

'Mercenary' Group

Castro Reports A Raid on Cuba

Associated Press

Miami

Fidel Castro said yesterday his troops killed two mercenaries from the United States and captured three others in two weekend battles in Cuba.

The Cuban chief of state said the invaders were armed with modern automatic weapons of the "Yankee army."

Castro said four of his own men were killed and two more wounded.

BROADCAST

He made the disclosure in an unusual personal communique broadcast on Radio Havana and monitored in Miami.

The broadcast did not say how many mercenaries landed, but the Cuban prime minister indicated the number was small. He pointed out that they landed Friday—the ninth anniversary of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion.

Exiles here said that about 40 men could be involved in the landing.

Castro did not say the mercenaries were Americans, but said they came from the United States.

In Washington, a spokesman for the State Department said it had no informa-

See Back Page

From Page 1

tion on Castro's statement except for news dispatches.

None of the militant anti-Castro groups in Miami's Cuban exile colony immediately claimed credit for the attack, although some of them have bragged previously that they sent guerrilla bands to the Communist island.

However, a spokesman for the militant exile anti-Castro organization, Alpha 66, said: "An expedition like this was on our program."

But Alpha 66 Secretary-General Andres Nazario Sargen added, "We can neither affirm nor deny at this time that it was our force that was involved in the battle. We are waiting for news."

Captain Vicente Mendez, Alpha 66 military command-

er, was reported away.

On December 29 a boat carrying a 15-man force headed by Mendez sank in Cuban waters. One man was reported drowned. The others made it to the U.S. Guantanamo Naval Base and later returned to Miami. Alpha 66 said at the time that Mendez would try again.

Mendez, 39, fought against dictator Fulgencio Batista and later against Castro before going into exile.

"A group of mercenaries coming from the United States, equipped with modern automatic arms of the Yankee Army, landed near the Yumuri river, 14 miles east of the city of Baracea, Friday, April 17, at dawn," Castro said. Baracea is in Oriente province, near the eastern tip of Cuba.