I. THE INGREDIENTS OF AN ANTI-CASTRO CUBAN CONSPIRACY

(9) Was the John F. Kennedy assassination a conspiracy involving anti-Castro Cuban exiles? The committee found that it was not easy to answer that question years after the event, for two reasons. First, the Warren Commission decided not to investigate further the issue despite the urging of staff counsel involved with that evidence and the apparent fact that the anti-Castro Cuban exiles had the means, motivation, and opportunity to be involved in the assassination.

(10) In addition, the area of possible Cuban exile involvement was one in which the Warren Commission was not provided with an adequate investigative background. According to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence:

> (11) Despite knowledge of Oswald's apparent interest in pro-Castro and anti-Castro activities and top level awareness of certain CIA assassination plots, the FBI . . . made no special investigative effort into questions of possible Cuban Government or Cuban exile involvement in the assassination independent of the Oswald investigation. There is no indication that the FBI or the CIA directed the interviewing of Cuban sources or of sources within the Cuban exile community.(*1*)

(12) Nevertheless, even from the paucity of evidence that was available to them in 1964, two staff attorneys for the Warren Commission speculated that Lee Harvey Oswald, despite his public posture as a Castro sympathizer, was actually an agent of anti-Castro exiles. Pressing for further investigation of that possibility, Assistant Counsel William Coleman and W. David Slawson wrote a memorandum to the Commission stating:

> (13) The evidence here could lead to an anti-Castro involvement in the assassination on some sort of basis as this: Oswald could have become known to the Cubans as being strongly pro-Castro. He made no secret of his sympathies, and so the anti-Castro Cubans must have realized that law enforcement authorities were also aware of Oswald's feelings and that, therefore, if he got into trouble, the public would also learn of them . . . Second, someone in the anti-Castro organization might have been keen enough to sense that Oswald had a penchant for violence . . . On these facts, it is possible that some sort of deception was used to encourage Oswald to kill the President when he came to Dallas . . . The motive of this would, of course, be the expectation that after the President was killed Oswald would be caught or at least his identity ascertained, the law enforcement authorities and the public would then blame the assassination on

the Castro government and a call for its forceful overthrow would be irresistible. . . .(*2*)

(14) It is important in considering the possibility of anti-Castro Cuban involvement in the Kennedy assassination to recall the political and emotional conditions that affected the Cuban exile communities in Miami, New Orleans, and Dallas while Kennedy was President.

THE BACKGROUND: THE REGIME OF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ

(15) If it can be said to have a beginning, the anti-Castro Cuban exile movement was seeded in the early morning hours of New Year's Day 1959 when a DC–4 lifted from the fog-shrouded Camp Columbia airfield in Havana.(*3*) Aboard the plane was Fulgencio Batista, the military dictator of Cuba for the previous 6 years.(*4*) Batista was fleeing the country, his regime long beset by forces from within and without, now crumbling under pressure from rebel forces sweeping down from the mountains. When dawn came, the bells tolled in Havana and, 600 miles away, Fidel Castro Ruz began his triumphal march to the capital.(*5*) For seven days Castro and his 26th of July Movement rebels moved down Cuba's Central Highway while thousands cheered and threw flowers in their path. (*6*) Castro finally arrived in Havana on January 8 and characteristically gave a speech. Clad in his green fatigue uniform while three white doves, which someone had dramatically released, circled above him, Castro boldly proclaimed: "There is no longer an enemy!"(*7*)

(16) That was not true, of course, and he knew it. A hard core of Batistianos had fled the country early, many long before their leader, and were already concocting counter-revolutionary plots from their refuges in the United States, the Dominican Republic and elsewhere.(*8*)

(17) And it was not very long after Castro took power that a sense of betrayal began to grow among those who had once been his strongest supporters.(*9*) As each day went by it became more apparent that Castro's revolution was, as one chronicler noted, "leading inexorably toward an institutionalized dictatorship in which individuals were contemptuously shorn of their rights and dissenters were met with charges of treasonable conduct, counterrevolutionary activity or worse." (*10*) Then, too, there was a large number of public executions. Within 2 weeks of his reign, Castro shot 150 ex-Batista officials.(*11*) Within 3 months, there were at least 506 executions.(*12*)

(18) The disillusionment for many Cubans deepened when it became obvious that the form of Castro's rule was turning toward communism and that Castro's attitude toward the United States was engendering a hostile relationship. The publishing of Castro's Agrarian Reform Law in May 1959, was a significant sign.(*13*) It was far more radical than had been expected and was obviously designed to strip both Cuban and American-owned sugar firms of their immensely valuable cane lands.(*14*) A few weeks later the chief of Castro's air force, Maj. Pedro Diaz-Lanz, resigned, charging "* * * there was Communist influence in the armed forces and Government."(*15*) Then, when Castro's own hand-picked president, Manuel Urrutia, announced at a press conference that he rejected the support of the Communists and said "I believe that any real Cuban revolutionary should reject it openly," Castro

immediately forced him to resign and accused him of actions "bordering on treason."(*16*)

(19) And so, after the broken pledges of free elections and a free press, the mass trials and executions, the assumption of unlimited power and the bellicose threats against the United States, it slowly became apparent to many Cubans that Fidel Castro was not the political savior they had expected.(*17*)

(20) Then, on October 19, 1959, there occurred an incident which precipitated the formation of the first organized anti-Castro opposition within Cuba. Maj. Huber Matos, one of Castro's highest ranking officers and considered by most Cubans to be one of the key heroes of the revolution, resigned from the Army in protest against the increasing favoritism shown to known Communists.(*18*) The next day Matos was arrested, charged with treason, subsequently tried and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Shortly afterward, Castro himself called a secret meeting of the National Agrarian Reform Institute managers at which he outlined a plan to communize Cuba within 3 years.(*19*) There the suspicions of Dr. Manuel Artime, the manager in Oriente Province, were confirmed. "I realized," Artime later said, "that I was a democratic infiltrator in a Communist government."(*20*)

(21) Artime returned to Oriente and began organizing students and peasants to fight against Castro and communism. By early November each province in Cuba had an element of Artime's new underground movement. It was called the Movimiento de Recuperación Revolucionaria (MRR). It was the first anti-Castro action group originating from within Castro's own ranks.(*21*)

(22) By the summer of 1960, it had become obvious both within and outside of Cuba that the foundation for an eventual confrontation between Castro and anti-Castro forces had been laid. The Eisenhower administration had canceled the Cuban sugar quota.(*22*) Soviet first deputy chairman, Anastas Mikoyan had visited Havana and Raul Castro had gone to Moscow.(*23*) Ernesto "Che" Guevara had proclaimed publicly that the revolution was on the road set by Marx, and Allen Dulles of the Central Intelligence Agency had said in a speech that communism had perverted Castro's revolution.(*24*) By then, Castro had seized more than $700 million in U.S. property within Cuba.(*25*)

(23) On March 17, 1960, President Eisenhower authorized the CIA to organize, train and equip Cuban refugees as a guerrilla force to overthrow Castro.(*26*) Soon it became common knowledge within Cuba that a liberation army was being formed and that a political structure in exile had been created.(*27*) As the flight from Cuba increased in size and fervor, the exile community in the United States grew in spirit and confidence. One historian captured the special characteristics of the new arrivals:

> They were new types of refugees. Instead of a home, they were seeking temporary asylum. They found it along the sandy beaches and curving coastline of Florida. They arrived by the thousands, in small fishing boats, in planes, chartered or stolen, and crowded into Miami. Along the boulevards, under the palms, and in hotel lobbies, they gathered and plotted their counterrevolution. Miami began to take on the air of a Cuban city. Even its voice was changing. Stores and cafes began advertising in Spanish and English * * *. Everyone talked of home only 100 miles away. And every-

one talked about the great liberation army being formed in the secret camps somewhere far away.(*28*)

(24) By April 1961, the more than 100,000 Cubans who had fled Castro's revolution lived in anticipation of its overthrow. They had been buoyed in that hope by public pronouncements of support from the U.S. Government. In his state of the Union address, President Kennedy had spoken of "the Communist base established 90 miles from the United States," and said that "* * * Communist domination in this hemisphere can never be negotiated."(*29*) In addition, the Cuban exiles had been organized, directed and almost totally funded by agencies of the U.S. Government, principally the CIA.(*30*)

(25) From an historical perspective, in light of its later radical change, the attitude of the Cuban exiles toward the U.S. Government prior to the Bay of Pigs is especially significant. Author Haynes Johnson who, in writing a history of the invasion, collaborated with the top Cuban leaders, including brigade civilian chief Manuel Artime, described that attitude in detail:

