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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

APRIL 9, 1981

*Ken*

MEMORANDUM FOR CRAIG FULLER

FROM: KEN CRIBB *KC.*

*(P)* SUBJECT: IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE MEETING

The Attorney General requested that a meeting of the task force on immigration and refugees be scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, at 4 o'clock in the Roosevelt Room.

The Attorney General plans to distribute the materials for the meeting directly to task force members. As soon as I receive a copy of these materials, I will forward them to you.

Should Dick Darman staff this for the White House ?

*Yes*

cc: Missy Hodapp  
cc: Karen Hart

# **The 1980 Mariel Exodus: An Assessment and Prospect**



## **A Special Report**



Council for Inter American Security

**by Juan M. Clark**

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**SHE LIVED TO TELL ABOUT IT —** A survivor of a boat of refugees that sank off the coast of Cuba on May 17, 1980 is helped from a rescue helicopter by a U.S. Marine. Ten on the boat died in their desperate attempt to escape Castro's revolution.



United Press International

**BOAT BABY —** This infant, carried by his anxious father, was born at sea on a boat of refugees somewhere between Cuba and Florida. Castro made no concessions for pregnant women. In order to flee they had to leave the moment it was possible or risk having to remain in Communist Cuba.



Associated Press



Associated Press

**ALONE AND LOST —** Maria Jose Morales — aged 78 — cries as she sits alone in Key West. This brave woman came to Florida to be with her family, but they had no way to know she was arriving.



United Press International

**ESCAPE TO FREEDOM —** Another boat overloaded with Cuban refugees heads for Key West. It was the deliberate policy of the Castro government to overload vessels, even those obviously not seaworthy. In one case, a 7-year-old girl died as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning inhaled below the deck of a 25-foot wooden craft onto which 31 persons had been squeezed.



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# Introduction

The 1980 Mariel boatlift ranks by far as the most dramatic episode in the 21-year-long exodus from revolutionary Cuba. Over 124,000 men, women, and children left their homeland for the United States when Cuba opened its doors in a manner reminiscent of the little remembered, month-long Camarioca boatlift 15 years earlier. For the second time, Fidel Castro, in utter defiance of U.S. laws, used the exiled Cuban community for his own ends by exploiting their traditionally strong family ties. And just as in 1965, the U.S. government's vacillating policy allowed the Cuban regime to take advantage of the situation and decree who would come to this country, thus turning this massive migration into what appears to be a safety valve for a regime in crisis.

The disruption created by the 1965 Camarioca boatlift of almost 5,000 refugees cannot be compared to the Mariel exodus, which was significantly more chaotic by virtue of the sheer numbers involved. In one month alone — May 1980 — a greater number of refugees arrived in the United States than in any single year of the exodus from Cuba that began in 1959.

In addition to creating a logistical nightmare with regard to processing and relocating refugees throughout the U.S., the Mariel exodus has been characterized by riots in some of the refugee camps, an apparent increase in the crime rate in the main resettlement areas, and a wave of air hijackings allegedly carried out by those longing to return to their homeland after a disappointing experience with American life.

This monograph is an introductory analysis to the events surrounding this unprecedented migratory phenomenon and to the handling of this human wave on both the private and public levels. It proposes to examine a number of questions which have thus far received insufficient attention. Why did Fidel Castro see fit to open the doors to such massive emigration — an action bound to cast his regime in an unfavorable light? Who are the new Cuban refugees and why did they come? What assessment can be made of the Carter Administration in its handling of this migration? How has policy influenced the transition of refugees into U.S. life?

The significance of the Mariel exodus far exceeds that of a minor disturbance of parochial interest to South Florida authorities; the chaos which characterized it reflected deficiencies in U.S. foreign policy and serious flaws in the handling of a human crisis by domestic agencies. The fact that such large numbers fled Cuba and the circumstances of their departure poses serious questions concerning the integrity of Castro's 20-year old regime. On the other hand, the Mariel boatlift, with its reverberations, could also be a critical landmark for future U.S.—Cuban relations. Answering the questions raised by the Mariel exodus and understanding the lessons inherent in the experience will both give us a more accurate perspective on the much maligned new refugees and most importantly help us deal better with similar events in the future. Some suggestions or recommendations will be derived from this analysis.

