

Published Jan. 1, 1998

Politics of Illusion: The Bay of Pigs Invasion Reexamined

edited by James G. Blight and Peter Kornbluh

The defeat of the attempted April 1961 invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs (Playa Giron) was one of the worst foreign-policy disasters in U.S. history. Since then, explanations of the event have emphasized betrayal by one U.S. agency or another, seeking to assign blame for the "loss" of Cuba. With the benefit of new documentation, however--from U.S. government and Cuban exile sources--as well as the first-hand accounts of key participants, *Politics of Illusion* shows the current mythology to be just that.

Based on an innovative series of meetings that brought together former CIA officials, former anti-Castro Cuban operatives, a former high-ranking Soviet official, and others who were directly involved in the events--nearly all speaking on the record for the first time--this critical oral history demonstrates that all of the anti-Castro parties were guilty of illusions, to one degree or another. Blight and Kornbluh provide a thorough and perceptive context for the discussions held at the meetings, transcripts of the actual sessions, a selection of the main documents discussed by the participants, and a discussion of the implications of the participants' conclusions for current U.S.-Cuban relations.

James G. Blight is professor of international relations at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies. His extensive work on Cuba includes *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse*; he has also written extensively on the recent history of U.S. foreign policy. **Peter Kornbluh** is senior analyst at the National Security Archive, a nongovernmental research facility located at George Washington University. His publications include *The Cuban Missile Crisis* and *The Iran Contra Scandal: A Declassified History*.

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October 1997/ca. 280 pages ISBN: 1-55587-783-4 hc \$45

LC: 97-23213

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Last updated 09/01/97

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