

Abortive Bay of Pigs Invasion Described

Editor's note: "Alert alert - look well at the rainbow. The fish will be running very soon." These cryptic words crackling out over a clandestine radio two years ago signalled one of the worst fiascos in U.S. history - the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. The following dispatch recapitulates the grim episode.

By NORMAN RUNNION
United Press International
Washington - (UPI) - In the early morning hours of April 17, 1961, a force of 1,500 men

in combat uniforms stormed ashore in a remote and swampy section of Cuba facing a body of water called the Bay of Pigs.

As brigade 2503 slugged inland with high hopes, a Madison avenue public relations firm in far-off New York issued a communique in the name of the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

"Before dawn," it said with unjustified optimism, "Cuban patriots in the cities and the hills began the battle to liberate our homeland from the despotic rule of Fidel Castro

and rid Cuba of international cruelty and oppression."

In the early morning hours of April 20, just three days later, Havana radio also had a communique. To the world and the Cuban people it announced:

Army Crushed

"The mercenary army which occupied Cuban territory for less than 72 hours has been crushed, the government disclosed at 2:30 (A.M.) today in communique No. 4."

For the men of the brigade, and for the United States government which supported and

organized them, it was 72 hours of heartbreak, bloodshed and total disaster. The dangerous and grim repercussions have influenced power politics and diplomacy until today, two years later.

Out of the episode emerged much that was bad, indeed terrible, and a little that was good.

Castro Endures

Brigade 2503 set out to destroy Castro, but Castro is still there.

The invasion was launched from a sea of errors and engulfed in a tidal wave of con-

fusion; but this in itself was an experience that became a teacher. Lessons learned in April, 1962, were not forgotten by the Kennedy administration in the American-Soviet missile showdown last October.

Because the Bay of Pigs was such a fiasco as well as a tragedy for the men involved, and because it was such a glaring failure of U.S. policy, it will remain a controversy for years to come.

The adventure began, on the night of April 16, with a poem.

"Alert alert - look well at the rainbow.
The fish will be running very soon
Chico is at home visit him
The sky is blue
But notice on tree
Tree is green and blue . . ."
Verse Alerts

Broadcast by a clandestine radio starting before midnight, the poem appeared to be beamed at the Cuban underground to alert it that the "fish" were at that very moment approaching the Cuban shores. It is an old trick, hiding a message in verse, and

was a method employed by the Allies to alert the French underground on the eve of D-Day.

Although melodramatic and exciting, this poem alerted virtually no one. It was merely symbolic of futility. The anti-Castro underground was very much in existence. Some of its members heard the verses on short-wave radios and with agony realized they had no instructions to unlock the code of the fish, Chico or the rainbow; no prepared plans to blow up bridges, block trains, or delay Castro's

300,000-man militia.

Behind this lack of knowledge was simple fact. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) planners who organized and directed the Bay of Pigs expedition had decided to all but ignore the underground, which they did not totally trust, and concentrate instead on a one-hot landing of 1,500 men with no local support.

Blunder Seen

In the penetrating light of hindsight, it was a blunder that forged another link in the chain of destruction which was to crush the whole oper-

ation and badly damage American prestige.

The invasion began at 3 a.m. Brigade 2503 hit the beaches on the southern coast of Cuba less than 100 miles southeast of Havana and started to move inland toward its initial objectives.

In its ranks were men both rich and poor who were dedicated to overthrowing the man and the regime which had driven them from Cuba. Some had fought in Castro's ranks. But because of CIA insistence there also were some a handful - who had been involved with the deposed Batista, another mistake that was to provide Castro with propaganda ammunition.

For nearly three months American and exile personnel had trained the assault forces, mostly at a remote camp in Guatemala.

Report For Duty

One such trainee was Manuel Penabaz, who was ordered to report for duty in Miami on Jan. 24, 1961.

This was four days after John F. Kennedy had been inaugurated President of the United States and found himself confronted with plans for an exile invasion of Cuba which had been drawn up in the Eisenhower administration. Only a comparatively short time was to elapse before Kennedy gave the final go-ahead for an operation whose ramifications neither he nor his chief advisers had really mastered.

In the meantime Penabaz, one of the lucky few who eventually was to escape from the hell of the beachhead, was to undergo his military training. During this same period the master plan which he and his fellow exiles were to follow was drastically altered.