> From the beginning, the Cuban counterrevolutionists viewed their new American friends with blind trust. Artime was no exception. He, and later virtually all of the Cubans involved, believed so much in the Americans—or wanted so desperately to believe—that they never questioned what was happening or expressed doubts about the plans. Looking back on it, they agree now that their naivete was partly genuine and partly reluctance to turn down any offer of help in liberating their country. In fact, they had little choice; there was no other place to turn. Some, of course, were driven by other motives: political power and personal ambition were involved. Even more important was the traditional Cuban attitude toward America and Americans. To Cubans the United States was more than the colossus of the north, for the two countries were bound closely by attitudes, by history, by geography and by economics. The United States was great and powerful, the master not only of the hemisphere but perhaps of the world, and it was Cuba's friend. One really didn't question such a belief. It was a fact; everyone knew it. And the mysterious, anonymous, ubiquitous American agents who dealt with the Cubans managed to strengthen that belief.(*31*)

(26) This "blind trust" by the Cuban exiles in the U.S. Government prior to the Bay of Pigs was specifically noted by the military commander of the 2506 Brigade, José (Pepe) Pérez San Román:

"Most of the Cubans were there," he said,

> because they knew the whole operation was going to be conducted by the Americans, not by me or anyone else. They did not trust me or anyone else. They just trusted the Americans. So they were going to fight because the United States was backing them.(*32*)

(27) The debacle at the Bay of Pigs was not only a military tragedy for the anti-Castro Cuban exiles but also a painful shattering of their confidence in the U.S. Government. The exile leaders claimed that the failure of the invasion was a result of the lack of promised air

support, and for that they directly blamed President Kennedy.(*33*) Particularly galling to them was Kennedy's public declaration to Soviet Premier Khrushchev at the height of the invasion, when the Brigade was being slaughtered in the swamps of Bahia de Cochinos: ". . . I repeat now that the United States intends no armed intervention in Cuba."(*34*)

(28) Even those exile leaders who were willing to rationalize the extent of Kennedy's responsibility were dissuaded when Kennedy himself admitted the blame. Cuban Revolutionary Council leader Manuel Antonio de Varona, in his executive session testimony before the committee, told of the President gathering the Council members together at the White House when it became clear that the invasion was a disaster. Varona recalled:

> We were not charging Mr. Kennedy with anything; we just wanted to clarify. We knew that he didn't have any direct knowledge of the problem, and we knew that he was not in charge of the military effects directly. Nevertheless, President Kennedy, to finish the talks, told us he was the one—the only one responsible.(*35*)

A few days after that meeting, the White House issued a public statement declaring that President Kennedy assumed "sole responsibility" for the U.S. role in the action against Cuba.(*36*)

(29) The acceptance of responsibility did not cut the bitter disappointment the Cuban exiles felt toward the U.S. Government and President Kennedy. Much later, captured and imprisoned by Castro, Brigade Commander San Román revealed the depth of his reaction at the failure of the invasion: "I hated the United States," he said, "and I felt that I had been betrayed. Every day it became worse and then I was getting madder and madder and I wanted to get a rifle and come and fight against the U.S."(*37*)

(30) Prominent Cuban attorney Mario Lazo wrote a book caustically titled Dagger in the Heart.(*38*) Lazo wrote:

> The Bay of Pigs defeat was wholly self-inflicted in Washington. Kennedy told the truth when he publicly accepted responsibility . . . The heroism of the beleaguered Cuban Brigade had been rewarded by betrayal, defeat, death for many of them, long and cruel imprisonment for the rest. The Cuban people and the Latin American nations, bound to Cuba by thousands of subtle ties of race and culture, were left with feelings of astonishment and disillusionment, and in many cases despair. They had always admired the United States as strong, rich, generous—but where was its sense of honor and the capacity of its leaders?
>
> The mistake of the Cuban fighters for liberation was that they thought too highly of the United States. They believed to the end that it would not let them down. But it did . . .(*39*)

(31) President Kennedy was well aware of the bitter legacy left him by the Bay of Pigs debacle. It is not now possible to document the changes in Kennedy's personal attitude brought about by the military defeat, but the firming of U.S. policy toward Cuba and the massive infusion of U.S. aid to clandestine anti-Castro operations in the wake of the Bay of Pigs was editorially characterized by Taylor

Branch and George Crile in Harper's magazine as "the Kennedy vendetta."(*40*).

(32) What can be documented is the pattern of U.S. policy between the period of the Bay of Pigs failure in April 1961 and the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962. That pattern, replete with both overt and covert maneuvers, had a significant effect on the reshaping of Cuban exile attitudes and, when it was abruptly reversed, could have provided the motivation for involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy.

