

## GRAVES DECORATED

S-1 11/4/61

## Castro Foes Pay Tribute To Invasion Dead Here

By DAVE SNYDER

Jesus Vilachao and Ruben Vera, neither 20 years old, stuck it out for 48 hours on a swarapy, bullet-swept beach in the Bay of Pigs—never one of Cuba's tourist attractions.

Like 20 others, they swam to a small fishing boat and paddled with their hands as tracer bullets from Castro's planes and shore batteries blasted at them.

After 15 days with practically no food and no water the fugitives from a doomed attempt to oust the Cuban strongman were spotted not far off the Louisiana coast by an American merchant ship.

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HELP DID NOT COME soon enough for Vilachao, 17, and Vera, 19, who died on board the Atlantic Seaman. In fact, only 10 of those who left the beach to swim a mile to the fishing boat are alive today.

Vilachao and Vera, along with another victim of the abortive invasion, Enrique Cossio, are buried in the Garden of Memories on Air-Line Hwy.

Two representatives of the Cuban Revolutionary Front placed flowers at the small head stones of Vilachao and Vera and at the monumental headstone of Cossio this week.

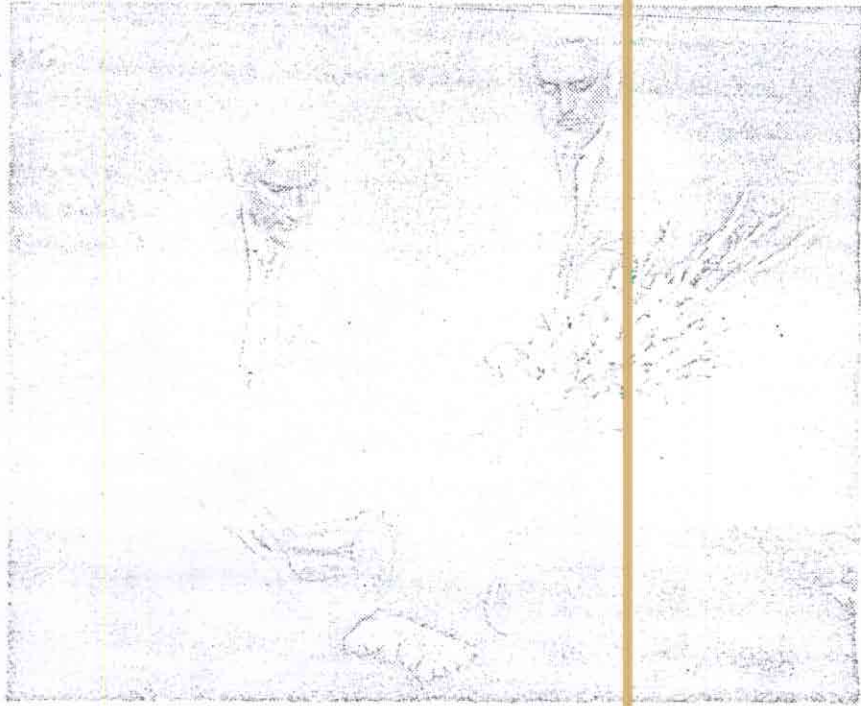
At the same time they covered the graves with flowers and the defeat of Castro.

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AT THE HEADSTONE of Vilachao and Vera, the two men by side in the cemetery, Sergio Arcacha, delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Front in New Orleans, said:

"We will never forget them. We hope that the people of New Orleans and of the United States will not forget that the first victims of Cuba's revolution were these two men."

"One day," said Arcacha, "we will accomplish what they were not able to do—free Cuba from the grip of the U.S. empire."



—States-Item photo.

CARLOS QUIROGA places a Cuban flag at the headstone of Jesus Vilachao, who died following the April 17 attempt to oust Castro, while SERGIO ARCACHA places flowers on the grave.

"The Bay of Pigs was just a battle lost. In the near future the experts in fighting against Castro until Castro will be thrown out of Cuba."

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THE BOAT that took the defeated members of the party out of the Bay of Pigs was about 20 feet long and was equipped with a motor that the men never succeeded in getting to run.

At first, according to a survivor of the ordeal who now makes his home in Miami, the men thought they were one of the U. S. warships not too far away.

The men were heard to

die frenetically with their hands and with two small boards they found in the bottom of the boat.

They were wanted to see the ships turn and leave the bay area, but followed doggedly, believing the ships would be waiting outside in open water for them.

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WHEN THE SHIPS were not there, they headed in the general direction of Yucatan in Mexico. Their threats already were paroled from the lack of water.

Somewhat they missed the coast and drifted toward the United States.

On the 15 days the men bet-

tle to stay alive, they were passed by nine different boats and at one point a plane, the occupants apparently curious, followed the men's boat for two days.

\* \* \*

THE MEN SMOULDED and waved their arms until they were weak, but the boat came no closer and, finally, turned away and disappeared.

The first man died six days after the ordeal began, and each day took new victims. As they died, they were lowered into the sea.

For those who survived, the ordeal was over at 5:30 p.m. on May 4 when the merchant ship took them aboard.