had no training in air reception. Twice the cargo was not dropped because the drop zone was not located, and once the plane turned back because of bad

weather. On the seven occasions cargo was dropped, it was either totally or in large part recovered by the Castro forces. Three times cargo was dropped blind, three times in the wrong place, and once on the drop zone when the reception committee was not there.

9. In all, about 151,000 pounds of arms, ammunition and equipment were transported by air. Not more than 69,000 pounds of this was actually dropped; the rest was returned to base. Of this 69,000 pounds, at least 46,000 pounds were captured by Castro forces, who recovered all or a large part of ten drops, compared with our agents, who recovered three. In other words, out of 75 tons which were air-lifted, paramilitary agents actually got about twelve (about enough to arm 300 men, figuring 7,500 pounds to a hundred-man pack).

10. Except for the one team, there were no clandestine personnel drops made or even attempted during the entire project.

Lack of Procedure

11. The agents on the ground did not have a standard procedure for air reception (most of them had not been trained). The locations of drop zones were variously and insufficiently described by coordinates, sketches, or azimuths. In two operations the requesting agents did not even have maps of their areas. In one of these WH/4 headquarters, DPD and Miami Base each arrived at a different set of coordinates from the reference points given.

In another case the coordinates given for a drop zone were in the ocean. Reception parties proposed to mark the drop zone with various bizarre and impractical patterns, such as: two red lights and one white light about 15 feet apart moving clockwise; an arrow 50 meters long with lights at two-meter intervals; lights in the form of a straight line with a sign in the middle lit up with Christmas lights (on this one, the crew at one point mistakenly identified cars on a road as the drop-zone signal); two crosses side by side; a triangle of three lights with a fourth light in the center. In some areas there were so many small lights in the vicinity that no pattern could be located. For one drop the agents made four proposals in rapid succession: no lights, a nine-man cross, a line of five bonfires, a 60-meter line of colored flashlights.

12. The standard light patterns taught by paramilitary instructors and generally accepted as best, were (a) an "L" of 4 lights; (b) a "T" of 5 lights; and (c) a cross of 6 lights. All lights should be 15 to 25 yards apart, with one light different from the others.

13. The Cuban air crews must share the blame for the failures, as must their trainers. Policy did not allow American observers to go along on the missions to correct the errors. Pilot discipline was lacking and instructions were not followed in numerous instances.

14. For example, one air crew, under specific orders to abort the mission if the drop zone was missed on the initial run and not to search for it or circle around, made four passes four miles away, according to the ground report (which added, "Pilots drunk or crazy.").

15. Another crew commander, under orders not to drop unless the T pattern was positively identified, elected to drop without seeing the T because he had a "positive feeling" that he was over the drop zone. Another aircraft remained in the drop zone area 41 minutes before dropping cargo.

Headquarters Direction

16. The Headquarters direction of these air drops left much to be desired. DPD, which controlled the crews and planes, never had a representative physically assigned to WH/4, and the two activities were operating in a divided command situation on the basis of mutual cooperation rather than generally accepted management practice and military command principles.

17. Daily consultation proved impossible although there was a requirement of it. There was trouble on cover stories, on funding, on security, and on cables, among other things. It was difficult to determine where the responsibilities of one component ended and those of the other began.

18. The WH/4 paramilitary chief recommended that the DPD unit be assigned to the chief of the task force for integration within

his staff. But no action was ever taken, and the situation remained as described for the duration of the project.

19. WH/4 and DPD did not even agree on doctrine and techniques. In addition, all flight plans had to be personally reviewed and approved by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI) and by the 5412 Special Group. The requests for air drops came from Cuba by radio, secret writing or telephone to Miami and then were forwarded to WH/4 headquarters, which then put in an operational request to DPD, which in turn directed the Guatemala air base to mount the flight after approval had been given by DDCI. DPD could and did release its own cables, without coordination.

20. This cumbersome system was complicated even more by the scarcity of agent radio operators inside Cuba. Some of the arrangements had to be made by secret writing, which was not only slow but contributed to misunderstanding. Necessary last-minute changes of plan by the reception groups or air crews could not be communicated to each other.

Example of Confusion

21. The drop finally accomplished on 30 December is an outstanding example of the confusion that prevailed.

22. WH/4 informed Havana that the drop would be made from 400 feet. DPD told the Guatemala Base that the drop would be at 1,000 feet. Guatemala, on the other hand, felt that 600 feet would be best. WH/4 informed the agents that the aircraft definitely

would make only one pass over the drop zone. But DPD authorized one 360° turn in order to make the drop good if the drop zone was not located on the initial run. (Actually, the crew made three passes.) This drop then failed (on 5 December) because the reception group understood that the plane would make only one pass, and turned off the lights when the plane came back for a second try. There was also confusion over the time of the drop and the number of bundles. The difficulties in arriving at an understanding among all parties concerned were so great that this operation, first planned for 22 October, was re-scheduled for 13 November, run on 5 December without dropping, then scheduled for 19 December. Then this had to be changed to 25 December and finally to 30 December.

23. For another operation WH/4 told Guatemala that the cargo should weigh 6,000 pounds, but DPD told Guatemala it could not be more than 4,000 or 5,000 pounds. The DPD message was not coordinated with WH/4, as Guatemala then pointed out.

24. Some of the techniques used by DPD were highly questionable. In one instance DPD told Guatemala that in the event the drop-zone lights were not seen by the crew the pilot should nevertheless drop his cargo on the drop zone as determined by dead reckoning. As it turned out, the reception group had dispersed after an encounter with a Cuban army patrol and was unable to be at the drop zone. The Castro forces then picked up at least half of the bundles dropped.

Supplies for Castro

25. In another case 1,600 pounds of food and materiel were dropped blind (in the dark of the moon) on each of four hilltops to a group which was known to be in such a precarious position that it was not able to stay in place long enough to lay out a drop zone. Again, the Castro forces got most of the load.

26. In still another, DPD told Guatemala that turns were allowed if the plane was not lined up on the initial run over the drop zone. The agents reported that the plane passed over twice without dropping and that this alerted the Castro army to attack the resistance group and to disperse it.