(33) In retrospect, the period between the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban missile crisis can be considered the high-water mark of anti-Castro activity, almost every manifestation of the U.S. policy providing a reassurance of support of the Cuban exile cause. As a matter of fact, only a few days after the Bay of Pigs invasion, President Kennedy delivered a particularly hard-line address before the American Society of Newspaper Editors on the implications of communism in Cuba. "Cuba must not be abandoned to the Communists," he declared. In appealing for support from Latin America, he indicated that the United States would expect more from the nations of the hemisphere with regard to Cuba and asserted that the United States would not allow the doctrine of nonintervention to hinder its policy. Said Kennedy, "... our restraint is not inexhaustible." and spoke of Cuba in the context of the "new and deeper struggle."(*41*)

(34) When Castro, in a May Day speech, declared Cuba to be a socialist nation, the State Department retorted that Cuba was a full-fledged member of the Communist bloc.(*42*)

(35) Another U.S. response was the establishment of the Alliance for Progress, after years of relatively little attention to Latin America's economic and social needs.(*43*) President Kennedy gave the Alliance concept a memorable launching in a speech in March, 1961 when he called for vigorous promotion of social and economic development in Latin America through democratic means and, at the same time, pledged substantial financial and political support.(*44*)

(36) While the campaign to broaden its Cuban policy base was being pursued, the United States was proceeding on another course. In one of the first unilateral efforts to isolate Cuba from its allies, the United States in September 1961 announced it would stop assistance to any country that assisted Cuba. In December, Kennedy extended the denial of Cuba's sugar quota through the first half of 1962.(*45*)

(37) Meanwhile, the secret policy aimed at removing Castro through assassination continued as FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover informed Attorney General Robert Kennedy in May that the CIA had used the Mafia in "clandestine efforts" against Castro.(*46*) In that month, poison pills to be used in a plot to kill Castro were passed to a Cuban exile in Miami by a Mafia figure.(*47*) In November 1961, Operation Mongoose, designed to enlist 2,000 Cuban exiles and dissidents inside Cuba to overthrow Castro, was initiated.(*48*)

(38) Although the bitter aftertaste of the Bay of Pigs invasion lingered in the Cuban exile community, those who remained active in the fight against Castro came to realize that these subsequent actions of the Kennedy administration were manifestations of its determination to reverse the defeat. What Kennedy had euphemistically termed "a new and deeper struggle" became, in actuality, a secret war:

> * * * the new President apparently perceived the defeat as an affront to his pride. Within a matter of weeks he committed the United States to a secret war against Cuba that eventually required the services of several thousand men and cost as much as $100 million a year * * * Kennedy entrusted its direction to the CIA, which * * * conducted an operation that could be described either as a large-scale vendetta or a small crusade. (*49*)

(39) The fact that the agency of the U.S. Government the anti-Castro exiles had dealt most with and relied on prior to the Bay of Pigs became, after the invasion failure, the controlling force of the "secret war" was another indication of the Cuban exiles that the Kennedy administration was, indeed, still sincere about overthrowing Castro.

> Within a year of the Bay of Pigs, the CIA curiously and inexplicably began to grow, to branch out, to gather more and more responsibility for the "Cuban problem." The company was given authority to help monitor Cuba's wireless traffic; to observe its weather; to follow the Castro government's purchases abroad and its currency transactions; to move extraordinary numbers of clandestine field operatives in and out of Cuba; to acquire a support fleet of ships and aircraft in order to facilitate these secret agent movements; to advise, train, and help reorganize the police and security establishments of Latin countries which felt threatened by Castro guerrilla politics; to take a hand in U–2 overflights and sea-air Elint (Electronic Intelligence) operations aimed at tracing Cuban coastal defense communications on special devices; to pump * * * vast sums into political operations thought to be helpful in containing Castro * * *. (*50*)

(40) The nerve center of the United States "new and deeper struggle" against Castro was established in the heartland of exile activity, Miami. There, on a secluded, heavily wooded 1,571-acre tract that was part of the University of Miami's south campus, the CIA set up a front operation, an electronics firm called Zenith Technological Services. (*51*) Its code name was JM/WAVE and it soon became the largest CIA installation anywhere in the world outside of its headquarters in Langley, Va. (*52*)

(41) The JM/WAVE station had, at the height of its activities in 1962, a staff of more than 300 Americans, mostly case officers. (*53*) Each case officer employed from 4 to 10 Cuban "principal agents" who, in turn, would each be responsible for between 10 and 30 regular agents. (*54*) In addition, the CIA set up 54 front corporations—boat shops, real estate firms, detective agencies, travel companies, gun shops—to provide ostensible employment for the case officers and agents operating outside of JM/WAVE headquarters. (*55*) It also maintained hundreds of pieces of real estate, from small apartments to palatial homes, as "safe houses" in which to hold secret meetings. (*56*) As a result of its JM/WAVE operation, the CIA became one of Florida's largest employers. (*57*)

(42) It was the JM/WAVE station that monitored, more or less controlled, and in most cases funded the anti-Castro groups. (*58*) It was

responsible for the great upsurge in anti-Castro activity and the lifted spirits of the Cuban exiles as American arms and weapons flowed freely through the training camps and guerrilla bases spotted around south Florida.(*59*) Anti-Castro raiding parties that left from small secret islands in the Florida Keys were given the "green light" by agents of the JM/WAVE station.(*60*) The result of it all was that there grew in the Cuban exile community a renewed confidence in the U.S. Government's sincerity and loyalty to its cause.

