

He Proposed Assassination Of Fidel Castro, Hunt Writes

By Donald Lambro
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Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, a former CIA agent who helped plan the 1961 Bay of Pigu invasion of Cuba, says he recommended to his superiors that Fidel Castro be assassinated as part of the takeover plot.

The disclosure was made in a forthcoming book by Hunt in which he tells about his part and that of the Kennedy administration in the invasion by several hundred Cuban exiles who were trained, equipped and directed by the United States to overthrow Castro's Communist regime.

Hunt describes the extent to which the Kennedy administration was committed to the invasion law—which was born in the final days of the Eisenhower administration—and how air support considered vital to the mission was cancelled at the last minute by President John F. Kennedy.

A copy of the book's galley proofs was obtained by UPI. It is to be published in November by Arlington House of New Rochelle, N.Y.

Hunt charges that President Kennedy tried to "whitewash the New Frontier" after the fiasco by "heaping guilt on the CIA."

Kennedy accepted the responsibility for the invasion at the time but much of the blame for its initiative and execution was placed on the CIA by others.

Hunt believes that the assassination, which he says was "a task for Cuban patriots, would leave Castro's army leaderless and confused." His written proposal was to "assassinate Castro before or coincident with the invasion."

Richard Bissell, chief of the CIA's clandestine services, said that the plan was being considered by "a special group" within the government, Hunt writes.

"So far as I have been able to determine no coherent plan was ever developed within CIA to assassinate Castro, though it was the heart's desire of many exile groups," he says.

Hunt maintains that top military men and White House officials in the Kennedy administration were far more responsible for the invasion plan than they admitted at the time. "Assault planning was almost directly in the hands of the Pentagon," he says in the book, titled "Give Us This Day." He also says he was told in mid-1960 that then-Vice President Richard Nixon was the invasion's

"action officer" within the White House during the last days of the Eisenhower administration.

Hunt also says that Adlai E. Stevenson, then ambassador to the United Nations, and who maintained he had been kept in the dark about the invasion, had been briefed "well prior to invasion date."

Hunt says an examination of U-2 spy plane photos showed the Cuban pilots "had claimed more destruction than actually occurred" during a raid by B-26 bombers and a "cleanup strike" was ordered just as CIA deputy director Charles Cabell entered the room. Cabell, who was acting director while the agency's chief, Allen Dulles, was on a speaking engagement, said only one had been authorized and that he would check to see whether another would be permitted.

Hunt says he was told by Bissell that at a hurriedly called meeting later that day attended by President Kennedy, his Policy Planning Council chairman Walt Rostow, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Stevenson, and special assistant Arthur Schlesinger among others, Kennedy decided there was to be no second strike.