27. Once two planes were sent over the drop zone half an hour apart and allowed to make two passes each. Not surprisingly, 200 militia searched the area the next day and seized the cargo. The drop altitude for another operation was set at 4,000 feet. The pilot reported he had hit the drop zone from 3,500 feet, even though unable to recognize the marker, but there is evidence that the enemy got at least half the drop.

28. One aircraft received heavy fire and was damaged. Its crew thus learned the hard way that dropping leaflets first had helped to alert the area and recommended that in the future the cargo be dropped first. Miami Base pointed out to Headquarters that it was a mistake to drop heavy weapons before a group had a known capability of using them or had specifically requested them.

29. For a long time the results of the drops, as reported by the ground elements, were not forwarded to the air crews, who got no critiques but continued to report successes when in fact they were missing the drop zone by many kilometers.

Handling an Emergency

30. The handling of an emergency also left something to be desired. One of the planes had to land in Jamaica. The commander's phone call to an emergency number in Guatemala produced the reply, "Never heard of you." [redacted] first heard of this landing from [redacted], who had assumed (wrongly) that [redacted] had been advised by Headquarters.

31. In January 1961 Division D of the Agency's FI Staff made a study which raised pertinent questions about the air drops. The project's paramilitary staff made a study in March and concluded that the Cuban crews did not have sufficient experience or supervised training in clandestine paramilitary air operations to meet the project objectives and that they were too undisciplined to obey instructions or to make correct reports. This study recommended that contract American aircraft commanders be used, but it did not receive the approval of the paramilitary chief and went no further.

32. DPD also made an analysis in March and recommended certain overdue corrective action such as obtaining agent reports of drop results for prompt dispatch to the air base in Guatemala,

critiques for each mission regarding compliance with instructions, elimination of blind drops, and better identification of drop zones. DPD cabled Guatemala on 7 March that an analysis of the mission results to date would be forwarded shortly to be used as a basis for refinement of tactics and improvement of coordination with the reception teams. And at the end of March a check pilot was included for the first time in a mission crew. He noted discrepancies in pilot procedure and crew coordination.

Tardy Corrective Action

33. These corrective actions came too late. The seeming inability to support resistance elements augmented the growing reliance being placed on the idea of an amphibious strike force to accomplish the objective; then, as the strike idea took over more and more, interest in clandestine drops decreased among officers in charge of the project. On or about 28 March a policy decision was made that there would be no more clandestine drops until after the amphibious assault. Inasmuch as the WH/4 case officers handling these drops were not informed as to the strike plan or the date, this posed a problem for them because 19 drops to specific drop zones were requested between 22 March and 19 April, and it was necessary to stall off the requests with such messages as:

"Don't give up hope. We'll drop as soon as we can."

"Regret unable mount BERTA. Definitely planning support your operation. Beg you understand our problems."

But the agents had their own problems during this time:

"Unjust to delay operation so much. . .This is not a game."

"How long will I have to wait for the drop. The lives of peasants and students depend on you."

"Dear Allies: Arms urgent. We made a commitment. We have complied. You have not. If you have decided to abandon us, answer."

"We are risking hundreds of peasant families. If you cannot supply us we will have to. . .demobilize. Your responsibility. We thought you were sincere."

"All groups demoralized. . .They consider themselves deceived because of failure of shipment of arms and money according to promise."

Perhaps the situation was best summed up by this agent message:

"Impossible to fight. . .Either the drops increase or we die. . .Men without arms or equipment. God help us."

34. The Inspector General reluctantly concludes that the agent who was showered with rice and beans was entirely correct in his finding that the Agency showed no professional competence in its attempts at clandestine air drops into Cuba. Furthermore, these attempts in their over-all effect probably hurt the resistance more than they helped.

K. CLANDESTINE PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS -- MARITIME

1. WH/4 Branch had two separate maritime problems. It needed to transport men and supplies clandestinely to the coast of Cuba by small boats, and it needed ships to transport and support an amphibious landing of a military force, more or less overtly. This section of the report will be mostly concerned with small boat operations.

2. The WH Division had no assets in being; there was no Agency element comparable to DPD to call on; and for obscure reasons the Navy was not asked to provide the help it might have. WH/4 had to start with nothing; there seemed to be very little maritime know-how within the Agency.

3. The original operational plan called for building up a substantial resistance organization, which could be done only if supplies and people were delivered to the right places. During the critical period March-December 1960, WH/4 had one boat, the "Metusa Time", a 54-foot pleasure cruiser which was lent to the Agency by a friend. Two maritime operations officers, more or less under deep cover, labored from March to October to outfit this boat and train its crew.

4. The boat went on its first mission on 28 September, offloading 300 pounds of cargo and picking up two exfiltrees. By January it had made five additional trips and transported about five tons, but only one infiltree. It had another successful operation in March 1961 and another in April.

[redacted] Boats

5. In November and December there were six other successful small boat operations conducted with boats owned by various Cubans. The arrangements were made by individual case officers at Miami (there being no maritime section) and mainly in response to requests by the owners. No memoranda of understanding were made and the agreements as to supporting, equipping, and funding these Cuban boats were exceedingly loose, thus causing many problems later.

6. A Cuban would say, "Give me a tank of gas and a machine gun, and you can use our boat and we will help run it." After the operation he was likely to come back and say that the boat needed all sorts of equipment which had been damaged by the operation, and many claims were built up in this way.

7. Although more than twenty of these boats were offered to case officers, most of them were too small and too limited in range to be of much use. Furthermore, the bad weather which lasted from December into March made small boat operations impossible at a time when they were badly needed. In January 1961 there was not a single successful operation.

[redacted] Boats

8. By December the need for some [redacted] boats was becoming obvious. The "Sea Gull" (see below) was picked up by Headquarters about this time. It turned out to be a complete

"lemon"; one of the most experienced employees in small boats spent most of his time from December to June trying to get it to run, and it never did participate in an infiltration or exfiltration operation. Also, about December a 75-foot yacht, the "Wasp", [redacted]. It had a 17-knot speed and a 600-mile range and ran its first successful mission on 15 February.

