Cuban ship seizure rankles
Navy on the way

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. (UPI) — President Nixon ended his cruise on Tuesday afternoon with his friend Bebe Rebozo and flew home to his villa and, for some reason, a rumor began flying that a shooting incident ended the outing so abruptly.

But Secret Service and White House officials categorically denied the rumor.

SCENIC ROUTE
The boat trip ended on Coco Lobo Island on Elliott's Key 18 miles south of his Key Biscayne villa. He returned to his compound by helicopter because of the pressure of time and he wanted to take an aerial view of the keys, according to deputy press secretary Gerald Warren.

The whisking of the President from the island by helicopter set off rumors that he was being evacuated after a shot had been fired.

Jack Warren, public information officer for the Secret Service said "there was no activity that would endanger the President of the United States."

He also "categorically denied" that anyone had been taken into custody.

Mr. Warren's first knowledge that Mr. Nixon was on Mr. Rebozo's houseboat, also named "Coco Lobi II," came when he was asked by reporters to check reports of the incident.

COMMUNICATIONS GOOD
Presidential Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler, assuring reporters that nothing unusual had happened, said there had been "a slipup in communications."

The outing lasted for about two hours.
It was the second day in a row that Mr. Nixon had deserted his compound with Mr. Rebozo without keeping his aides informed of his whereabouts.

Mr. Nixon and Mr. Rebozo took a drive on Thursday afternoon to Coral Gables and around the University of Miami campus. Reporters were informed after the motor trip was under way and Mr. Ziegler told them that he was unable to determine the President's location.

Mr. Ziegler also informed newsmen yesterday that the President also had taken a boat trip Thursday afternoon which he had not told them about earlier.

"It was a nice boat ride over there — and nothing more," Mr. Ziegler said.

GUN SHOT DENIED
Nixon outing cut short as rumors fly

MIAMI (UPI) — U.S. Navy and Air Force — armed and ready to intervene if necessary to protect American commercial vessels in the Caribbean — are on special alert today. A special task force is expected in the Caribbean later today.

The alert was called after Cuba said it would not free an American captain machine gunned and captured with his Panamanian ship.

The State Department warned Havana that it would not tolerate any more attacks on Americans on the high seas.

NIXON REACTS
From his Key Biscayne, Fla. villa, President Nixon demanded that Cuba release Capt. Jose Villa, 33, captured along with his crew Wednesday night when his 1,400-ton ship Johnny Express, which flew the Panamanian flag, was attacked by two Cuban torpedo boats in the Bahamas.

Havana radio, quoting an editorial in the government-controlled newspaper Granma, said it would not "take a single backward step" and that Mr. Nixon's demand for Capt. Villa's release would be "flatly rejected."

Mr. Nixon met Thursday with the wife and children of Villa, whose 235-foot cargo vessel was strafed and seized in international waters about 130 miles off Cuba. There were 13 other crewmen aboard and several of them, including Villa apparently were wounded in the machinegun and mortar attack.

Cuba claimed the vessel was a "pirate ship" being used by CIA.

Cuba said thru the Granma editorial: "The hysterical statements and shouting of the U.S. government will not make the Cuban people take a single step backward in the determination to face the aggressors on whatever ground is necessary."

SHORE LEAVE
"Nixon, the Pentagon, the CIA and other Imperialist hierarchies are jackals are abundantly aware of this. Nixon's demands, blackmail and threats will be flatly rejected."

After the State Department-warning that all further attacks on unmarked commercial vessels in the Caribbean would be intolerable, the Pentagon said it was taking unspecified defensive measures. It was learned that U.S. Air Force and Navy fighter planes were placed on alert and that sailors were recalled from shore leave.

Forces for the Caribbean alert could be withdrawn from the U.S. Navy base at Guan-