

## Richard M. Bissell Jr.; Principal Planner of Bay of Pigs Invasion

*From Associated Press*

FARMINGTON, Conn.—Richard M. Bissell Jr., a former deputy CIA director and principal architect of the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Kennedy Administration's failed attempt to topple Cuban leader Fidel Castro, has died. He was 84.

He died Monday of heart failure, said his associate, Frances T. Pudlo.

Bissell had been on track to succeed CIA Director Allen Dulles, but after the Bay of Pigs debacle in 1961, President John F. Kennedy told both they would have to resign.

The failed invasion overshadowed Bissell's other achievements at the CIA, where he guided the clandestine program to build the U-2 reconnaissance plane and its supersonic successor, the SR-71, as well as the first orbiting spy satellite.

Bissell supervised the delivery of supplies to Allied troops around the

world during World War II, then helped administer the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe after the war.

An economist, Bissell left the Commerce Department for the CIA in 1954, becoming special assistant to the director and later heading the covert operations program.

Forced out in 1962, he later formed a management consulting firm in Farmington.

Bissell took responsibility when the band of CIA-trained exiles sent to invade Cuba were quickly vanquished by Castro's forces.

A CIA review of the raid faulted Bissell, but an agency historian, Jack Pfeiffer, said years later the review had "deliberately distorted" the issue of Bissell's responsibility.

Kennedy awarded Bissell the National Security Medal on the first anniversary of the invasion, "for a most distinguished contribution to the security of the United States."

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