(43) Then came the Cuban missile crisis. The more fervent Cuban exiles were initially elated by the possibility that the crisis might provoke a final showdown with Castro.(*61*) For several months there had been increasing pressure on President Kennedy to take strong measures against the buildup of the Soviet presence in Cuba, which was becoming daily more blatant. In a report issued at the end of March 1962, the State Department said that Cuba had received from the Soviet Union $100 million in military aid for the training of Cuban pilots in Czechoslovakia and that the Soviet Union also had provided from 50 to 75 Mig fighters as well as tons of modern weapons for Cuba's ground forces.(*62*) Fortifying the Cuban exile's hope for action was the fact that the increasing amounts of Soviet weapons moving into Cuba became the dominant issue in the news in the succeeding months, leading to congressional calls for action and a series of hard-line responses from President Kennedy.(*63*) In September, Kennedy declared that the United States would use "whatever means may be necessary" to prevent Cuba from exporting "its aggressive purposes by force or threat of force" against "any part of the Western Hemisphere."(*64*)

(44) The fervent hope of the Cuban exiles—that the Cuban missile crisis would ultimately result in the United States smashing the Castro regime—was shattered by the manner in which President Kennedy resolved the crisis. Cuba itself was relegated to a minor role as tough negotiations took place between the United States and the Soviet Union, specifically through communication between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev.(*65*) The crisis ended, when President Kennedy announced that all IL–28 bombers were being withdrawn by the Soviets and progress was being made on the withdrawal of offensive missiles and other weapons from Cuba. In return, Kennedy gave the Soviets and the Cubans a "no invasion" pledge.(*66*).

(45) If Kennedy's actions at the Bay of Pigs first raised doubts in the minds of the Cuban exiles about the President's sincerity and determination to bring about the fall of Castro, his handling of the missile crisis confirmed those doubts. Kennedy's agreement with Khrushchev was termed "a violation" of the pledge he had made 3 days after the Bay of Pigs invasion that the United States would never abandon Cuba to communism.(*67*) Wrote one prominent exile: "For the friendly Cuban people, allies of the United States, and for hundreds of thousands of exiles eager to stake their lives to liberate their native land, it was a soul-shattering blow."(*68*)

(46) The bitterness of the anti-Castro exiles was exacerbated by the actions the U.S. Government took to implement the President's "no invasion" pledge. Suddenly there was a crackdown on the very training camps and guerrilla bases which had been originally established and funded by the United States and the exile raids which once had the

Government's "green light" were now promptly disavowed and condemned.

(47) On March 31, 1963, a group of anti-Castro raiders were arrested by British police at a training site in the Bahamas. (*69*) The U.S. State Department admitted it had given the British the information about the existence of the camp. (*70*) That same night another exile raiding boat was seized in Miami Harbor. (*71*) On April 3, the Soviet Union charged that the United States "encourages and bears full responsibility" for two recent attacks on Soviet ships in Cuban ports by anti-Castro exile commandos. (*72*) The United States responded that it was "taking every step necessary to insure that such attacks are not launched, manned or equipped from U.S. territory." (*73*) On April 5, the Coast Guard announced it was throwing more planes, ships, and men into its efforts to police the straits of Florida against anti-Castro raiders. (*74*) As a result of the crackdown, Cuban exile sources declared that their movement to rid their homeland of communism had been dealt "a crippling blow" and that they had lost a vital supply link with anti-Castro fighters inside Cuba.

