

# MORE RUSSIANS PULL OUT OF CUBA

Kennedy Says 4,000 Left in  
March — 12,000 Troops  
Believed to Remain

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WASHINGTON, April 3— President Kennedy reported at his news conference today that approximately 4,000 Soviet troops departed from Cuba in March, in addition to the 5,000 men who left last November.

This, Mr. Kennedy said, "still leaves some thousands on the island" and "we hope they are going to be withdrawn." [Question 3, Page 10.]

Information made available here indicated that hundreds of Soviet troops were going aboard ship in Havana today.

President Kennedy's estimates suggested that 12,000 to 13,000 Soviet troops remain on the island. At the height of last October's crisis the number of Soviet troops in Cuba was put at 22,000.

## The Principal Goal

The withdrawal of as many Soviet troops as possible from Cuba remains the principal goal of United States policy in the Caribbean. This point was reaffirmed in a diplomatic note delivered to the Foreign Ministry in Moscow this morning.

The note was primarily designed to reject Soviet charges that the United States was responsible for two raids last month by Cuban rebels against Soviet ships in Cuban harbors.

It declared that "the United States Government categorically denies this charge" and emphasized that Washington was opposed to these raids and had been taking stern measures to prevent their organization on United States territory.

The State Department's note

Continued on Page 3, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

and President Kennedy's subsequent remarks in effect linked the question of the rebel raids and of the continued presence of Soviet troops in Cuba.

The note said that "in taking vigorous action to prevent misuse of its territory, the Government of the United States trusts that the government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics will not misinterpret such action as indicating any change in United States opposition to Soviet military involvement in Cuba."

Discussing the problem of rebel raids from another angle, President Kennedy remarked that these attacks not only were "ineffective" and did not "represent any real blow" at Premier Fidel Castro but the raids also might help to justify the maintenance of Soviet troops on the island.

"It gives additional incentive for the Soviet Union to maintain their personnel in Cuba, to send additional units to protect their merchant ships," the President said.

## U. S. Position Underlined

Mr. Kennedy's comments underlined once more that the Administration's overriding concern in dealing with the Cuban problem was to avoid situations in which heightened military tension with the Soviet Union might again emerge.

While the Administration has been steadily maintaining its position of sympathy for the foes of Premier Castro, its policies have emphasized the President's belief that Cuba is a factor in the United States-Soviet relationship.

Speaking of the dangers that could result from the rebel raids, Mr. Kennedy criticized raiding because "it is not controlled, no one in a position of responsibility knows about it, so that it will bring reprisals possibly on American ships."

"We would then be expected to take military action to protect our ships, which may bring counteraction," he said.

"I think that when the issues of war and peace hang in the balance, the United States Government and authorities should when American territories are being used—have a position of some control on the matter."

Mr. Kennedy said that he wanted to contrast the raids—though he said that he understood the motives of the Cubans carrying out the attacks—with the actions of other Cubans who have joined the United States Army.

He said that 400 to 500 members of the exile brigade that participated in the 1961 Cuban invasion and were liberated last December had taken advantage

of the offer to enlist in United States armed forces.

Turning to other Latin-American problems, Mr. Kennedy acknowledged that the United

States did not have a "consistent policy" on recognizing regimes that have taken power forcibly, "because the circumstances sometimes are inconsistent."

Referring specifically to the case of Guatemala, where a military regime took over last Sunday, the President said that he had not yet determined whether it would be in the interest of the United States to recognize the new regime at this time.

## Exile Accuses U. S.

A charge that Cubans have "never received real help from the United States" was made yesterday by a spokesman for the Cuban Student Directorate, an exile organization of former Havana University students with headquarters in Miami.

Luis Fernandez Rocha, secretary general for the group, issued a statement in which he declared that his organization "demands that the United

States and the rest of the free world, recognize our right to fight for Cuba's freedom."

Mr. Fernandez Rocha asserted that efforts to overthrow the regime of Premier Fidel Castro "have always culminated in abandonment, treachery and broken promises."

"The United States has unjustly imposed imprisonment on some of our Cuban leaders and some of them are still confined to their homes," he said. "Jointly with England, the United States has effected a blockade to stop the attacks against the Communist regime in Cuba and are, thus, strengthening the Communist position."

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Times P. 1  
4/4/63