9. About February the "Tejana" also became operational. This was a 110-foot yacht which became available through a Cuban contact of a case officer. The arrangements made by the case officer with the Cuban owner were so vague that payment of bills incurred was a continuing problem. However, the "Tejana", in four operations in March, infiltrated 19,000 pounds, as compared with 12,700 pounds which had been infiltrated from September up to February by all available boats.

10. The statistics compiled by WH/4 and by Miami Base on the small boat operations are somewhat confused and inconsistent. However, the general picture is clear. The small boat operations succeeded in getting about 76 people into Cuba clandestinely. Most of these were taken in during March. Up to the middle of February only ten had been successfully infiltrated by this means, the first being in mid-November.

11. In the matter of arms, ammunition and other supplies to the resistance, the boat operations were not an outstanding

success. From September to the time of the strike about 70,000 pounds were successfully infiltrated. This was about three times as much as was put in by air drops. The total amount of supplies put into Cuba by air and boat operations amounted to about 93,000 pounds (46½ tons); this would be about enough to equip 1,250 men.

Limited Area

12. There was one successful boat operation in September; two in October; three in November; six in December, none in January; six in February; thirteen in March; and two in April. Up to February only six and a half tons were sent in.

13. One should not get the idea that these supplies were uniformly distributed throughout Cuba. Most of them were placed in one small area, the north coast of Cuba close to Havana. The small boats did not have the range to go farther.

14. In almost all cases the supplies were transferred to a Cuban boat or an offshore key rather than deposited on the shores of Cuba itself. In the fall, boat operations were restricted by policy to offshore rendezvous. By January Miami had begun to plan beach landing operations as a means of overcoming the unreliability of Cuban-based boats. At this time Miami Base did not even have aerial photos of the north coast of Cuba.

15. Of the 33 missions rated as successful only 27 could be considered entirely so since the cargo on the other operations

was later recovered by the Castro government or the success was only partial. The reception committees did not seem to have had much training in maritime reception procedures.

16. In sum, a small amount of materiel was put into the Havana area in the period September-December by some ill-suited small boats. Then by using the "Wasp" and the "Tejana" a substantially larger amount of supplies was put in during February and March as well as some people, but to a limited area only. At this point the "Barbara J" and the "Blagar" (former LCIs) were used because of their longer range and larger size; however, for various reasons they were also unsuccessful in placing anything on the south coast except at the westernmost part.

Lack of a Plan

17. Officers who worked on these operations reported that there was no effective project plan for using small boats to deliver men and equipment to forces inside Cuba who were best suited to use them to build up a powerful underground movement against Castro. According to these officers, WH/4 did not plan small boat operations; the case officers simply responded to requests by individual Cubans and groups. One officer remarked that the Cubans were running the operations.

18. Of all the attempts made to land men and supplies in Cuba clandestinely by water some of the most notable were made

by the "Barbara J", a surplus LCI which the Agency bought in October 1960. It was intended that this craft would serve as a mother ship for small boat operations and also provide a long-range lift capability.

19. After a shakedown voyage in December, featured by a mutiny, the ship was scheduled for clandestine maritime infiltration of three paramilitary teams into Cuba. Initially there was some confusion as to who was running the operation since Miami had been handling small boat operations and had made the rendezvous plans for this one, but Headquarters had responsibility for the "Barbara J". WH/4 then sent the chief of its maritime section to Miami to coordinate, to brief the captain, and to dispatch the boat on its mission on 16 January.

20. The "Barbara J" put into Vieques Island on 31 January 1961 after having been unsuccessful in putting anybody ashore in Cuba. The crew's morale continued to deteriorate. Some refused to take direct orders, attempts to discipline the men were ineffective, the engineers refused to stand watch, and all of the crew wanted to return to Miami and resign. Also, nine of the ten agents did not wish to stay on the ship for another mission.

A Sit-down Strike

21. On 4 February the "Barbara J" sailed from Vieques for a rendezvous on the south coast of Cuba, 24 crew members having

been left on a Vieques beach, where they staged a sit-down and a hunger strike. On 9 February the "Barbara J" reported that the contact had not shown up at the rendezvous point.

22. After trying again on 10 February, the captain of the "Barbara J" cabled: "Take a message to Garcia: The reluctant heroes in fishing boat again conspicuous by their absence." On 11 February he sent another odd cable: "Last message to Garcia: Your fishing boat still manifesting extreme shyness. Suggest next operation send in varsity." On 13 February he sent: "Cruised without making contact. Picked up small target on radar, tracked it down, and scared hell out of some fishermen who wanted no part of us."

23. The case officer and the team leaders had a different story. They stated that when the "Barbara J" arrived at the rendezvous point it was approached by a small boat that came at the right time and gave the correct signals, but that as the boat came alongside the captain of the "Barbara J" ordered two floodlights turned on the boat which apparently scared it away. On 18 February the reception party sent a message that their boat had been at the right place at the right time and that a patrol boat had showed up. The "Barbara J" arrived at [redacted] on 14 February without having received arrival instructions. On 15 February Miami sent a message saying that it was setting up facilities at Key West to receive the

"Barbara J". Upon landing in Key West the ten paramilitary agents, having been on this trip for a month after spending two months in a safe house, were ready to resign and it took a considerable amount of persuasion to get them to stay with the program. They were then sent to New Orleans for holding.

Earning a Citation

24. Several officers who were associated with the captain of the "Barbara J", a contract employee acquired from Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS), have testified to his drinking on duty, his bullying of Cubans, and his disregard for security. Drew Pearson wrote about the drunken American LCI skipper who scared away Cuban underground leaders with his ship's floodlights, and who threatened to abandon a sabotage team. On 21 March the project's paramilitary chief relieved the captain of his command and requested that he be terminated. However, the captain was retained on duty and eventually received full pay and a bonus for a six-month contract period in the amount of $14,698.

