Route 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
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Editor, The Washington Post

Tom Braden's contrived argument in defense of Watergator Nixon (Post 5/26/73) puts "old pro" Braden in the camp of the JFK revisionists, whether or not this old CIA hand realises or intended it. It is consistent with "old pro" Braden's self-justification, finding his essential part in the National Student Association scandals a dedication to freedom, which it was not, rather than a deep subversion, which it was.

Braden says it is "the bright young amateurs who came to"Washington with JFK "in 1961 who, as "the first thing" bought – his word- the Bay of Pigs insanity.

It was a scheme dreamed up by the Bradens of the CIA under Eisenhower who conceived and commenced that operation. It was presented to JFK during the interregnum, when he took it on faith. This happened in Palm Beach, right after the election and several months before the inauguration, before 1961 and not in Washington.

Braden further twists this monstrous thing to describe it as a plan "for the landing 2,000 men in Cuba to take on an Army 1 millions strong".

The plan was to establish a beachhead, from the official accounts, to be followed by recognition of a government in exile to be followed by God knows what, for the spooks certainly didn't. The basis for this government in exile was formed in the Skylark Motel at Miami the month before the invasion.

What Braden fails to say, in pinning ultimate responsibility erroneously on JFK's "bright young amateurs", is that the CIA of which he was part was making policy for the President, arranging a situation he could not control. The probability of a successful invasion was designedly low. Whether it failed or succeeded, the spookery intended it as the first step prior to overt United States military intervention.

"Old pro", ex-spook Braden needs something better than this to justify Nixon's anti-Americanism. Braden also owes better to history.

And it isn't once a spook always a spook. I used to be one.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg