

Cuban Communists Acknowledge Role In Venezuela Raid

AP 5/19/67
HAVANA, May 18 (AP) —

The Communist party acknowledged today that three Cubans had helped a guerrilla band land in Venezuela, and said it would continue to aid guerrillas all over the world.

A statement from the party's Central Committee declared, "We will not avoid combat."

The statement declared in effect that the Cubans captured in Venezuela had merely been doing their part as good revolutionaries.

"Imperialism never needs excuses to commit its crimes," it said. "Nor does the Cuban revolution need to ask its permission or for forgiveness to fulfill its duty of solidarity with all the revolutionaries of the world, among them the Venezuelan revolutionaries, because the justification of the acts of revolutionaries is the system of imperialism itself."

Charge Made on Friday

The statement was Cuba's first official reaction to the announcement last Friday by Venezuela that she had captured two Cubans and killed two in a landing May 8. Cuba said only that three Cubans had been involved. The statement identified them as Antonio Briones, 27 years old, Manuel Gil Castellanos, 25, and Pedro Cabra Torres, 29.

It denied that any of the Cubans were members of the regular army.

"We are lending and will continue to lend aid to all those who fight against imperialism in whatever part of the world," the statement said. It bore no date, but the 100-member Central Committee is known to have met in Havana yesterday.

The statement accused the United States of pushing Venezuela into making threats against Cuba by taking the case to the Organization of American States. [Venezuela announced earlier this week that she would ask for a special session of foreign ministers of the Organization of American States to hear her charges of aggression against Cuba.]

"Between the peoples of Venezuela and Cuba there will never be war," the statement declared. "It doesn't matter what the O.A.S. and its masters in Washington decide."