25. WH/4 Branch initiated action to get the captain commended by his parent service for outstanding performance. In July 1961 he was cited "for completing an assignment involving extreme hazards in an outstanding manner, and displaying exceptional skill and courage" and given the Navy Superior Civilian

Service Award -- the highest honorary civilian award within the authority of the MSTS commander.

26. The branch had never taken action either to clear him or to convict him of serious charges, and the high commendation he received casts doubt not only on the validity of other WH/4 recommendations for merit citations but also on the quality of personnel management in the project.

Peculiar Organization

27. The organization for controlling clandestine maritime operations was peculiar. The forward operating base in Miami had the responsibility for small boat operations but could not run any without Headquarters approval. It was seldom that Headquarters had any query or refused to give approval.

28. But the Miami Base did not have the equipment and experience that were needed. For a long time the docking facilities were inadequate. The desirability of having a base at Key West was recognized as early as November 1960, but this base was not established until mid-February. It was insufficiently staffed and had a great many cover, security and administrative problems on which it received little assistance. At first it was under the direction of the Miami paramilitary section; eventually it was placed under the chief of the Miami Base.

29. The small staff at Key West not only supported small boat operations; it also had to take whatever action was necessary when disabled black flights came in to the local Naval air station since DPD had no representative in the area. Each unsuccessful maritime operation doubled the work. Boats coming back to a safe haven loaded with arms and explosives, usually crewed by Cubans and sometimes disabled in various ways, had to be unloaded again by whoever was available among paramilitary case officers and security and support people. A few staff employees worked almost around the clock for a month loading and unloading cargo without benefit of even a forklift. Many tons were so handled.

30. It is clear that there was no over-all policy in regard to the small boats. There was no clear directive as to whether to acquire short-range, speedy boats or long-range, slower boats; whether to use fishing craft and crews or special-purpose boats built specifically for our use. There was no policy on the use of a mother craft. There was no control over the amount of money spent on these small boats and their outfitting.

The Maritime Unit

31. WH/4 Headquarters had a staff employee whose job was small boat coordinator. This meant, in effect, checking proposed operations with the intelligence section, extending approvals and keeping records. WH/4 also had a separate maritime

unit which handled the technical side of the small boats, approved funds for them, and arranged for personnel for them, but had nothing to do with their operations.

32. This maritime unit also had the responsibility for acquiring and fitting out the larger ships such as the "Barbara J", the "Blagar", the three LCUs and the ships used in the strike. This unit also had the responsibility for training underwater demolition teams, directing raiding operations, and overseeing the Vieques Base.

33. The lack of equipment, the shortage of experienced personnel, the press of time and the problems of coordination are shown by the experience which the maritime unit had with the acquisition and outfitting of the LCIs and the LCUs. The press of time hardly allowed for advertising for specific types of craft or soliciting competitive bids. The two LCIs (the "Barbara J" and the "Blagar") were purchased from a private corporation in Miami for $70,000. About $253,000 was then spent in modifying, repairing and outfitting them.

34. This work, which extended over a period of several months, was directed by officers from Headquarters during short temporary duty tours in the Miami area. The day-to-day supervision of the work was under several Navy chief petty officers (borrowed from the Agency's Office of Training) who had no contact with Miami Base, no authority to spend money or

give orders, and no channel to procure parts and equipment. The technical and training abilities of these Navy chiefs were grossly misused by the project; much of their time was spent at stevedore or deckhand labor.

Training on LCUs

35. [redacted], three LCUs were bought directly from the Navy in September 1960 at $125,000 each. Supposedly in operating condition, these craft had been stripped and were in such bad shape that they could hardly be moved from the dock. The dozen or so Agency employees who went to Little Creek to get them into operational condition were so busy with repairs that there was little time left for learning how to operate the craft, even though some members of the group were not familiar with LCUs, the engineers did not all know engineering and the skippers did not all know navigation. This group got the LCUs to Vieques Island somehow and proceeded to train the Cuban crews, which, however, were given no training in night landing and very little in navigation.

36. In all, about $1,400,000 was spent on boats and ships, and the total cost of the maritime phases of the project was about $2,679,000. Wages were a considerable item. For example, ship's masters on contract were budgeted at $2,500 a month, cooks at $1,000. There seemed to be a general failure at the top to

realize how much boats cost to run and to keep in repair. The arrangement whereby officers in Headquarters tried to control the expenditures being made in Florida to repair and operate boats which were urgently needed was highly impractical. The high cost of boats in this project is well illustrated by the dismal case of the "Sea Gull".

Case of the "Sea Gull"

37. [redacted] It had previously been used to service offshore oil-drilling rigs and was estimated to have a fair market value of $74,500.

38. The request for approval [redacted] was signed for the chief of the project by a special assistant in the FI section (acting for the acting chief!) and approved by the Deputy Chief of WH Division (acting for his chief). It was [redacted] christened the "Sea Gull" and transported to Miami, where it broke down 500 yards from the pier on its first trial run. On 6 January 1961 it was estimated that repairs and modifications would cost $10,000; by 30 January, the estimate had grown to $32,000; by 22 February, to $40,000; and on 24 February, the shipyard doing the work submitted a bill for $65,000! In all, the "Sea Gull" cost:

[redacted]	$39,500
Repairs (eventually reduced from $65,000)	58,000
Communications gear, tools, arms, navigation aids	14,000
	$111,500

39. The "Sea Gull" was not ready to be used until the last week of March; at this time it was commandeered (along with the "Wasp") by a headquarters unit which was staging a deception operation in connection with the amphibious strike, over the strong protests of Miami Base, which never got to use the boat on an infiltration operation.

40. The lack of qualified personnel, the confusion of responsibility, the lack of planning, and the skyrocketing costs in the maritime activity led to a high-level request for the assignment of a qualified senior Naval officer to the project. When a captain reported, no one seemed to know what to do with him and, after he briefly visited Miami and Key West bases, he was assigned to the naval side of the strike planning at Headquarters. He is reported to have been not entirely happy with his brief Agency tour. In any event he was another example of poor handling of people in this project, and he was not given a chance to solve the problems of maritime operations.