## Unfolding of the 1980 Exodus

### *Social Conditions Prompting the Exodus*

Understanding why close to 11,000 people would stampede into an embassy to flee their country — the prelude to the Mariel exodus — is difficult without some insight on the nature of the political system prevailing in Cuba and the concomitant living conditions.

In its attempt to gain control over all aspects of an individual's life — including the use of “free time” — the regime systematically and progressively eliminated the right to self determination and dissent and stifled all incentive and entrepreneurial initiative. Cubans have only the political right to agree with the governmental policies originated by a new class at the top of the totalitarian structure imposed upon the people. A very effective repressive system (*Seguridad del Estado*) guarantees that no one would dare to challenge the “revolution of the people” whose only interpreter and critic is Fidel Castro.

The elimination of private initiative was completed in 1968, when small businesses, including peddler operations, were confiscated or totally eliminated. By then the right to dissent had disappeared, largely through the governmental takeover of the entire media, while the right to make a living and support one's family had been seriously curtailed, since it even became a crime to try to buy food from a farmer to supplement the meager official food ration.<sup>1</sup> Soon, the regime became the sole employer, educator and healer of the people.

At other levels, Cubans faced a similar situation. In addition to a scarcity of consumer goods, housing and transportation have suffered considerably in recent years to the point that far more houses are being demolished, due to deterioration and lack of maintenance, than are being constructed.<sup>2</sup> Most neighborhoods are constantly and arbitrarily deprived of water and electric service, not to mention urban transportation which as a system is totally inadequate.

While greater access to education for Cubans is often cited, this favorable appraisal ignores the extent to which the regime uses education as an instrument of control and indoctrination and as a means of extracting work from the young. High school students are separated from their parents and are being transferred throughout the entire academic year to the countryside to engage for half a day in agricultural activities. Political discrimination is used at the university level: only those with a “clear record” of political allegiance are allowed to choose a career. Those of recognized religious militancy are denied, as a matter of policy, admission to psychiatry, psychology, social sciences and other politically-related faculties.<sup>3</sup> After graduation one is still controlled by the government, since the regime has total control of every job in the country.

In 1979, perhaps feeling that the revolution had indeed been “consolidated” (there being no organized opposition to prove otherwise), and hungering for dollars because of

the failure of the sugar and tobacco crops, Castro opened the doors to the exiles in the United States, no longer referring to them as “worms, but instead describing them as members of the “community abroad”. On the basis of an unfavorable dollar exchange and exorbitant prices, he invited “la comunidad” to visit their relatives in Cuba. This maneuver apparently coincided with the goal of improving his human rights image vis-a-vis the Carter administration in an effort to normalize relations with the U.S. In conjunction with his action, Castro also began a process of freeing some of his thousands of political prisoners.

Once more exhibiting their strong family solidarity, over 100,000 exiles returned to Cuba to visit their loved ones, in the process spending more than \$100 million on the island. But if they paid a high price (more than \$800 per person), it quickly became evident that Castro would have to pay a price for his decision as well. Evidently he did not foresee the “demonstration effect” that the visit of the exiles would have on the population. Suddenly, two long decades of anti-American and anti-exile propaganda evanesced as each visitor became the living proof of an abundant free society contrasting sharply with the island's repressive and austere totalitarianism.

This, in turn, triggered a chain reaction of resentment and discontent. For the first time since the early 1960's sabotage, mainly by fire, began to spread, and antigovernment graffiti and flyers proliferated.<sup>4</sup> Inevitably, repressive measures were stepped up, thousands were arrested under a law “de peligrosidad” empowering the regime to imprison anyone deemed “potentially dangerous” to society.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the repressive apparatus — the only truly “effective organization” in Cuba, as a recent emigre put it — had made it hopeless to expect improvement of any kind. No wonder there were more escapes in 1979 (by boat, raft, etc.) than in all of the previous seven years combined.<sup>6</sup>

But Castro, with his recognized ability for political survival, must have been well aware of the country's critical situation and consequently of the need to open another “safety valve” similar to Camarioca in 1965 with the ensuing eight-year-long airlift that brought 260,561 Cubans to the U.S.<sup>7</sup> By March 1980 he had already publicly hinted to another Camarioca, but the incident at the Peruvian Embassy gave him the right opportunity.

