

Officials Still Studying Castro's Offer To Allow Cubans to Depart for U.S.

The State Department said yesterday it is willing to give "most careful consideration" to Premier Fidel Castro's offer to allow a large-scale migration of Cubans to the United States.

But, the State Department added, the Cuban proposal would have to be made through proper diplomatic channels.

Diplomatic sources said this U.S. reply was intended to gauge the seriousness and intent of the offer made by Castro in a Havana speech Tuesday night. Castro, these sources said, is being told to "put up or shut up."

In making the formal U.S. reply, State Department Press Officer Robert J. McCloskey described the Cuban proposal

as "vague and ambiguous." He added:

"The terms of the proposal and the form and the tone in which it was presented raise doubts about its seriousness."

Underlying McCloskey's statement was puzzlement in U.S. diplomatic circles about whether Castro had been making anti-American propaganda or whether he really wants to get rid of a large number of Cubans.

Among the things left unclear by Castro's Tuesday speech was whether the offer applied only to Cubans with relatives in the United States

or whether he was implying that anyone who wished to leave Cuba was free to do so.

Most of his remarks were coupled with references to those with relatives in this country. However, his speech also contained hints that others opposed to his regime would be allowed to go.

McCloskey was asked what would happen if some Cubans left the island in boats provided by the Castro government while discussions were in progress. The United States, he answered, would make its decision if and when that occurred.