

Pentagon to Continue Taiwan Troop Pullout

A government spokesman said yesterday the United States would continue to withdraw troops from Taiwan in accordance with the 1972 Shanghai agreement signed by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai and President Nixon.

The United States has 2,500 servicemen—none of them combat troops—on Taiwan, compared with 10,000 who were there when Nixon visited China in 1972.

State Department spokesman John Trattner neither confirmed nor denied a report in yesterday's Boston Globe that President Ford had promised Chinese Deputy Premier Teng Hsiao-ping last year that the U.S. troop level on Taiwan would be cut in half.

Other sources, however, confirmed that President Ford did assure Peking's leaders of the step-by-step cutback in force levels on Taiwan.

"We are going to continue the process of reducing troop levels on Taiwan consistent with the principles adopted in the Shanghai Communiqué, but I do not

want to set any timetable of reductions," Trattner said.

The Shanghai Communiqué says the United States "affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes."

Most of the U.S. servicemen on Taiwan still called the Republic of China by the United States, are engaged in surveillance. There is also a small group of officers who, with counterparts in Taiwan, would form the nucleus of a joint command in the event of war. The United States and Taiwan have a mutual defense treaty dating from 1954.