### *The Triggering Factor: the 10,800 at the Peruvian Embassy*

The chain of events leading to the Mariel exodus began on April 4, when the Cuban government withdrew from the Peruvian Embassy the powerful military guard assigned to those embassies most likely to follow the Latin American tradition of extending political asylum. Triggering this action was a Cuban-Peruvian dispute over the



death of a Cuban guard, shot accidentally a few days earlier in attempting to prevent a group of would-be exiles from crashing into the Peruvian compound.<sup>8</sup> In consciously deciding to announce through the official media the removal of the guard, Castro must have anticipated that a few hundred dissidents would enter the embassy grounds, creating a serious logistical problem for the Peruvians at the expense of no great embarrassment to the Cuban government. Evidently he did not anticipate that, as had happened in 1965, a multitude would seek to leave the country. Within the roughly twenty-four hours that the embassy lacked military protection, 10,800 Cubans from all walks of life, and traveling from outlying provinces as well as the Havana area, entered the Peruvian compound. There is evidence that many others tried unsuccessfully and were turned away or arrested on the grounds nearby. The Castro government immediately claimed that those who entered the embassy were the "scum" of Cuban society.

The scene of thousands of men, women and children packed into embassy grounds almost without food or water became a major image problem for the propaganda conscious Cuban regime. Suddenly, the true story of the Peruvian Embassy 10,000 began to appear on the front pages, raising disturbing questions about the much heralded Castro's "popularity." International pressure arose for Cuba to allow their departure, eventually forcing Castro to accept a proposed airlift via San Jose, Costa Rica.<sup>9</sup>

When the airlift began, Castro's embarrassment increased as the world watched what appeared to be fairly young workers kissing the ground at their arrival in Costa Rica, while others cried, "libertad, libertad." They were not the "social scum" claimed by the Cuban government, but instead, largely working class citizens who were willing to go to extreme sacrifices to attain freedom, and who in many cases showed on their bodies marks of physical abuse received for wanting to leave the country.<sup>10</sup> Under such highly negative publicity — perhaps the worst received by the regime in 21 years — Castro's solution was to invite the "community abroad" to come pick up their relatives, in a skillful repetition of a formula which had proved successful 15 years earlier.

#### *Another Camarioca in 1980*

On September 28, 1965, Fidel Castro responded to mounting domestic pressure by announcing that all Cubans wishing to rejoin relatives in the United States could depart via the northern fishing port of Camarioca in Matanzas province. Shortly thereafter, restrictions were announced. Professionals and males between ages of 16-27 would not be permitted to leave. Demand for crafts — or anything that could float — soared, and another Dunkirk developed almost instantaneously as hundreds of thousands of Cubans applied to leave the island.<sup>11</sup> After initially opposing the migration, President Johnson took on the challenge; he opened the nation's doors and extended invaluable assistance to the ragtag freedom flotilla through the U.S. Coast Guard. During the episode

4,993 relatives of Cubans already residing in the U.S. came to this country.<sup>12</sup>

The boatlift was ultimately stopped by Castro when the Cuban and United States governments reached an "understanding" that led to a family reunification program via a Varadero-Miami airlift. Under this program more than a quarter of a million refugees were brought to this country between December 1, 1965 and April 6, 1973. The roughly one-month-long Camarioca episode was made possible by the prevailing strong ties among Cuban families. At the same time, it appears that, much as would be the case 15 years later, the Cuban government grossly underestimated the people's desire to leave the country, since by August 1980 1.5 million apparently applied to do so.<sup>13</sup> But Camarioca and especially the ensuing airlift were indeed a good safety valve opened at a moment of high internal pressure. It was also very productive to the regime in terms of vacant housing left, as well as jobs and semi-slave work done in agricultural fields by the would-be refugees.<sup>14</sup>