(48) There were numerous other indications of the U.S. crackdown on anti-Castro activity following the missile crisis. The Customs Service raided what had long been a secret training camp in the Florida Keys and arrested the anti-Castro force in training there. (*75*) The FBI seized a major cache of explosives at an anti-Castro camp in Louisiana. (*76*) Just weeks later, the U.S. Coast Guard in cooperation with the British Navy captured another group of Cuban exiles in the Bahamas. (*77*) In September, the Federal Aviation Administration issued "strong warnings" to six American civilian pilots who had been flying raids over Cuba. (*78*) Shortly afterward, the Secret Service arrested a prominent exile leader for conspiring to counterfeit Cuban currency destined for rebel forces inside Cuba. (*79*) In October, the Coast Guard seized 4 exile ships and arrested 22 anti-Castro raiders who claimed they were moving their operations out of the United States. (*80*)

(49) The feeling of betrayal by the Cuban exiles was given reinforcement by prominent sympathizers outside their community, as well as by Kennedy's political opponents. Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, chairman of the Committee for the Monroe Doctrine, asserted: "The Kennedy administration has committed the final betrayal of Cuban hopes for freedom by its order to block the activities of exiled Cuban freedom fighters to liberate their nation from Communism." (*81*) Senator Barry Goldwater accused Kennedy of "doing everything in his power" to keep the flag of Cuban exiles "from ever flying over Cuba again." (*82*) Richard Nixon urged the end of what he called the "quarantine" of Cuban exiles. (*83*)

(50) Of course, the most strident reactions came from within the anti-Castro community itself. Following the U.S. Government's notification that it would discontinue its subsidy to the Cuban Revolutionary Council, its president, José Miró Cardona, announced his resignation from the council in protest against U.S. policy. (*84*) The Cuban exile leader accused President Kennedy of "breaking promises and agreements" to support another invasion of Cuba. (*85*) Miró Cardona said the change in American policy reflected the fact that Kennedy had become "the victim of a master play by the Russians." (*86*)

(51) The extent of the deterioration of relationships between the Cuban exiles and the Kennedy administration is indicated in the State Department's reply to Miró Cardona's charges. It labeled them "a gross distortion of recent history."(*87*)

(52) Against the pattern of U.S. crackdown on Cuban exile activity during this period, however, emerges a countergrain of incidents that may have some bearing on an examination of the Kennedy assassination. These incidents involve some extremely significant Cuban exile raids and anti-Castro operations which took place, despite the crackdown, between the time of the missile crisis and the assassination of the President. In fact, in the midst of the missile crisis, one of the most active Cuban groups, Alpha 66, announced that it made a successful raid on the Cuban port city of Isabela de Sagua, killing about 20 defenders, including Russians.(*88*) On October 15, the same group sank a Cuban patrol boat.(*89*) On October 31, the day after the blockade was lifted, it struck again.(*90*) Immediately after the crisis ended in November, a spokesman for the group pledged new raids.(*91*)

(53) During this period, other anti-Castro groups also remained active. In April, a group calling itself the Cuban Freedom Fighters reported bombing an oil refinery outside Havana.(*92*) In May, the Cuban Government confirmed that anti-Castro rebels had carried out a "pirate" raid on a militia camp near Havana despite U.S. promises "to take measures to prevent such attacks."(*93*) Later that month, the anti-Castro Internal Front of Revolutionary Unity reported it had formed a military junta in Cuba to serve as "provisional government of Cuba in arms." Shortly afterwards, a group of returning Cuban exile raiders claimed they had blown up a Cuban refinery, sank a gunboat and killed "many" of Castro's soldiers.(*94*) It is not known exactly how many incidents took place during this period, but in April 1963 one anti-Castro fighter asserted that, by then, the U.S. Government knew of 11 raids on Cuba since the missile crisis and did nothing.(*95*)

(54) One analyst, reviewing that period of United States-Cuban relations, noted: "The U.S. Government's policy toward the exiles was equivocal and inconsistent * * *" (*96*)

(55) It cannot be determined to what extent, if any, the military activities of the anti-Castro exile groups were sanctioned or supported by the Kennedy administration or by the CIA or both. At a press conference in May 1963, in response to a question as to whether or not the United States was giving aid to exiles, President Kennedy was evasive: "We may well be * * * well, none that I am familiar with * * * I don't think as of today that we are." (*97*) And it is known that by June 1963, the U.S. Government was supporting at least one Cuban exile group, Jure, under what was termed an "autonomous operations" concept.(*98*)

(56) In retrospect, this much is clear: With or without U.S. Government support and whether or not in blatant defiance of Kennedy administration policy, there were a number of anti-Castro action groups which were determined to continue—and, in fact, did continue—their operations. The resignation of Miró Cardona actually split the Cuban Revolutionary Council down the middle and precipitated a bitter dispute among the exile factions. (*99*) The more moderate contended that without U.S. support there was little hope of ousting Castro and that the exiles should concentrate their efforts in mounting political pressure to reverse Washington's shift in policy. (*100*) Other exile

groups announced their determination to continue the war against Castro and, if necessary, to violently resist curtailment of their paramilitary activities in the Kennedy administration. (*101*) In New Orleans, for instance, Carlos Bringuier, the local leader of the Cuban Student Directorate (DRE) who, coincidentally, would later have a contact with Lee Harvey Oswald, proclaimed, in the wake of the Miró Cardona resignation, that his group "would continue efforts to liberate Cuba despite action by the United States to stop raids originating from U.S. soil." (*102*)