Penabaz kept a diary. On April 14, as the six ships carrying the invasion forces were en route to Cuba, he made this entry:

Flotilla Moves

"The flotilla is steaming toward our date with destiny . . . two destroyers . . . I think they are North American . . . flank us. The sensation is of an authentic war convoy."

"We were told that the underground was to destroy the bridges and declare a general strike throughout the island. We were told we would have an air umbrella over us at all times so as to guarantee that the sky would always be ours."

There was no general strike. There was no umbrella.

To provide sufficient aerial firepower to protect the invasion forces, American planes would have been needed. But Kennedy firmly ruled out any overt U.S. participation. Four Americans did, in fact, fly planes provided to the exiles, and vanished under attack from Cuban jets. But the four had been hired - presumably by the CIA - for the sole purpose of aiding the exiles.

Postpones Strike

Available to the brigade were World War II vintage B26s, no match for Castro's MiGs. Two days before the landing the exiles had bombed Cuban airfields in the hope of knocking out Castro's air force, but destruction had been far from total. A second planned strike was postponed because of the worldwide storm over the first one.

April 17, the day of the landings. From the diary of Manuel Penabaz: "We are entrenched on Cuban soil, and here we will stay . . ."

In less than 24 hours we have already driven 42 kilometers (26 miles) inland."

A little further on the advance halted in the face of Cuba's military might, personally directed by Castro. Consolidate.

On April 18, the second day, Penabaz reported: "Early today battalion two pulled back to Blue beach to consolidate our forces already too dispersed and far from supply lines. For the first time, enemy aviation appears very active . . . the enemy planes . . . are constantly bombing and strafing our landing strip."

"Everyone keeps asking us: 'Where are the Americans? I don't see any Americans here.' They are convinced that the Americans are landing and no amount of persuasion changes their minds. Napoleon Villa Boe, executive officer of the battalion, tells me we are fighting against 100 times our number but that he is not discouraged."

Within hours he would be. On April 19 it was all over. Pounded relentlessly by jets and Castro's tanks, deprived of supplies that were destroyed when ships were sunk, alone with no air cover, lacking any internal uprising that would have diverted the militia, the brigade floundered and then quit.

For 10 months its members suffered in Cuban prisons before New York attorney James Donovan, aided quietly by the Kennedy administration and openly by the American Red Cross, obtained their release.

NO STAMPS
NO GIMICKS
NO CONTESTS

PEAR BLOSSOM SPECIALS

Every Customer Is a CASH SAVING WINNER at Thunderbird Market

BETTY CROCKER
PANCAKE FLOUR 4 pound bag **39¢**

THUNDERBIRD
PANCAKE SYRUP 22 ounce bottle **29¢**

LILT HOME
PERMANENT For any type hair
Reg. \$1.55 **99¢** tax inc.

SHO CURL
SHAMPOO For dry tinted or bleached hair
Reg. 99¢ **39¢**

GREST
TOOTH PASTE Large size - Reg. 53¢
3 tubes for \$1

BREAKFAST
TANG DRINK Reg. 39¢ 7-Oz. Jar **29¢**

C&H
CANE SUGAR 10-Lb. Bag **89¢** 25-Lb. Bag **\$2.19**

THUNDERBIRD
MAYONNAISE Qt. **39¢** Gal. **\$1.49**

THUNDERBIRD
SALAD DRESSING Qt. **33¢** Gal. **\$1.29**

MR. GOODBAR, KRACKLE
HERSHEY BARS Giant Bar **29¢**

MITY FRESH FROZEN
Speckled Butter Beans 2-Lb. Bag **49¢**

SMOKEY JOE'S FROZEN-CHUCK WAGON BEEF OR HAM
Barbecue Sandwiches 9-Oz. Pkg. **69¢**

DEL ROQUE KOSHER
DILL PICKLES 22-Oz. Jar **3 for 89¢**

TUBBY TIME
Child Bubble Bath 11-Oz. Characters **49¢**

M.J.B.
INSTANT COFFEE 6-Oz. Jar **99¢**

RANCHO CHICKEN NOODLE
SOUP 10 1/2-Oz. Can **10/99¢** 22-Oz. Can **5 for 99¢**

CLAM CHOWDER HILTON Reg. 25¢-10 1/2-oz. can **6 FOR 99¢**

PEANUT BUTTER PLANTERS Crunchy or Cream 18-oz. jar **39¢**

EVERICH MARGARINE 1-Lb. Pkg. **4 FOR 47¢**

COFFE MATE CARNATION Regular 79¢ 11 ounce jar **59¢**

CANDY BARS BABY RUTH, BUTTERFINGERS Regular 10c Bars-EACH **5¢**

BOOK MATCHES 50 Book Carton **8¢ 3 FOR 23¢**

GOLD MEDAL FLOUR 10-lb. bag **89¢**

MJB COFFEE 1-lb. can **49¢** 2-lb. can **97¢**

KITCHEN TOWELS Reg. 39¢ Morgan Jones Terry Irregulars. 16-in. x 30-in. Size **3 FOR 79¢**