In April 1980 Castro used the same tactics tried in 1965. This time the circumstances varied and were more extreme, but world pressure developed calling upon Havana to release those who had sought refuge at the Peruvian Embassy. At the same time Castro sought to neutralize the embarrassment caused by refugees arriving in other Latin American countries. His shrewd sense of political survival must have told him that another Camarioca could be tried, and that this time he could have a few unpleasant surprises for the incoming Cuban-Americans who thought they would be allowed to retrieve their relatives.



Rafael Lleners

**THEY DIDN'T MAKE IT** — inner tubes tied together and used by Cubans who tried in vain to cross the straits to freedom. Their bodies were never found.

The first exiles to sail to Cuba for their relatives were members of the "Dialogo Committee." This group had been established in 1978 for the alleged purpose of holding negotiations with Castro, and its members had been chosen by the Cuban leader. Many of its members were considered to be pro-Castro within exile circles. It appears that the committee leaders received orders from Castro to start the flotilla, and they were the first to reach Cuba. When on April 21 the first boats returned from the northern port of Mariel loaded with exiles, the stage was set for a new exodus with the full support of the Cuban-American community.<sup>15</sup> Leisure boats of all types and sizes, rented or chartered, as well as fishing vessels were mobilized by the Cuban-Americans who wanted to rescue their families still in Cuba. Much as in 1965, opportunists moved in to gather handsome profits from boat rentals and charters. Many within the Cuban-American community went heavily into debt to finance the rescue of their relatives, mortgaging homes and undertaking loans.



Rafael Llenera

**MADE IN USSR** — One of the inner tubes reveals its place of origin — the Soviet Union.

After fairly good treatment at the outset, conditions at the port of Mariel began to deteriorate for both the boat crews and their relatives. When supplies ran out, the Cuban government became the sole provider and characteristically supplied food, water, transportation to shore and lodging at the Triton Hotel in Havana at exorbitant prices.<sup>16</sup>

Considering both the prices and the unfair and arbitrary rate of exchange offered (70.2 Cuban cents per American \$) the Castro regime was able to make a brisk profit. But the problems of those waiting at Mariel did not end with the economic cost. An even higher emotional toll was exacted by Castro when he only partially fulfilled his promise of releasing relatives and the refugees of the Peruvian Embassy, arbitrarily loading boats with criminals as well.

The inclusion of some common prisoners with no family ties with those arriving on boats to Mariel, a feature absent in the Camarioca exodus, represented a new emigration policy which was both unscrupulous and very shrewd. Faced with the need to justify its description of the Peruvian Embassy refugees as the scum of Cuban

society, the Castro government simply began to include individuals fitting that description with an instruction to affirm they had been at the Peruvian Embassy.<sup>17</sup>

In some instances it forced hard-core criminals serving long sentences to choose between remaining in jail or leaving for the U.S. In other instances former prisoners were presented with the dilemma of returning to jail for four years under the law of "peligrosidad" (dangerousness) or departing for the U.S. The great majority chose — for obvious reasons — the way north. Most of the Cubans with jail records had actually been convicted under Cuban laws that make it a crime to purchase food privately from a farmer, to kill a cow and sell its meat, or to traffic in the all-pervasive black market — a must for survival in present Cuban society.

### *Thirty Days in May to Remember*

The number of arrivals during the days in April following the inauguration of the sealift was a trickle compared to what the following month would bring. A veritable human avalanche would best describe what happened in May 1980. As Table 1 shows, there 86,488 arrivals in this country that month; more Cubans came during those 31 days alone than in 1962, theretofore the period of time with the heaviest migration (73,632 people).<sup>18</sup> It was a month filled also with confusing and contradictory governmental policies, tragedies, deceit and emotional outpouring.

