

John Causten Currey

Daily Okla 2/26/68

Communist Forces Masterful At Pulling Sudden Shift Scene

FOR years, the Communist forces around the world have kept the non-Communist and anti-Communist nations off balance by the ability to suddenly shift the scene of the main battle. It has been as if they were masters of a three ring circus and could shift the spotlight to a new act anytime the old one became dull or got in trouble. Thus when they were afraid they had almost gone too far in Berlin or Cuba, they could order riots, "revolts," or border strife in Cyprus, the Congo, or Southeast Asia.

After brief self-congratulation that the one crisis was over, the free world turned its attention to the latest, and thus was always on the defensive, reacting to Communist moves. The Reds have grown more confident, and more dangerous, with each such successful offensive.

Some such switch seems about ready involving South Viet Nam and the Indonesia-Malaysia, crisis. In Viet Nam, the Reds do not expect they will have to back down this time, thanks in part to America's home-grown appeasers, who are screaming loudly for an "arrangement" with the aggressors.

It is already clear, though, that however the flames in Southeast Asia are to be damped, their reduction to banked embers would not grant our harried president much peace. The Cuba inferno has been restoked, and at a prod from Moscow could erupt into an explosion of troubles.

Cuban exile reports, and a report from the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba, have piled up on this

desk during the past few weeks. Journalists who have checked out some of these items have reported during the past week, in pained terms, that this time the exiles are right. (The same thing happened during the summer of 1962.) From Washington, the Allen-Scott report said last week that U. S. air surveillance of Cuba has dropped to the vanishing point. They noted that U-2 planes had been shifted from covering Cuba to checking North Viet Nam.

From Puerto Rico, Victor Riesel published confirmation from labor sources of the CCFC estimate that there are now at least 26,000 Soviet regular troops in Cuba, perhaps 40,000 or more. By contrast, we have an estimated 23,000 servicemen in South Viet Nam, and no regular units as such are included, except for naval crews and some service and support organizations.

The Cuba-based forces are not trained and equipped to cow the Cuban people. They are attack forces. What will they attack? Well, some are missilemen in position to immobilize U. S. forces that might try to interfere with any Cuba-based adventures. The rest are ready to launch a "war of liberation" anywhere from Haiti to Venezuela or British Guiana, or from Mexico to Panama and Colombia. There are a half-dozen primary targets considered most likely to be hit suddenly.

They could even be used to divert U. S. efforts from Southeast Asia and Indonesia. In any case, they are dangerous — too dangerous to be unwatched for an hour.