PAD & COVER FOR IRONING BOARD Silicone Cover, Cotton Pad Regular \$1.98 **66¢**

DECORATOR RUG Reg. \$2.98 100% Rayon Pile. 24-in. x 36-in. Skid Resistant Back **1.99**

LIQUID OR TABLET
GERITOL A fortified tonic
Reg. \$2.98 **\$2.66**

ROSE BUSHES 2-Yr. Old Everblooming
Reg. \$1.49 **77¢**

HIRSCH-WEIS 5-LB. CELLO-RAY
SLEEPING BAG
• 36-in. x 80-in. • Full Length Zipper
• May be zipped together
• Air Mattress Pockets
Reg. \$15.95 **\$9.97**

GOODYEAR VINYL FILM
BABY PANTS
• Waterproof • Full Cut
• Med., Lg., X-Lg. • Reg. \$1.00
Pkg. of 4 **66¢**

Cedar Planter Tub or
Hanging Basket
Reg. 98¢
Your Choice **59¢**

MEN'S SHORT SLEEVE
SPORT SHIRT
REG. \$2.98
• Wash-n-Wear
• Dan River
• Fabrics
• Sizes Sm., Med., Lg.
\$1.99

LARGE RED RIPE Tomatoes lb. **15¢**
Just right for slicing

MEDIUM SIZE SOLID HEADS Cabbage lb. **9¢**

FANCY Zucchini Squash lb. **17¢**

COACHELLA VALLEY
Grapefruit 8 lb. bag **57¢**

WHITE BERMUDA ONIONS 2 pounds **25¢**

Green Peppers lb. **23¢**

RCA RADIO AND
T.V. TUBES Less 40%
REG. \$1.57 DISPENSER JAR **\$1.19**

BRYLCREAM REG. \$1.45 HALO **99¢**

SHAMPOO 12 1/2-Oz. Bottle **99¢**

VI-JON-TAKE ONE EACH DAY-90 TABLETS
VITAMINS with Minerals **88¢**

REG. \$1.00 MORGAN JONES
DISH CLOTHS Pkg. of 6 **88¢**

REG. \$1.39 GIRLS' COTTON
Pedal Pushers Sizes 7-14 **99¢**

REG. \$1.38 RAY-O-VAC 2-CELL
FLASHLIGHT With Batteries **98¢**

Men's Heavy Weight
BOOT SOCKS Reg. 98¢ **59¢**

CASHIER WINDOW SERVICES
• FILM DEVELOPING
• YEAR AROUND LAY-AWAY PLAN
• Free Gift Wrapping & Greeting Cards for all occasions
• Hunting and Fishing Licenses
• Checks Cashed
• Money Orders
• Postage Stamps
• Bottle Return
• Philco TV & Radio Tubes at 40% Discount
• G-E Floor Polisher & Waxer Rental 77¢ a Day

MEN'S IRREGULARS OR MENDERS
T-SHIRTS Sizes Sm., Med., Lge. **59¢**

REG. 49¢ MEN'S FIRST QUALITY
CREW SOCKS Sizes 10-13 **3 for 99¢**

REG. 65¢ RPM SAE 20-30 WT.
MOTOR OIL **2 Qts. 89¢**

REG. \$1.49 30 FT. VINYL PLASTIC
GARDEN HOSE **97¢**

REG. \$19.95 RCA 5-TUBE
TABLE RADIO **\$14.99**

REG. \$1.39 VINYL
Laundry Basket **88¢**

REG. \$5.98 MADE IN ITALY
Ladies Handbags **\$2.88**

NYLON OR SHANTUNG TRICOT
LADIES' BRIEFS Sizes 5-6-7 Reg. 98¢ **2 FOR 99¢**

Tinted Plastic
DROP CLOTH 9-ft. x 12-ft.-Reg. 49¢ **39¢**

Always More For Your Money
Thunderbird
Discount **MARKET**
CORNER JACKSONVILLE HIWAY AND LOZIER LANE