Without a clear U.S. policy, local and federal authorities made no real attempt to stop the illegal flotilla. In fact, orders were actually issued to have the Coast Guard and Navy help out the refugee flotilla,<sup>19</sup> and the President declared on May 5 that "We'll continue to provide an open heart and open arms to refugees seeking freedom from Communist domination."<sup>20</sup> A record number of refugees arrived at about the time of that statement. The President's statement was contradicted, however, on May 14 by an order to interrupt the boatlift. Despite the prohibition and subsequent naval blockade, almost 90,000 Cubans arrived in the United States in May.

During this time Castro was very active shipping out what he considered "undesirables" along with refugees from the Peruvian Embassy and relatives of U.S. residents. The former was first reported on April 29th,<sup>21</sup> and such people included not only persons with criminal records on the basis of repressive Cuban law but also mental and deaf-mute patients and even lepers.<sup>22</sup>

Other activities were taking place in Cuba as well. In contrast to the earlier policy toward would-be refugees, "spontaneous" demonstrations were taking place on the island against those that had returned to their homes with a safe-conduct from the Peruvian Embassy. They then became the object of verbal and physical abuse. In some instances, government-directed mobs made the would-be refugees march through the streets with derogatory signs hung around their necks.<sup>23</sup>

Huge rallies also took place throughout the island and millions marched in what witnesses described as a "carnival" atmosphere rather than an attitude of real protest against the "departing scum".<sup>24</sup> The most

**Table 1. Breakdown by Month & Week of Cuban Arrivals During the Mariel Exodus**

	Weekly Arrivals	Cumulative Total	Monthly Arrivals	Percent
	6,053	—		
	7,634	13,687	7,655	6.1
	22,171	35,858		
	21,611	57,469		
	20,432	77,901		
	16,811	94,712	86,488	69.3
	17,009	111,721		
	1,684	113,405		
	564	113,969		
	872	114,841		
	315	115,156	20,800	16.7
	649	115,805		
	655	116,460		
	405	116,865		
	1,187	118,052	2,629	2.1
	280	118,332		
	709	119,041		
	1,203	120,244		
	1,267	121,511	3,939	3.2
	468	121,979		
	1,353	123,332		
	995	124,327		
	442	124,769		
	0	124,769	3,258	2.6
	7	124,776		
	0	124,776		
	3	124,779		
	0	124,779		
	<u>124,779</u>		<u>10</u> 124,779	<u>0</u> 100.0

Source: Official Department of State statistics

**Table 1. Breakdown by Month & Week of Cuban Arrivals During the Mariel Exodus**

		Weekly Arrivals	Cumulative Total	Monthly Arrivals	Percent
April	21-27	6,053	—		
	28-May 4	7,634	13,687	7,655	6.1
May	5-11	22,171	35,858		
	12-18	21,611	57,469		
	19-25	20,432	77,901		
	26-June 1	16,811	94,712	86,488	69.3
June	2- 8	17,009	111,721		
	9-15	1,684	113,405		
	16-22	564	113,969		
	23-29	872	114,841		
	30-July 6	315	115,156	20,800	16.7
July	7-13	649	115,805		
	14-20	655	116,460		
	21-27	405	116,865		
	28-Aug 3	1,187	118,052	2,629	2.1
August	4-10	280	118,332		
	11-17	709	119,041		
	18-24	1,203	120,244		
	25-31	1,267	121,511	3,939	3.2
Sept	1- 7	468	121,979		
	8-14	1,353	123,332		
	15-21	995	124,327		
	22-28	442	124,769		
	29-Oct 2	0	124,769	3,258	2.6
Oct	6-12	7	124,776		
	13-19	0	124,776		
	20-26	3	124,779		
	27-Nov 2	0	124,779	10	0
		<u>124,779</u>		<u>124,779</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: Official Department of State statistics

significant of these was staged on May 17 in front of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana, after an incident on May 2 in which former political prisoners were beaten by government thugs while they waited in line to enter the building.