(57) The seeds of defiance of the Kennedy administration may have been planted with the exiles even prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion. In his history of the invasion, Haynes Johnson revealed that shortly before the invasion, "Frank Bender," the CIA director of the invasion preparations, assembled the exile leaders together at the CIA's Guatemala training camp:

> It was now early in April and Artime was in the camp as the civilian representative of the Revolutionary Council. Frank called Pepe (San Roman) and (Erneido) Oliva again. This time he had startling information. There were forces in the administration trying to block the invasion, and Frank might be ordered to stop it. If he received such an order, he said he would secretly inform Pepe and Oliva. Pepe remembers Frank's next words this way:
>
> "If this happens you come here and make some kind of show, as if you were putting us, the advisers, in prison, and you go ahead with the program as we have talked about it, and we will give you the whole plan, even if we are your prisoners." * * * Frank then laughed and said: "In the end we will win." (*103*)

(58) That, then, is the context in which the committee approached the question of whether or not the John F. Kennedy assassination was a conspiracy involving anti-Castro Cuban exiles. It also considered the testimony of the CIA's chief of its Miami JM/WAVE station in 1963, who noted " 'assassination' was part of the ambience of that time." (*104*)

(59) This section of this staff report details the evidence developed in the committee's examination of some of the most active anti-Castro exile groups and their key leaders. These groups were specifically selected from the more than 100 exile organizations in existence at the time of the Kennedy assassination. (*105*) Their selection was the result of both independent field investigation by the committee and the committee's examination of the files and records maintained by those Federal and local agencies monitoring Cuban exile activity at the time. These agencies included local police departments, the FBI, the CIA, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (now the DEA), the Customs Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Department of Defense.

(60) The groups selected can be termed the "action groups." These were the ones most active on both the military and propaganda fronts, the ones that not only talked about anti-Castro operations, but actually planned and carried out infiltrations and raids into Cuba, conducted Castro assassination attempts, were involved in a multiplicity of arms dealings and had the most vociferous and aggressive leaders. These

were also the groups and individuals who took the brunt of the Kennedy administration's crackdown on anti-Castro operations when it came after the Cuban missile crisis. These were the ones who, in the end, were most bitter at President Kennedy, the ones who felt the most betrayed. Finally, these were the groups and individuals who had the means and motivation to be involved in the assassination of the President.

(61) The committee, however, found no specific evidence that any anti-Castro group or individual was involved in Kennedy's assassination. It did appear, however, that there were indications of association between Lee Harvey Oswald and individuals connected to at least some of the groups.

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(*8*) "U.S. Seizes Batista Backer in Miami," New York Times, Apr. 9, 1961, p. 4.

(*9*) See ref. 5, Johnson, "Bay of Pigs," p. 23.

(*10*) Paul Bethel, "The Losers" (Arlington House, 1969), p. 102.

(*11*) "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro, Mar. 10, 1952–Oct. 22, 1962," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, p. 6 (J. F. K. Document 013100) (hereinafter cited "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro").

(*12*) Ibid.

(*13*) Mario Lazo, "Dagger in the Heart" (Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), p. 186 (hereinafter cited Lazo, "Dagger").

(*14*) Ibid.

(*15*) See ref. 11, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro," p. 7.

(*16*) Ibid.

(*17*) See ref. 5, Johnson, "Bay of Pigs," p. 23.

(*18*) Ibid.

(*19*) Ibid.

(*20*) Id. at p. 24.

(*21*) Ibid.

(*22*) See ref. 11, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro," Jan. 26, 1960, p. 9.

(*23*) Ibid.

(*24*) See ref. 5, Johnson, "Bay of Pigs," p. 18.

(*25*) Ibid.

(*26*) Id. at p. 28.

(*27*) Id. at p. 19.

(28) Ibid.

(*29*) "U.S.-Cuba Relations, 1959–1964: An Analysis," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, House Select Committee on Assassinations (J. F. K. Document 011478.) (hereinafter cited "United States-Cuba Relations.")

(*30*) See ref. 5, Johnson "Bay of Pigs," pp. 23–31.

(*31*) Id. at p. 27.

(*32*) Id. at p. 76.

