

# CIA Ex-Historian Presses For a 30-Year-Old Tale

## Second Suit Filed on Bay of Pigs Invasion

4/10/91  
By Bill McAllister  
Washington Post Staff Writer

At 71, Jack Pfeiffer is a retired CIA historian who was once a nationally ranked squash player.

Yesterday, Pfeiffer, who says he still plays a good game of squash, delivered a strong backhand to his old employer, suing the Central Intelligence Agency over regulations he said have blocked him from publishing a declassified version of the organization's role in the ill-fated 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba.

Pfeiffer, who holds a PhD in history from the University of Chicago, said his version, which he researched while serving as the agency's one-man history staff, may make the CIA look better than it has in previous accounts.

But the agency, citing its strict disclosure rules, has refused to declassify his work and a federal court has upheld its decision. Yesterday, in a second lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court here, Pfeiffer sought to overturn the CIA's declassification and review procedures, contending they are "overbroad" and violate his free speech rights.

In addition, he argued, as he did in a previous lawsuit filed under the Freedom of Information Act, the agency does not want his papers made public because his findings might embarrass senior agency officials.

Pfeiffer has accused former CIA inspector general Lyman B. Kirk-

patrick of writing "a deliberately distorted report" on the agency's role in the invasion in hopes of being promoted to the agency's deputy director for plans.

The historian said Kirkpatrick "knowingly relied on the testimony of several unqualified witnesses and he had ignored the testimony of the most qualified witnesses . . ."

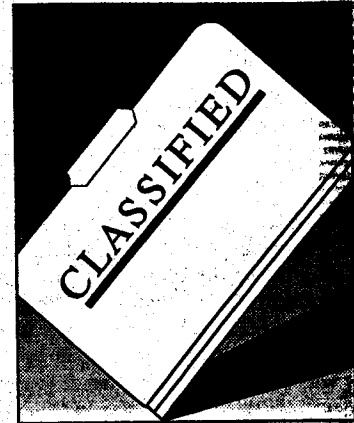
Often described as one of the darkest moments in the CIA's history, the agency helped train 1,500 Cuban rebels at secret bases in Florida in the early 1960s and then assisted in planning their invasion of Cuba in an effort to topple Fidel Castro, the island's communist leader.

The invasion forces suffered a massive defeat when they landed at the Bay of Pigs on the island.

Mark Mansfield, a CIA spokesman, declined yesterday to comment on specific allegations in the latest lawsuit because the agency had not seen the 13-page complaint filed in the court.

"However," Mansfield said, "there is absolutely no substance to charges that Dr. Pfeiffer's constitutional rights have been violated and that information about the Bay of Pigs operation is being withheld to spare the U.S. government from embarrassment." He also noted that Pfeiffer had failed in his earlier efforts to force the agency to release the report.

Public Citizen, the Ralph Nader advocacy group, filed the lawsuit on Pfeiffer's behalf, accusing the CIA



of balking at giving the historian complete copies of its disclosure regulations.

"Plain and simple, the CIA is suppressing a man's free speech, for no good reason other than arbitrarily to protect its top brass," said Patti Goldman, a lawyer with the Nader group.

Pfeiffer, who lives in Northern Virginia, worked for the agency from 1955 until 1984.

He said he left the agency after reaching a negotiated agreement with officials he said were determined to end the agency's history staff.

"The spooks" had long opposed having any independent staff develop accounts of their project and they ultimately won, Pfeiffer said.

He noted in his lawsuit that he has won release of a declassified version of a report he wrote on the work of a presidential commission that reviewed the Bay of Pigs operation and said he would be willing to abide by some of the same restrictions that he agreed to in securing release of that document. The agency, however, has declared that his other review of the Bay of Pigs operation should be withheld in its entirety.