41. It is apparent that the Agency had very little capability for maritime operations even of a clandestine nature. It lacked

trained personnel, boats, bases, doctrine, and organization. The employees who worked in this sadly slighted activity were well aware of this, and morale was not high. As one of them said, "The lowest kind of operations officer is a paramilitary operations officer, and the lowest kind of PM officer is a maritime operations officer."

L. CLANDESTINE PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS -- TRAINING UNDERGROUND LEADERS

1. Early in the project a carefully selected group of Cubans was trained for infiltration into Cuba to organize resistance. The loose management of the project is illustrated by the confusion between the headquarters elements and the training elements over what these men were being trained for, and by the failure to have their missions, means of entry, and reception ready for them.

2. The trained Cubans put into Cuba were too few and too late to do very much, and the strike planners ignored them. The cost of training and holding these men probably ran well over a million dollars, yet most of them were never used for what they were trained to do, and some were not used at all.

3. This particular endeavor began in December 1959 when the WH Division made a decision to pick a small group of Cubans and train them to train other Cubans for infiltration into Cuba in small paramilitary teams to organize resistance forces. Possible training sites in Panama were surveyed at this time, but no further action was taken. The basic policy paper approved by the President in March 1960 included the above proposal.

4. In April 1960, the Cuban leader Manuel Artime, who was in Miami, offered a number of his followers as recruits for this program. Useppa Island was acquired as an assessment and holding site, and a preliminary screening of the candidates for the training program began.

5. During May and June 1960 complete polygraphs, psychological and psychiatric tests, and evaluations were obtained on 66 individuals. Basic Morse code training was begun at the island. In June 29 trainees were sent from Useppa Island to Panama for basic paramilitary training. In July 32 trainees were sent to Guatemala to be trained as radio operators, and Useppa Island was then closed down.

The Training Site

6. A worse training site could hardly have been chosen than the one in Guatemala, it being almost inaccessible, with no training facilities and almost no living facilities. The trainees were put to work building the camp, working during the day and studying at night. This went on for several months.

7. The number of Americans at the camp was held to a bare minimum for security reasons. They were represented to be either tourists or adventurers. The camp commander was also the chief of training and the project officer for Guatemala. When he arrived, he had to set up the temporary camp, find an area for a permanent camp, contract for buildings, supplies,

and equipment; he also had to find sites for a suitable air base, a maritime base, and a prison and contract for these facilities to be built. He had three assistants: a communications officer and two contract employees.

8. The initial group of paramilitary trainees was transferred to the Guatemala Base from Panama after two months of training. By 23 August there were 78 paramilitary trainees, 34 communications trainees, and nine staff and contract employees.

9. By September the training camp had enough facilities and instructors to begin a four-week basic training course. The trainees were sorted into seven-man teams according to their area knowledge and their aptitudes. Sixty were selected to go into Cuba (either legally or illegally) and to contact resistance groups; 60 were selected for action teams to go in illegally and join the resistance groups that had been contacted by the first teams; the remainder of the trainees would be formed into a small conventional strike force. The training base expected the teams to be ready to go in October and asked Headquarters to provide the infiltration plans.

10. The trainers did not realize that Headquarters had changed the plan. Already in July the FRD, the exile political front, had been asked to provide 500 individuals for a paramilitary action cadre, and the training base was asked if it could accommodate this number. Obviously, it could not.

Conditions actually got worse. In September the training camp was plagued by torrential tropical rains, shortages of food and supplies, plus trouble with agitators and hoodlums among their recently arrived trainees, who were not being screened and assessed as the first ones had been. The training base chief got into disfavor with Headquarters apparently because of his blunt cables asking for assistance. ("My men are going hungry and barefoot.")

Request for Missions

11. In October the infiltration teams that had been selected from among the trainees worked out detailed operational plans for themselves, complete with maps, propaganda handouts, and resistance operations. When the base announced that about a hundred men were ready to go, Headquarters replied that it was proposing the illegal infiltration of the teams in November by boat. (Actually, the only boat the project had at this time was the 54-foot "Metusa Time".) Headquarters further cabled that it was engaged in preparing a general plan for the employment of the infiltration teams but that the details were not yet ready. The base chief was recalled in October, and thereafter the training base had a new chief each week for five weeks. One trainee was put into Cuba legally at the end of October.

12. In November 1960 (12 months after the original decision had been made to train Cuban teams for resistance organization) ten teams were reported ready to go. But they were still awaiting Headquarters plans for infiltration. In all 178 men (including 23 radio operators) had been trained in security, basic clandestine tradecraft, intelligence collection and reporting, propaganda and agitation, subversive activities, resistance organization, reception operations, explosives and demolitions, guerrilla action, and similar matters.

13. Headquarters approved the use of 60 of these men for the resistance teams; all others were scheduled to begin formal, conventional combat training on 15 November as an element of a strike force of 1,500 men. This drastic change in over-all plan was announced to the training base by a cable on 4 November and led the base to plead for closer coordination in the future between Headquarters planning and the field training. During this month six trainees were moved to a Miami safe house where they stayed for two months, awaiting transportation into Cuba.

Move to Panama

14. In December 1960 Headquarters advised the training base that it was expecting approval of its operational concept, which included internal resistance stimulated by teams as well as the use of a ground and air assault force. It advised the base that a 750-man brigade (instead of 1,500) was being planned

and that 80 men (instead of 60) were approved for infiltration teams. During this month the 80 men were moved to Panama where they were held until somebody could find out what to do with them. An offer from DPD to give them jump training was turned down by the project.

15. By January 1961 the morale of the trainees in Panama had declined considerably. There was not even an interpreter available for briefing and debriefing them. Headquarters then had 24 of them brought to safe houses in Miami to be made ready for dispatch. Twelve radio operators were moved from Panama to the Agency's training base in the United States for further training.

