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Herald

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U.S. Is Cutting Aid To Cuba Traders

Britain, France Among Nations Hit by Policy

By Murrey Marder
Staff Reporter

The United States yesterday announced its first retaliatory action to cut off American aid to nations that trade with Cuba.

Britain, France and Yugoslavia were hit first in a cut-off that will "terminate" relatively small military training or military sales credit programs now running about \$100,000 each.

Bigger targets, financially, are Spain and Morocco. They were put on notice that no new foreign aid funds will be "obligated" for them until they provide "further clarification" of their policies on trade with Cuba. In the current fiscal year Spain is getting about \$31.8 million in military aid; Morocco's mili-

tary aid figure, in lesser millions, is unpublished but Morocco also received \$21.6 million in economic aid.

Some Start To Comply

Fifteen other nations whose ships have gone to Cuba since 1962 are said to have begun actions to comply with United States restrictions on trade with Cuba.

By its move yesterday, the United States inevitably underlined the widespread disunity in Western ranks over East-West trade.

Last weekend British Prime Minister Douglas - Home, after conferences with President Johnson, publicly announced Britain's determination to seek expanded trade in non-strategic goods with the Soviet bloc and Cuba, over United States objections. With the governments in both London and Washington facing elections, the politics of the clash happens to serve opposing political interests. In the case of Cuban trade, particularly, the British public generally favors it; the reverse is true here.

The Johnson Administra-

tion's action yesterday was taken in conformity with an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, passed in December.

That law banned aid to nations that, after Feb. 14, failed

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to take "appropriate steps" to prevent their ships and aircraft from carrying equipment, materials or commodities to or from Cuba.

A State Department's announcement of yesterday's decisions was cloaked in unusually ambiguous phrases which officials said they were either unable or forbidden to clarify.

One of the reasons for the ambiguity was that the United States action is part of a direct pressure campaign. In the case of Spain, in particular, where the United States maintains bases for its Strategic Air Command, Spanish reaction to the United States move is uncertain. Spain has been engaged in negotiations to sell fishing boats to the Cuban regime of Premier Fidel Castro.

There also were wide discrepancies in the information available yesterday about the exact amount of military assistance that will be cut off to Britain, France and Yugoslavia. Part of such information is normally secret, but in addition there were conflicting reports about how

much aid or military credit was "obligated" to these nations before the Feb. 14 cutoff date.

The official statement by State Department Press Officer Richard I. Phillips said only that "with respect to the United Kingdom, France and Yugoslavia, the very small residual military training and sales arrangements involved are being terminated."

United States military training for Britain and France has been tapering off to the \$50,000 to \$100,000-a-year range. Yugoslavia has been getting only sales credits for spare parts for American equipment supplied in earlier years. What is affected under the foreign aid act, however, is only new commitments and not past delivery agreements. The shipment of surplus American farm products, Export-Import Bank loans, or operations of the Peace Corps are all exempt from the present ban.

Most American aid now goes not to Europe, but to the underdeveloped nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America.