(33) Id. at p. 222.
(34) See ref. 11, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro," Apr. 18, 1961, p. 26.
(35) Executive session testimony of Manuel Antonio de Varona, Mar. 16, 1978, hearings before the House Select Committee on Assassinations, p. 23.
(36) See ref. 11, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba and Castro," Apr. 24, 1961, p. 29.
(37) See ref. 5, Johnson, "Bay of Pigs," p. 213.
(38) See ref. 13, Lazo, "Daggers."
(39) Ibid., p. 299.
(40) Taylor Branch and George Crile, III, "The Kennedy Vendetta," Harper's, Aug. 1975, p. 49 (hereinafter cited Branch and Crile).
(41) See ref. 29, "United States-Cuba Relations," p. 39.
(42) Id. at p. 40.
(43) Id. at p. 41.
(44) Ibid.
(45) Id. at p. 42.
(46) See ref. 1, Intelligence Committee Report, Book V, p. 11, footnote 4.
(47) Id. at p. 99.
(48) Ibid. See also "Our Heritage—The Exile Cuban Terrorists," Washington Post, Nov. 7, 1976, p. C3.
(49) See ref. 40, Branch and Crile, p. 49.
(50) Andrew St. George, "The Cold War Comes Home," Harper's November 1973, p. 70.
(51) "How the CIA Operated in Dade," Miami Herald, Mar. 9, 1975, p. 1.
(52) Ibid.
(53) See ref. 40, Branch and Crile, p. 51.
(54) Ibid.
(55) Ibid.
(56) See ref. 51, "How the CIA Operated in Dade," p. 1.
(57) Ibid.
(58) Ibid. See also the memorandum of interview of Ron Cross Jan. 16, 1978, House Select Committee on Assassinations (J. F. K. Document 004721).
(59) See ref. 40, Branch and Crile, pp. 52, 56.
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(61) Id. at p. 62.
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(63) Id. at p. 49.
(64) Ibid.
(65) Id. at p. 53.
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(67) See ref. 13, Lazo, "Dagger," p. 364.
(68) Id. at p. 378.
(69) "A Selected Chronology on Cuba, Apr. 1, 1963–Apr. 30, 1963," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, p. 1 (J. F. K. Document 013101) (hereinafter "A Selected Chronology on Cuba").
(70) Ibid.
(71) Ibid.
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(75) "U.S. Nabs Anti-Castro Fighters," Miami Herald, Dec. 5, 1962, p. 21A.
(76) New Orleans Times-Picayune, Aug. 1, 1963, p. 1.
(77) "United States-Cuba Relations, 1960–1963: Neutrality Enforcement and the Cuban Exiles During the Kennedy Administration," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, p. 12 (J. F. K. Document 013099) (hereinafter cited "United States-Cuba 1960–1963").
(78) Ibid.
(79) Ibid.
(80) Ibid.
(81) See ref. 69, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba," Apr. 6, 1963, p. 4.
(82) Ibid., Apr. 7, 1963, p. 5.
(83) Ibid., Apr. 20, 1963, p. 18.
(84) Ibid., Apr. 10, 1963, p. 7.
(85) Ibid., Apr. 15, 1963, p. 10.
(86) Ibid., Apr. 18, 1963, p. 12.

(87) Ibid., Apr. 15, 1963, p. 10.
(88) Ibid., Oct. 10, 1962, p. 24.
(89) See ref. 77, "United States-Cuba 1960–1963," p. 8.
(90) Ibid.
(91) Ibid.
(92) See ref. 69, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba," Apr. 26, 1963, p. 24.
(93) Ibid., May 21, 1963, p. 10.
(94) Ibid., June 12, 1963, p. 5.
(95) See ref. 77, "United States-Cuba 1960–1963," p. 9.
(96) See ref. 29, "United States-Cuba Relations, 1959–1964: An Analysis," p. 69.
(97) Id. at p. 71.
(98) CIA memorandum to Director, July 9, 1964.
(99) See ref. 69, "A Selected Chronology on Cuba," Apr. 19, 1963, p. 16.
(100) Paris Flammonde, "Why President Kennedy Was Killed," p. 69 (J. F. K. Document 013106).
(101) Ibid.
(102) Ibid., Associated Press dispatch, May 10, 1963.
(103) See ref. 5, Johnson, "Bay of Pigs," pp. 75–76. (In a footnote in later editions, Johnson notes that after initial publication of his book, "the CIA let it be known that Frank Bender denied—in writing—making such statements.")
(104) See ref. 1, Intelligence Committee Report, Book V, p. 14.
(105) "Our Heritage—The Exile Cuban Terrorists," Washington Post, Nov. 7, 1976, p. C3.