

Castro Blames Havana Attack On U. S. Boats

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Machine Guns Rake Palace Of President

HAVANA, Cuba (AP) — Two small boats raked the Havana waterfront with machine-gun fire early Sunday and Prime Minister Fidel Castro blamed the attack on the U.S. Government and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

In Washington, the State Department declined comment on Castro's claim.

He said one of the boats aimed its fire at President Osvaldo Dorticos' waterfront residence. Most of the bullets slammed into the nearby national aquarium.

Havana officials said no one was hurt and both boats escaped.

It was not known if Dorticos, a figurehead in the Castro Communist regime, was home at the time.

The second boat sprayed its .50-caliber bullets across Malecon Drive near the downtown area into a line of apartment buildings behind Maceo Park. The brief strafings occurred in the darkness, about 2:30 a.m.

In a nationally televised speech, Castro bluntly accused the United States of authoring the attack.

(Cuban exile sources in Miami, however, claimed credit for the raid and said it was the work of the Cuban Representation in Exile — RECE. A RECE spokesman said the two boats returned safely to their base

"somewhere in the Caribbean." He promised details later.

Castro spoke at graduation exercises for 400 doctors and dentists who hiked into the mountains with him for the ceremony atop Mt. Cuba, the island's second-highest mountain. Mt. Cuba is in the Sierra Maestra Mountains of eastern Cuba, where his revolution began.

He called the Sunday morning attack "a work of desperation" by "our enemies who are suffering defeat after defeat in every field." He listed one such defeat as his announcement that anyone who wished might leave Cuba for the United States.

"It is necessary to say that it was not the imperialists who opened the doors," Castro declared. "It was we who opened the doors with the blow of truths spoken opportunely."

The strafing attack was over so quickly it apparently awoke few seafront residents. Witnesses of the Maceo Park shooting said they watched tracer bullets come flashing in from the sea out were unable to see the boat itself.

The attack in the area of Dorticos' home came first and was

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followed within minutes by the second strafing.

Meanwhile the Associated Press reported from Key West, Fla. that a new phase of the Cuban refugee movement went forward Sunday as U.S. government-chartered craft brought the vanguard of possibly 100,000 persons.

The Coast Guard reported the excursion boat Skipper K was taking aboard a second refugee load at Matanzas, 90 miles south of Key West. The 85-foot boat brought 108 Cubans late Saturday night.

One, a 56-year-old army lieutenant, during pre-Castro days, clenched his fists and said, "I want to go back to Cuba and fight against Fidel Castro. But I need help. I can't do it alone."

His daughter's husband could be drafted into Castro's army. He was denied permission to leave Cuba because he is 23, military age.

"It was terrible to leave him behind," said the daughter, Victoria Blanco. "In all, we left 14 relatives in Cuba."

First of the U.S.-transported refugees to land, Josefina Isabel de Rosario, 76, walked with home-made crutches. She had a leg amputated a year ago because of gangrene.

"Thank God I am on free soil," she said.

The seaborne operation follows helter-skelter small boat shuttles that brought 3,000 refugees at the cost of a number of drownings in the rough waters en route.

After a waiting list of 2,000 is cleared, U.S.-chartered planes are to start flying other refugees to Miami at the rate of 3,000 to 4,000 monthly. The Cuban Refugee Center in Miami said new arrivals will be transferred rapidly to cities throughout the United States.

Such a relocation program has proceeded for some time. Fewer than 100,000 of some 250,000 refugees who arrived on their own prior to the new phase of the movement remain in Miami.