

## Crises in Viet Nam Overshadow Soviet Military Buildup in Cuba

**S**AN JUAN, Puerto Rico: — Unbeknown to the American public, which has been absorbed in the Asian crisis, the Soviet Union has rebuilt its forces in Cuba into a powerful mobile army, air force and navy.

The Russians now command many squads of missiles, swift MIGS and groups of surface and underwater fighting craft nesting in newly built "fishing" pens along the Cuban coast.

All this and many more startling details of the new Soviet buildup are disclosed in a dramatic memorandum recently dispatched by the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba to a small number of leading Americans.

The vital importance of this communication lies in the prominence and responsibility of the committee's 42 members — among whom are men linked to global intelligence services, labor leaders with far flung contacts on several continents and the nuclear scientist Edward Teller.

Furthermore this document has just been checked by this column with seafarers who ship in and out of the many Caribbean islands and with members of the Cuban Refugee Labor Federation, who have been conferring here these past few days.

These men, who slip into Cuba regularly, confirm the reports of the free Cuba committee which has its headquarters in Washington.

According to the committee, the Russians have quietly beefed up their land forces to a minimum of 26,000 Soviet regular troops. There are sources which say the Red force runs as high as 40,000 troops.

The free Cuba committee states that there are now inside Cuba:

One motorized infantry division, composed of some 16,000 to 18,000 shock troops.

Four tank battalions — light, medium, heavy.

Four battalions of "Frog" missiles capable of mounting nuclear warheads.

Twenty-one ground-to-air missile installations, manned by 6,000 Soviet and satellite-bloc soldiers and military technicians.

At least 150 SA-2 missiles, controlled by some 2,000 Soviet soldiers.

These men also handle radar and missile detection systems. There are 150 MIGs — types 15, 17, 19, 21.

Backing them up are Ilyushin 14s and Ilyushin 28s operating out of three underground hangar systems.

Thus, says the Free Cuba Committee, the Soviets again are on a "collision course" with the U.S.

Anti-Castro labor exiles who have just come here from western hemispheric parleys in Central America, report that the new Soviet concentration of forces came after a secret pact between Moscow and Havana some time last year. The Soviets intensified their buildup after turning Nikita Khrushchev into an unperson.

Since then the Russians have skillfully exploited the bearded figure of Fidel Castro by exalting his image through their extraordinary propaganda machine in Latin America.

This campaign has been so successful that throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America the talk no longer is of Moscow Communism, or Sino-Communism or Mao or Lenin, but of Castro Communism.

Last November the politburos of the Soviet's 22 Latin Communist parties were summoned to a special plenum session in Havana. They were told that "Fidel" would be the nominal Communist leader from then on.

In addition to handling Fidel this propaganda triumph, the Soviets agreed to supply the necessary equipment for terrorist attacks in Latin America — especially against U. S. installations — much in the grim manner of the Viet Cong guerrillas.

The Soviets are willing to humor the Castros as long as the Cuban government does not make it awkward for Moscow to maintain a big military base on the island.