

# U.S. tells of Castro, Shaba link

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON — Cuban leader Fidel Castro informed the United States four days after Katangan rebels invaded Zaire that he had prior knowledge of the attack and tried to head it off, Senate sources told the Associated Press last night.

Castro's statement appears to support President Carter's claim that Cuba was aware of the invasion plans but casts doubt on his assertion that the Cubans "obviously did nothing" to prevent the bloody attack on Shaba Province.

Sen. Dick Clark, D-Iowa, chairman of the Senate foreign relations subcommittee on Africa, referred to the cable in a telephone interview yesterday.

"The thing that I find disturbing is that the president didn't bring it (the cable) out and let the Congress and public decide (on Castro's truthfulness)," he said.

Other Senate sources, who asked not to be named, said Castro made his comments on May 17 to Lyle F. Lane, the top U.S. diplomat in Havana, who relayed the contents of his remarks to the State Department in a secret cable.

Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., read a copy of the cable to a closed meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Friday as CIA director Stansfield Turner was briefing the panel on evidence to support Carter's claim of Cuban involvement, the sources said.

Turner confirmed its contents and said it had not been disclosed previously because administration officials did not believe Castro was telling the truth, the sources added.

The sources said Castro told Lane that he learned early in April of the impending invasion by Angola-based Katangan rebels into their former homeland, now known as Shaba Province.

Castro claimed that he immediately approached Angolan leader

— Turn to Page 19, Col. 1

—From Page 1

Agostino Neto to try to prevent the invasion, but failed to block the attack partly because Neto was ill and staying in the Soviet Union, the sources said.

The Katangans invaded Shaba on May 13, capturing the copper-mining city of Kolwezi and killing hundreds of black and white civilians.

The rebels were eventually dislodged from Kolwezi and driven back into Angola by a combined force of French, Belgian and Zairian troops who received U.S. logistical support.

On May 25 — one week after Castro met with Lane — Carter denounced Cuban involvement with the attack.

"We believe that Cuba had known of the Katangan plan to invade and obviously did nothing to restrain them from crossing the border," the president said.

The sources said the Carter administration offered other evidence to support its claim that the Cubans were involved although none was described as conclusive.

"If I had to bet my life, I'd probably say the Cubans were involved, but if I had to prove it in

Clark, in a comment typical of the committee's reaction.

On Friday, McGovern said Turner had produced circumstantial evidence based on "doubtful" sources.

Sen. John Sparkman, D-Ala., chairman of the committee, said "the weight of (the evidence) is substantial but by no means conclusive."

As early as March, according to documents obtained by United Press International, Carter had asked Venezuela and Brazil to help put pressure on Cuba to end its interventions in Africa.

Carter made the requests during his March 28-31 visits to the two South American countries.

The documents showed that Carter was advised to make his views known about Cuban activity especially clear to Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez who, they said, "distrusts the Cubans because of their interventionist activity in Venezuela in the early 1960s."

The documents are foreign policy briefing papers, some marked "secret," prepared for Carter for the trip that also took him to Nigeria and Liberia.

Carter was advised to tell Perez that Washington was interested in his help in ending Cuban military activities in Africa, presumably through diplomatic pressure.

Specifically, Carter was advised to seek Perez's views on whether unchecked Cuban intervention in Africa later could lead to new Cuban adventures in the Western Hemisphere.

For his talks in Brasilia with President Ernesto Geisel, Carter was advised to stress both Soviet and Cuban intervention in Africa. Carter was told to make it clear to Geisel that U.S.-Cuban rapprochement has come to a virtual standstill because of Africa.

Brazil — which has a growing interest in African affairs, particularly in the Portuguese-speaking nation of Angola where Cuban presence is highly visible — has no diplomatic relations with the Havana government. Brazilian pressure therefore would have to be applied through the United Nations or other countries.

In a related development, the Soviet press continued its attack on Zbigniew Brzezinski, saying Carter's national security adviser has invented "a strange code" of detente, imposing Western value judgments on the Soviet Union.