16. By February 1961 the 32 trainees still in Panama were described as disillusioned and at the breaking point. They were then transferred to a base in New Orleans to be given additional training in sabotage and air-maritime reception. February was actually a red-letter month. Six of the radio operators were infiltrated legally. On 14 February the first resistance team was put into Cuba, and two more teams went in at the end of the month. However, the two teams which had sat in a Miami safe house from mid-November to mid-January returned to Miami in bad humor in mid-February after a month on the "Barbara J" circumnavigating Cuba without being put ashore.

17. An effective infiltration mechanism never was developed. Not one of the paramilitary teams was ever delivered by air. On 29 March the project was able to put four agents into Cuba through Guantanamo Base. It is not clear why this could not have been done earlier. No infiltration was ever tried by submarine.

Morale Problems

18. On 10 March 1961 (16 months after the original decision to train resistance teams) the 90 men who had been trained for this were distributed as follows:

32 infiltrated, including 14 radio operators
5 at sea on a sabotage mission
6 in New Orleans as members of a raider team
28 in New Orleans still awaiting infiltration
19 detached to Miami for various impending operations.

The morale of the remaining trainees was low and their anger high. This caused a great many problems in New Orleans. Some of these men had been held in five different camps over a ten-month period. On 30 March, about three weeks before the invasion, the remainder of the group (about 20) were transferred to Miami and turned loose, being described as a collection of spoiled individuals distinguished by bad conduct. At least 30 of the agents who were recruited between May and September 1960 never got into Cuba at all; among the 30 were eight who came into the project in the original group in May 1960 and who were in training almost continuously from that time up to April 1961.

19. The time spent in training is no measure of the quality of the training, of course, and there was undoubtedly a great waste of time. One of the Cubans trained for infiltration into Cuba wrote that after he arrived in Panama in December 1960: "... during almost three weeks, the only thingh I did...was cleaning a small dam and the shoting range. after that we just din't do anythingh, just sleep and ate, thats all." When he arrived in Florida on 18 January: "There, the same history, sleep, eat, play card and watch television. The only training I receveid during that time was on secret writting, wich was very good but nothing else." The same agent pointed out serious deficiencies in his weapons training and his final briefing.

20. One of the instructors in Guatemala in the early months later claimed that only two instructors knew their business; the others were chosen from the trainee cadre, who had only a background of two months' training themselves. He included himself among the unqualified.

Training Omission

21. The remoteness of the training site caused additional difficulties. When brigade training started on 29 November there were only two compasses for 405 troops, and these belonged to trainees. Compasses had first been requested on 2 October, but when they were not received the training in their use had to be omitted from the program.

22. More serious, there had never been any definition of training goals, and the base and Headquarters were working at cross-purposes. The chief of the training base in Guatemala never received any letter of instruction.

23. The situation at the New Orleans Base in March 1961 was even more chaotic. The instructors found a training area which was 90% swamp and filled with poisonous snakes. Demolition classes had to be conducted along a footpath leading from a theater to a mess hall, with constant interruptions from passers-by. Nobody seemed able to define the training that was required. A demolitions instructor was assured on arrival that the group he had come to train did not need the instruction; in any case, there were no explosive training materials, no adequate range, and no gear to set one up. Another instructor, sent to New Orleans to train a small raider group, found himself expected to train, organize and equip a 90-man guerrilla force. A week later he found himself training a 160-man assault battalion instead. The training requirement was never spelled out, and the training equipment never showed up.

24. Training activity of various sorts was going on continually; there were requirements for everything from counterintelligence to small boat handling. But there was no full-time chief of training in the project to oversee requirements, define responsibilities, set up facilities and provide support.

Consequently, what training was done, was done without control, by individual case officers doing the best they could. How effective this training was cannot be determined. Much of it took place in Miami, where personnel from the base were instructing Cubans in intelligence collection, counterintelligence techniques, psychological warfare activities, or paramilitary subjects, according to need.

25. The training was necessarily conducted in safe houses, and required a considerable expenditure of time on the part of base personnel. Other training was conducted in the Washington area, usually by case officers. One man was trained in a hotel room to make a parachute jump (he made one successfully!). Many requests were levied on the Office of Training for instructors and training materials. But these were uncoordinated and wasteful. Many of the instructors, when made available, were not used in their specialties, ending up in such jobs as stevedoring instead.

26. A well thought-out project would have had a training annex which would have laid specific requirements on the Office of Training, particularly when the training of hundreds of people was an integral part of the venture. Instead, the requirements were met in piecemeal and improvised fashion, under difficult conditions, and with dubious results.

M. SECURITY

1. The assault on Cuba is generally acknowledged to have been a poorly kept secret. It could hardly have been otherwise, considering the complexity of the operation and the number of people involved, both Cuban and American. The inspection team did not make a detailed study of the security aspects of the operation but came across many weaknesses in the protection of information and activities from those who did not "need to know."

2. In general the Cubans who were in the operation do not seem to have had any real understanding of the need to keep quiet about their activities. Many of them knew much more than they needed to know, and they were not compartmented from each other and from Americans to the extent that was necessary. For example, one wealthy Cuban who was close to the operation was being contacted by at least six different staff employees.

3. Some agents were being handled by two or three different case officers at the same time, with confusing results and lack of control. Many of the agents who were sent into Cuba had known each other during training; for example, a dozen radio operators had been trained as a group. If one was arrested, he would know who the other ones were. One radio operator inside Cuba was aware of almost every paramilitary operation in Cuba from the beginning of the project.

4. Agents who were supposedly well trained disregarded elementary rules of personal security and were arrested because they needlessly gave away their true identities by visiting relatives who were under surveillance or by carrying identifying documents in their pockets.

Hazard in Miami

5. The Miami area represented a particular hazard because stories and rumors spread rapidly through the large Cuban community, which included Castro agents. Movements of boats and people soon became known. One agent, who had been infiltrated into Cuba by boat, reported later that within three days his family in Miami knew when and how he had landed, because one of the crew members of the boat had told many people in Miami about it. Letters from the training camp, although censored, managed nevertheless to convey information to the Miami Cubans.

