

8-1
4/20/70

Castro Forces, Exiles Battle

Cuban 'Guerrilla

MIAMI, Fla. (AP) — A weekend battle in Cuba between exile invaders and Fidel Castro's forces is the beginning of guerrilla war in the mountains of the Communist island, a spokesman for an anti-Castro group was quoted as saying today.

The spokesman for the militant group, Alpha 66, said

several invading forces landed on Cuban shores during the past several days.

Castro announced yesterday via Havana radio that six men, including four of his own troops, were killed in the beach fighting. He blamed the invasion on "mercenaries coming from the United States equipped with modern

automatic arms of the Yankee Army."

A SPOKESMAN FOR Alpha 66 told the Miami News that Friday's landings in Cuba were designed to start warfare in the mountains of easternmost Oriente Province.

The spokesmen said the invaders' friends and relatives

waited anxiously at Alpha 66 headquarters in Miami's "Little Havana" sector for further news.

The News said the nucleus of the landing parties came from a group that had a January invasion foiled by rough seas. That band of men found refuge at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. One man was lost in the ocean and many of the arms sank when two small boats overturned, the News said.

CAPT. VICENTE Mendez, 39, led the ill-fated group of 16 in January. The News said Mendez also led the latest assault after a training session deep in the swampy Florida Everglades. There was no word on the jumping off point since such a departure from

War'

Florida would have likely violated neutrality laws, the newspaper said.

The News said it appeared many invaders were still at large on the Cuban island just 90 miles from Key West.

Mendez' wife, Dulce Maria, waited with the others at Alpha 66 headquarters. Her eyes were puffy from crying. She said, "I'm very worried. To tell you the truth, I'm desperate. I only hope that he (Mendez) was not one of those captured and that he is continuing to fight."

Castro said in a communique broadcast yesterday by Havana Radio the armed men landed on Cuba's east coast Friday—the ninth anniversary of the abor-

(Turn to Page 6, Col. 6)

M

APRIL 20, 1970

Cuban Guerrilla War Reported by Exiles

Continued from Front Page

border patrol captured two prisoners soon after the landing, "seizing two automatic rifles, 2,000 bullets and numerous packages of plastic explosives."

A "group of mercenaries coming from the United States, equipped with modern automatic arms of the Yankee Army, landed near the Yumuri River 14 miles east of the city of Baracoa Friday, April 17, at dawn," he said.

BARACOA is in Oriente Province, near the eastern tip of Cuba.

Castro said his troops and

border patrol captured two prisoners soon after the landing, "seizing two automatic rifles, 2,000 bullets and numerous packages of plastic explosives."

A second battle occurred Saturday, Castro said, and "four courageous combatants of the revolution lost their lives and two were gravely wounded."

"During the action, two mercenaries were killed and a third one was taken prisoner," he said.

"A HUNT for the mercenaries continues."