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Kennedys and Bay of Pigs

On Sept. 9, your paper printed columnist Henry J. Taylor's blistering attack on Robert F. Kennedy titled, "Question--Does N. Y. Need Bobby?"

Mr. Taylor, who never really liked John Kennedy and who likes Robert Kennedy even less, gives all the old and worn reasons why Robert Kennedy should never have been attorney general or anything else and why, of course, he should never be a senator from New York.

Taylor's attack bears comment for the simple reason that it is not fair journalism. Taylor rode the sad course of the half-truth and did so with full knowledge of his deed. For a columnist of his stature, this is unforgivable.

Specifically, Taylor gleefully blames again the brothers Kennedy for the Bay of Pigs catastrophe. I will agree with him only to the extent of acknowledging that if John Kennedy were to blame, so was Robert Kennedy.

But Taylor knows the background of the Bay of Pigs decision and therefore knows that, although John Kennedy later took the sole blame for it, the fault was neither his nor Bobby's, at least to anything like the extent Taylor would have one believe.

As far back as November 1960, when Kennedy became the President-elect, he was briefed by Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell of the training of Cuban refugees in Florida, Texas and Guatemala. Intelligence experts reported to him that an invasion of Cuba by these refugees would cause on the island a mass uprising which could overthrow Castro. These experts rated the chances of success of such an uprising as being better than that for the plan which in 1954 had successfully overthrown Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala.

"What experts?" Mr. Taylor might ask. Well, other than the CIA men on the job, the experts whose job it was to advise Kennedy were Army Gen. Yhman Lemnitzer, Adm. Arleigh Burke and Air Force Gen. Thomas White, all men of peerless military reputation and all of whom sat right across the table from Kennedy. These military advisers, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Pentagon and the CIA selected the Bay of Pigs as the invasion site, armed and trained the impatient rebels and equipped them with B-26s.

John F Kennedy and, indeed, Robert Kennedy followed the advice of these experts just as you do the advice of your trusted doctor. The only objection raised to the invasion was raised by Arkansas Sen. William Fulbright and his objection didn't concern the military expediency of it so much as the moral concept.

On April 4, 1961, before the invasion on April 17, Kennedy's experts were again polled and Kennedy learned that none of them really doubted the success of the invasion and all of them agreed that it should go as planned. Fulbright was at the meeting on that day and even he had softened his objection to it.

We all now know that the Bay of Pigs thing was a monumental mistake but, really, isn't Mr Taylor relishing in the brilliance of his own hindsight? As John Kennedy himself remarked later, "All the mysteries about the Bay of Pigs have been solved now but one--how could everybody involved have thought such a plan would succeed. I don't know the answer, and I don't know anybody else who does."

If Mr. Taylor knows the answer, let him speak up. Otherwise, at least let him be fair toward Robert Kennedy in this regard.

ASA M. ROUSE, Walton, Ky.

RICHMOND, VA.
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Sees Cuban Crisis Politically Timed

In all sincerity, I am convinced the missile affair in Cuba was politically motivated by the Kennedy-led liberal establishment, regardless of the defensive article by Charles Bartlett, September 15, in your Times-Dispatch and the counter claims by Hubert Humphrey on CBS News September 15. The timing was perfect to upset the conservative movement, which without question would have made considerable inroads into the liberal representation in Congress in the congressional election of November, 1962.

On April 4, 1962, from the Congressional Record in "Military Cold War Education and Speech Review Policies, Part 4," Pg. 1456. Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker testified before a congressional subcommittee in these words: "The word has certainly been passed around that there are four missile bases completed in Cuba, even though they are not armed or manned."

Then, in the fall of that same year, President Kennedy appeared before the American people on television and said he knew of no missile bases in Cuba. Of course, it was convenient to know of these bases two weeks before the congressional election.

Now, the President had the CIA of the United States at his disposal, plus millions of the taxpayers' dollars, so if General Walker had this information on April 4, 1962, it is safe to assume the President also had this same information.

With the above facts in mind, I feel it is safe to assume that Barry Goldwater is telling the truth when he says the missile affair was politically timed. Barry Goldwater can be the only choice of an informed America.

FORREST E. HAMILTON.
Powhatan.