6. The Americans on the project in many cases also failed to observe strict security discipline. One senior case officer holding an operational meeting with Cubans in a Miami motel was overheard by a citizen, who reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

7. It has been testified that the security measures at the training camps in Guatemala and at New Orleans were inadequate. Furthermore, the training camps had no adequate counterintelligence capability. Except for an instructor borrowed from the Office of

Training for a few weeks, the Agency was unable to provide a counterintelligence officer to the camps. This lack was serious because, in order to obtain a great many recruits for the strike force in a hurry, there was very little screening of the volunteers, and some who were sent to camp had been inadequately checked.

Poor Backstopping

8. Instances were noted of poor backstopping of the cover stories of Agency employees, sketchy briefings on cover, weak cover stories, and faulty documentation. Much of this can be ascribed to lack of attention to detail due to the press of time. Many of the early difficulties in Guatemala stemmed from the inadvisability of providing supplies and support to instructors who were posing as "tourists" and "soldiers of fortune". This pretense eventually had to be dropped because of its impracticality. A serious weakness showed up in the poor arrangements for backstopping overflights (for example, the plane that landed in Jamaica).

9. Somewhat curiously, a strict compartmentation was applied in certain areas of the project which actually denied information to people who needed it. Those who were engaged in running agents into Cuba were never allowed into the War Room or given the plan for the strike.

10. For security reasons, the resistance elements inside Cuba were not advised of the time of the assault, and could hardly have risen up even if there had been 100,000 of them. The entire complement of the Miami Base was likewise uninformed and was unprepared to take action when the strike occurred. Staff employees at the Miami Base, who could have benefited by special clearances, did not get them until much too late.

Use of Guatemala

11. The use of Guatemala for training bases was, in terms of security, unfortunate. It is obvious now that the training could have been done more securely in the United States (as for example, the tank crew training, which got no publicity at all). The Guatemala camps were not easily hidden and not easily explained. The air base was located on a well-traveled road and in view of a railroad where trainloads of Guatemalans frequently halted on a siding.

12. It is strange that the training of the Cubans was undertaken in a foreign country, where the trainees were necessarily exposed to the natives and reporters could pick up information. Presumably this was done on grounds of security and non-attributability; however, the radio operators who were trained in Guatemala were later brought to the United States for further training. The force for the abortive diversionary expedition was trained in New Orleans rather than being sent outside the

country. Other Cubans were trained in both paramilitary and espionage subjects in the outskirts of Miami and Washington, and still others were trained on American soil at Vieques Island. Of all these training locations, only the ones in Guatemala became known to the world.

13. It is acknowledged that many Cubans and Americans observed strict security discipline, that the security officers of the project made an outstanding contribution, and that many arrangements and activities are not open to criticism regarding their security. Unfortunately, this was not good enough for a project of this size and importance, conducted by professional intelligence officers.

14. Because of the operation's magnitude, the errors committed resulted in the exposure of Agency personnel and modus operandi to many uncontrolled individuals, both foreign and American.

N. AMERICANS IN COMBAT

1. During the invasion landing two Agency contract employees, assigned as operations officers aboard the two LCIs, went ashore to mark two of the beaches and exchanged gunfire with Cuban militia. One of these employees had taken part in a sabotage raid on a Cuban oil refinery a month earlier. Both of them engaged in rescue operations along the Cuban shore after the brigade collapsed.

2. In late 1960 the project leaders were becoming doubtful of the motivation of the Cuban pilots they were training and of their ability to perform tactical missions successfully. In January 1961 the Agency requested the Special Group to authorize the use of American contract pilots. The authorization given was limited to the hiring of the pilots and reserved for later decision the question of their actual use. The Special Group also granted authority to recruit and hire American seamen to serve in the invasion fleet.

3. Three American contract pilots with long Agency experience were made available from another project. A number of other pilots and air-crew technicians, members or ex-members of several Air National Guard units, were recruited especially for the project in early 1961 under cover of a notional commercial company.

4. Through the first day of fighting, 17 April, only Cuban air crews were used for combat or drop missions. Of 11 Cuban-manned B-26s which had gone over the beachhead, only three had returned to base, and four of the others had been shot down. That night the available Cuban crews were exhausted and dispirited.

5. On 18 April the hard pressed exile brigade was calling for air support. Two American fliers volunteered to go, and several Cuban crews followed their example. The result was a highly successful attack against a column of Castro's forces moving on Blue Beach. Four American-manned aircraft were in combat over the beachhead the following day, and two of them were shot down by Castro's T-33s. Later the same day two American crews returned for another sortie. Four American fliers were either killed in combat or executed by Castro forces after being shot down.

6. In addition to these actions, an American-manned PBY patrolled the waters south of Cuba for a total of 57 hours during five days on air-sea rescue and communications relay duty.

7. The American pilots lost in combat were aware of United States Government sponsorship and probably also of Agency interest, but had been instructed not to inform their families of this. In spite of wide press coverage of the invasion failure, the story of the American pilots has never gotten into print, although its

sensational nature still makes this a possibility. In dealing with the surviving families it has been necessary to conceal connection with the United States Government. This effort has been complicated by the fact that the original cover story was changed and a second notional company substituted.

8. The resolution in a secure manner of the legal and moral claims arising from these four deaths has been costly, complicated and fraught with risk of disclosure of the Government's role. These problems were aggravated by the inclusion in the employment contracts of certain unnecessarily complicated insurance clauses and by the project's failure to prepare in advance an effective plan for dealing with the eventual legal and security problems.

O. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Certain basic conclusions have been drawn from this survey of the Cuban operation:

1. The Central Intelligence Agency, after starting to build up the resistance and guerrilla forces inside Cuba, drastically converted the project into what rapidly became an overt military operation. The Agency failed to recognize that when the project advanced beyond the stage of plausible denial it was going beyond the area of Agency responsibility as well as Agency capability.

2. The Agency became so wrapped up in the military operation that it failed to appraise the chances of success realistically. Furthermore, it failed to keep the national policy-makers adequately and realistically informed of the conditions considered essential for success, and it did not press sufficiently for prompt policy decisions in a fast moving situation.

