



NEWS from

U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE TO CARTER: CLOSE CUBAN MISSION, FREEZE NORMALIZATION TALKS WITH CUBA

Washington, D.C. --- Senator Bob Dole, in a letter sent today by President Carter, urged that the United States withdraw its mission from Havana, and request that the Cuban Government close its liaison office in Washington. Citing the recent build-ups in Cuban forces in Ethiopia, and the new evidence that Cuban pilots are making air strikes against Somalia, Dole said "it is time we discard the illusion that Cuba is ready to take its place among the community of responsible, peaceable nations." Dole called for an immediate "freeze" on moves to normalize American relations with Cuba.

"Despite the hopes of this Administration, and before that, of the Ford Administration, the regime of Fidel Castro has shown itself to remain a client tool of Soviet interference on the African continent," Dole contended. "It has shown itself to be an aggressive force of death and destruction in both Angola and Somalia, and there is no end in sight to the build-up of Cuban troops and 'advisers' throughout Africa."

Dole said "The intentional, callous role that the Cuban government has chosen to play in the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict should render it ineligible for diplomatic or trade concessions from the United States. In the interest of American principle and international peace, I urge you to immediately suspend current normalization efforts with the Cuban government, and to withdraw the United States 'interest section' from Havana."

Cuban Forces Increase Seven-Fold

Over the weekend, Administration officials revealed that intelligence reports indicate that Cuban pilots based in Ethiopia are carrying out air strikes in Soviet-built planes against targets inside Somalia. On Monday, State Department spokesman Hodding Carter III confirmed the reports, and visiting President Anwar Sadat of Egypt reiterated the charges in an address to the National Press Club.

Administration sources now estimate the Cuban force in Ethiopia at more than 3,000, more than a seven-fold increase from the 400 Cubans believed to be in Ethiopia last November. Soviet forces in the area have grown from approximately 100 last November to a present strength of more than 1,500, and the Soviet Union is supplying arms for the conflict.

Attached is a copy of Senator Dole's letter to the President.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

February 7, 1978

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The recent build-up of Cuban and Soviet forces in Ethiopia is a matter of grave concern. During the past three months, the size of the Cuban presence has increased more than seven-fold. The Soviet Union continues to pour huge amounts of manpower, arms, and aid into the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict. There is no end in sight to this brazen and unwarranted interference by the two Communist nations in the Ogaden region conflict.

Mr. President, I sincerely believe it is time that we discard the illusion that Cuba is ready to take its place among the community of responsible, peaceable nations. Despite the hopes of your Administration and, before that, of the Ford Administration, the regime of Fidel Castro has shown itself to be a client tool of Soviet interference on the African continent. It has shown itself to be an aggressive force of death and destruction in both Angola and Somalia, and there is no end in sight to the build-up of Cuban troops and advisers throughout Africa.

In my opinion, and that of many of my colleagues, the intentional and callous role that the Cuban government has chosen to play in the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict should render it ineligible for diplomatic recognition or trade concessions from the United States. Therefore, in the interest of preserving American principles and international peace, I urge you to immediately suspend current normalization efforts with the Cuban government, and to withdraw the United States 'interest section' from Havana. I believe that action should be reciprocated by the Cuban regime, and that there should be a "freeze" on any further contacts until circumstances have changed significantly.

Thank you for your attention to this communication.

Sincerely yours,



BOB DOLE
United States Senator