
good shepard movie THE GOOD SHEPHERD AT THE BAY OF PIGS -- By Jane Franklin

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD AT THE BAY OF PIGS January 23, 2007 By Jane Franklin Before the opening credits, The Good Shepherd shows us glimpses of a murky and mysterious audiovisual tape. As the movie unreels, layers keep unfolding, like a brilliant combination of Antonioni's fictional photographs in Blow-Up and Zapruder's real-life tape of the Kennedy assassination. But embedded in the audiotape is an historical fiction about the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs (Bahía de Cochinos) that the filmmakers themselves fail to comprehend. Yet the audiotape of lovers whispering secrets about Bahía de Cochinos is a fascinating invitation to penetrate the core of the Central Intelligence Agency, and The Good Shepherd delivers. Viewers at 2,250 screens all over the United States get to see the CIA as a toxic swamp of moral corruption and psychological depravity. After it leaves the multiplex nearest you, the film will be seen again or for the first time by more people on DVD. It will travel abroad to foreign audiences, many of them in countries victimized by the CIA. To portray the cult of secrecy of our secret government, The Good Shepherd makes the April 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion the fulcrum for its revelations. In the first scene we find a man meticulously placing a model of a ship into a jug while listening to a radio broadcast of President John F. Kennedy at a press conference before the invasion. The man is CIA official Edward Wilson, based loosely on James Jesus Angleton, CIA director of counterintelligence at the time of the invasion, and on Richard Bissell, Jr., the CIA head of the Bay of Pigs operation. He hears Kennedy promise what both he and the president know is a lie: no Americans will be involved in any action against Cuba. Already the supposed super secret invasion had become an open secret. The whole world was waking up to the reality that the CIA had planned an invasion of Cuba and trained the Cuban expatriates as their proxy army. With their invasion imminent, Wilson and other CIA agents head from Washington to a beachfront location closer to Cuba to be ready for rapid, victorious transit to Havana. From their headquarters, we experience the invasion and the quick defeat. Instead of having a celebratory lunch on the turf of El Comandante as they had anticipated, the agents are faced with the reality of Cuba's defenses. On the morning of the invasion, April 17, U.S. B-26 planes (painted to look like Cuba's B-26s) are shot down in a surprise attack by real Cuban planes. We see documentary footage of a ship burning, Prime Minister Fidel Castro arriving at the invasion site, invaders surrendering, and Castro announcing victory. It's over, less than 72 hours after it began. The huge audience for this movie has just watched actual scenes of what is arguably the first great defeat of U.S. imperialism. Wilson stands on the beach staring across the water toward Cuba in stunned disbelief. We hear, They knew where to find us. This becomes the central mystery of the movie: Who told the Cubans that the invasion would take place at the Bahía de Cochinos? These intelligence agents, arrogant even in defeat, believe that a leak about the landing site led to Cuba's victory. On cue, a package containing the audiotape arrives from an unknown source (later we learn it came from Soviet intelligence). The CIA Technical Service begins deciphering. Their expertise is standard espionage-movie fare

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