3. As the project grew, the Agency reduced the exiled leaders to the status of puppets, thereby losing the advantages of their active participation.

4. The Agency failed to build up and supply a resistance organization under rather favorable conditions. Air and boat operations showed up poorly.

5. The Agency failed to collect adequate information on the strengths of the Castro regime and the extent of the opposition to it; and it failed to evaluate the available information correctly.

6. The project was badly organized. Command lines and management controls were ineffective and unclear. Senior Staffs of the Agency were not utilized; air support stayed independent of the project; the role of the large forward base was not clear.

7. The project was not staffed throughout with top-quality people, and a number of people were not used to the best advantage.

8. The Agency entered the project without adequate assets in the way of boats, bases, training facilities, agent nets, Spanish-speakers, and similar essential ingredients of a successful operation. Had these been already in being, much time and effort would have been saved.

9. Agency policies and operational plans were never clearly delineated, with the exception of the plan for the brigade landing; but even this provided no disaster plan, no unconventional warfare annex, and only extremely vague plans for action following a successful landing. In general, Agency plans and policies did not precede the

various operations in the project but were drawn up in response to operational needs as they arose. Consequently, the scope of the operation itself and of the support required was constantly shifting.

There were some good things in this project. Much of the support provided was outstanding (for example, logistics and communications). A number of individuals did superior jobs. Many people at all grade levels gave their time and effort without stint, working almost unlimited hours over long periods, under difficult and frustrating conditions, without regard to personal considerations. But this was not enough.

It is assumed that the Agency, because of its experience in this Cuban operation, will never again engage in an operation that is essentially an overt military effort. But before it takes on another major covert political operation it will have to improve its organization and management drastically. It must find a way to set up an actual task force, if necessary, and be able to staff it with the best people. It must govern its operation with clearly defined policies and carefully drawn plans, engaging in full coordination with the Departments of State and Defense as appropriate.

Previous surveys and other papers written by the Inspector General have called attention to many of these problems and deficiencies, and have suggested solutions. For example, in

June 1958 a recommendation was made, in a survey of the Far East Division, that a high-level Agency study be made of the extent to which the Agency should be engaged in paramilitary operations, "if any"; and that it include an evaluation of the capabilities of other government departments to assume primary responsibility in this field.

In January 1959 the Inspector General pointed out in a memorandum to the Deputy Director (Plans) that: "A basic problem in the PM field is the delineation of responsibility between the Agency and the military services. In our view, the Clandestine Services tends to assume responsibilities beyond its capabilities and does not give sufficient consideration to the ability of other Departments of the Government to conduct or participate in these operations."

A 1955 survey of the then Psychological and Paramilitary Operations Staff warned against the by-passing of this staff by the operating divisions, who were dealing directly with the Deputy Director (Plans) and the Director of Central Intelligence instead. In March 1961 the survey of the Covert Action Staff again warned against ignoring the staff and failing to utilize its services.

The July 1959 survey of the Deputy Director (Plans) organization again stressed the importance of the functional staffs, particularly in relation to the conduct of complex

operations, and advocated the use of a task force for covert operations having major international significance.

"These operations", the survey stated, "may be aimed at the overthrow of a hostile regime and may require extensive paramilitary operations, ... and clandestine logistics and air support of substantial magnitude. Such operations must be coordinated with national policy on a continuing basis, and may require constant high-level liaison with the State Department and the White House. To be successful, major covert operations of this nature require the effective mobilization of all the resources of the DD/P, and are clearly beyond the capabilities of any one area division."

The same survey added that the Caribbean task force located in the WH Division was planning at a great rate, but accomplishing little because it was too low-level to act decisively or to obtain effective policy guidance from other departments of the Government; it did not even inspire confidence among many senior DD/P officers. Such task forces within a single division "represent a woefully inadequate response to a problem of major national significance. Command of such a task force must be a full-time job, and the task force commander must be of sufficient stature to deal directly with the Under Secretary of State or with other senior officials of the government as the need arises."

The same survey also discussed the management problem in the DD/P area at length, and made a number of recommendations which are on record. Among other things, it pointed out the confusion as to the relationship and functions of the three top officers.

The study of the Cuban operation shows that these criticisms and many others discussed in previous Inspector General surveys are still valid and worthy of review. But the Cuban operation, in addition to demonstrating old weaknesses again, also showed Agency weaknesses not clearly discerned before.

The Inspector General, as a result of his study of the Cuban operation, makes the following recommendations regarding future Agency involvement in covert operations which have major international significance and which may profoundly affect the course of world events:

1. Such an operation should be carried out by a carefully selected task force, under the command of a senior official of stature on a full-time basis, and organizationally outside the DD/P structure but drawing upon all the resources of the Clandestine Services.

2. The Agency should request that such projects should be transferred to the Department of Defense when they show signs of becoming overt or beyond Agency capabilities.

3. The Agency should establish a procedure under which the Board of National Estimates or other body similarly divorced from clandestine operations would be required to evaluate all plans for such major covert operations, drawing on all available intelligence and estimating the chances of success from an intelligence point of view.

4. The Agency should establish a high-level board of senior officers from its operational and support components, plus officers detailed from the Pentagon and the Department of State, to make cold, hard appraisals at recurring intervals of the chances of success of major covert projects from an operational point of view.

5. A mechanism should be established for communicating these intelligence and operational appraisals to the makers of national policy.

6. In return, a mechanism should be established to communicate to the Agency the national policy bearing on such projects, and the Agency should not undertake action until clearly defined policy has been received.

7. The Agency should improve its system for the guided collection of information essential to the planning and carrying out of such projects.

8. The Agency should take immediate steps to eliminate the deficiencies in its clandestine air and maritime operations.

9. The Agency should take steps to improve its employees' competence in foreign languages, knowledge of foreign areas, and capability in dealing with foreign people, when such skills are necessary.

10. The Agency should devise a more orderly system for the assignment of employees within the DD/P area than that currently in use.