

Children of Euphoria

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A THOUSAND DAYS

to attack that plan as "probably the most dangerously irresponsible" recommendation made in the campaign. It would, he said, violate the United Nations Charter and five hemisphere treaties.

If we were to follow that recommendation — we would lose all our friends in Latin America, we would probably be condemned in the United Nations, and we would not accomplish our objective. It would be an open invitation to Mr. Castro to come into Latin America.

In his response, Kennedy said nothing more than straight talk for freedom, only noting that economic sanctions against Cuba, to be successful, would have to be multilateral and that the single will be to prevent the influence of Cuba spreading to other countries. For the rest of the campaign, he left Cuba alone.

Immediately after the election, his concern was with an immediate program for Latin America rather than with Cuba. However, he asked John Sharon for estimates of the effectiveness of the trade embargo against Cuba and of the possibility of rapprochement. Four days later, Dulles and Richard M. Helms of CIA informed him for the first time about the Guatemalan project.

6. PLANNING IN THE SHADOWS

The Eisenhower decision of March 17, 1960, had two main parts. On the political side, it directed the CIA to bring together a broad range of Cuban exiles, with *Batistianos* and Communists specifically excluded, into unified political opposition to the Castro regime. On the military side, it directed the CIA to recruit and train a Cuban force capable of guerrilla action against that regime.

When Nixon first proposed the use of exiles against Castro in the spring of 1959, United States action would have inevitably been for Batista, only *Batistianos* were then available. A year later the situation had improved. Thousands of disenchanted Cubans who had disliked Batista and at first welcomed the revolution were now streaming into Florida and Central America, some flying boldly on commercial airlines, others stealing onto small boats and disappearing into the Caribbean night. Many were lawyer, doctors