

GARDEN CITY (L.I., N.Y.)
 NEWSDAY

Circ.: e. 305,958

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

Date: APR 27 1961

If So Sharp, Why So Wrong?

The CIA insists that its intelligence as to what the Cuban people would do in the event of an invasion by freedom fighters was absolutely, completely, totally 100 per cent right. But it doesn't explain what went wrong, and that takes a lot of explaining. The argument may be that Castro, when the landing occurred, clapped about 50,000 of the best internal revolutionaries in jail. That, however, is only a fraction of the total Cuban population. What about those predictions that the citizenry would arise en masse and throw Castro out? For that matter what about the persistent rumors that Castro agents had infiltrated the invasion force?

The whole Cuban fiasco has something fishy about it. The leaders, it appears, were held en masse incommunicado in a house outside Miami, presumably so they couldn't botch up the skillful generalship of the CIA. Considering the results, it might have been better to let them go ashore with the landing force. Just why the landing force was so tiny is another mystery.

All in all, remembering the mishandling of the U-2 case, the failure of our intelligence to forecast the crisis in South Vietnam and Laos or to gather any advance data on the Russian man-in-space flight, it is apparent that CIA badly needs a shaking up. It may even need to be partitioned. Unlike the British, who separate their intelligence agencies from the military people who execute the final plans, we have them all lumped in one establishment. This, being heavy with military brass, may very likely favor fast action over the cool appraisal that is the lot of the espionage worker.

When a central intelligence agency is doing a good job, even if not a totally good job, it is best for Congress to keep hands off. When it does a series of bad jobs, the latest of which has shaken our standing in the world, then a sober, detailed, even if secret inquiry is overdue.