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Cuban Says CIA Man Pledged

CPYRGHT

U. S. Air Cover

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By ROBERT BOYD
Observer Washington Bureau

... an American aircraft carrier would be 100 miles away from us and there would be 6,000 U.S. Marines on the carrier," he added.

Penabaz said "Bender" made the promise about three months before the invasion.

"If I hadn't thought we were going to have jet air support, I wasn't going to fight with 1,500 men against 300,000 with Russian tanks and jets. That would be just asking us to commit suicide."

Asked why Jose Perez San Roman, the military commander of the brigade, only last week

denied that he had been promised air cover, Penabaz said: "San Roman is in a different position from me. He was ransomed. He feels that he has some obligation."

"I wasn't ransomed. If you send me to a battle and then you betray me, I don't feel any obligation to keep still."

Penabaz said he supported the wishes of Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., and some other congressmen who have sought a new investigation of the Bay of Pigs mess.

He said he was worried that the U.S. government wants to close the Cuban case, and that's why Robert Kennedy finally gave his "official" version of the affair.

Penabaz said that on the last day of the invasion, less than an hour before he escaped in a rubber boat, three U.S. Navy Sabres flew over the beachhead.

"We thought help had finally come. We had hopes. Even Castro's men stopped in their tracks," he said.

He said that if a few Sabres had come 20 or three times and then disappeared,

... been promised the ... calling Robert Kennedy a liar." Penabaz was asked Thursday, "I don't say that," the Cuban said. "Being wrong doesn't mean that you're a liar. Maybe he (Bender) does."

Asked what promised the air cover, Penabaz said, slowly and emphatically:

"It was Mr. Bender who said there would be American U.S. Navy air protection and naval protection from U.S. ships."

Penabaz said the Cuban pilots had recently seen Bender in the Congo, "doing something new."

"I don't know what he's doing, but I'd like to," Penabaz told a press conference he called to "set the record straight" on the troublesome air cover question.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, who conducted the official autopsy into the failure, told the Knight Newspapers Sunday that no U.S. air cover

... He told us an American aircraft carrier would be 100 miles away from us and there would be 6,000 U.S. Marines on the carrier," he added.

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