



## Guideline

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

Washington.

It is now two months since the unsuccessful invasion of Cuba, but it is doubtful if either the Kennedy Administration or the Republican opposition has really learned the lessons of that sad adventure.

The first lesson is that the problem in Cuba, at this stage, is political, not military. If the situation in the island becomes promising for a revolution against Castro, then outsiders can give military assistance just as Cuban exiles, with tacit American approval, once gave such assistance to Castro. But until the political struggle inside Cuba is going favorably, military action can do no good.

A second conclusion is that only Cubans can plan and carry out a successful political offensive against Castro. This cannot be done by faceless men in the Central Intelligence Agency. Only Cubans can redeem Cuba's freedom.

Third, in deciding which Cuban exile faction should receive our principal support, the U. S. government should observe the lesson of past social revolutions in other countries and encourage the faction that is most radical and revolutionary. No one is going to risk death and torture in Cuba today to bring back to power the sugar kings and the American utility companies.

The only ideal that can arouse hope and action is one that combines the social gains of the Cuban revolution with personal freedom. Castro has betrayed his own revolution. The Cuban exiles who want "the revolution without Castro" are the only group who can capture for our side the fervor and idealism of the revolution. Neither Cuban reactionaries who are the equivalent of John Birch Society members nor middle class middle-of-the-roads can beat Castro at his own game in a revolutionary situation.

\* \* \*

President Kennedy has not yet laid down a policy guideline that would make it indisputably clear that he has taken to heart these lessons of his April mistake. He has not made a choice between political methods and military methods. He has not brought the CIA fully under his control and excluded its politically inept operatives from interfering in Cuban exile affairs. And because he has not made these first two decisions, the U. S. and the anti-Castro Cubans have been inhibited in prosecuting vigorous political warfare against the Cuban dictator.

Throughout the last Presidential campaign, Mr. Kennedy did an uneasy balancing act on Cuba. He would, on the one hand, praise former Ambassador Earl E. T. Smith, his personal friend, for his early warnings against Castro and criticize the Eisenhower Administration for not heeding them. Then, on the other hand, he would denounce the Eisenhower Administration for being too friendly to Batista—which is exactly the course Ambassador Smith followed. Moreover, Mr. Kennedy, in his speeches would make dark threats of military action against Castro, a course urged by his friend Sen. Smathers (La.). Then he would deliver passages suggested by his friend Chester Bowles arguing that a program of social reform was the only way to combat Castroism in Latin America.

This tension in Mr. Kennedy's thinking about Cuba is yet to be resolved. Sen. Smathers is still a friend and still to be considered a source of authority. For too long the Administration has been prapprasing Hamlet and saying, "To do and not to do—O that is our policy."

Unfortunately, the public can hope for no ally in our debate on this program from the loyal opposition. For the new Republican national chairman, now chairs the anti-invasion would have been a success if there had been proper air cover as planned by the Eisenhower Administration. No amount of American air support would have rescued that disaster if Miller had not object.