In spite of, and in addition to, the opening of the Mariel boatlift, freedom-seeking Cubans continued to defect in May through various means.<sup>25</sup> This month also marks the beginning of a series of hijackings to Cuba which rose to suspiciously epidemic proportions in later months, and which many experts link to the Castro agents discovered among the incoming refugees.<sup>26</sup>

In view of the "avalanche" of arrivals, the month of May also brought the takeover by the Federal government of the refugee "reception operation", until then in the hands of local authorities in south Florida, particularly those of Dade County. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was charged with directing the influx of refugees. Unfortunately, this agency, designed to help in the event of natural disasters and with huge resources at their disposal, lacked the appropriate expertise for this task involving the handling of such a large number of people. No major problems had surged in the local (Dade County) refugee holding areas until then.

Up to that point, a heart-warming combination of volunteer help provided by the Cuban-American community, local agencies (including the Dade County Metropolitan government and the cities of Miami and Hialeah), the Federal Cuban Refugee Center, and the voluntary agencies, had done a superb job helping the initial arrivals. Food, clothing, and thousands of hours of volunteer time were, donated spontaneously by individual citizens and public officials alike in an unprecedented gesture of goodwill and eagerness to help the new arrivals. This performance moved an old time observer of the Cuban exodus to state, "The community has to be commended for doing a magnificent job in dealing with the refugee arrivals."<sup>27</sup>

The picture changed, however, as soon as the refugees began to be transferred to Eglin Air Force Base in northern Florida and other military bases under the supervision of FEMA. As they were transferred, no attempt was made (at Key West, the arrival point) to group them on the basis of similarity of background, and, many families were actually separated. A pattern of riots was to develop in those "storage" sites as a result of a variety of factors.

#### *Apparent Goals of the Cuban Government*

Castro's objective in opening the port of Mariel became

clear with the unfolding of events. By this diversionary move, he apparently sought to escape international embarrassment caused by Cuban working-class refugees arriving in Latin America, the very people who were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the revolution. In shifting world attention to the U.S., the impact of departing refugees was substantially diminished. The maneuver provided an additional bonus by placing the U.S. in a "defensive" position. It was now up to the United States to reject or handle as best it could a "human tidal wave" unprecedented in its history not only in magnitude but in composition as well. The problems of logistics in the handling of this population alone may continue to have unforeseeable repercussions well into the future for the U.S.

With the inclusion of hard-core criminals and minor offenders with a prison record, Castro was trying to rid the island of what he termed "scum" and "anti-social" elements, but more importantly, he was embarrassing the Carter Administration, which was unable to stop the inflow, as well as tainting the reputation of the established Cuban-American community that had so successfully adapted to the American way of life. It appeared also that, from Castro's perspective, he was trying to "punish" the United States for failing to curtail the escapee flow through boat hijackings of Cuba that had proliferated in 1979 and 1980.<sup>28</sup> Castro also reasserted his full control of the human influx into this country, thus acquiring some leverage with the U.S. government for future negotiations, especially concerning the trade embargo that Cuba is so desirous to eliminate.

With the sudden departure of over one percent of the Cuban population, Castro certainly alleviated his serious demographic problems, especially regarding the acute housing shortage. Just as has been the case in regard to previous exile waves, preference was given in many cases to those leaving empty housing or cars that would be taken over by the government. A large number of the 1980 refugees also left job vacancies, relieving widespread unemployment.

Castro's offer to allow unrestricted departure via Mariel led to a large number of applications to leave. This not only enabled the regime to identify dissidents but also discouraged the more dangerous temptation to plot or engage in subversive actions against the government in the hope of legally fleeing that totalitarian system. Last, but not least, Castro may have attempted not only to eliminate dissidence, but also to use the refugees as "escape-goats" in an attempt to infuse some militancy to a revolution showing definite signs of sagging.



## Who The New Refugees Are And Why They Came

### Basic Demographic Characteristics

The Mariel refugees exhibit important characteristics regarding the continuation of an occupational trend as well as the reversal of others such as sex composition, marital status and past criminal record.

**Occupational Background:** Consistent with the trend of the continuous increase of working class people established by earlier arrivals, the 1980s are predominantly blue-collar workers. Table 2 indicates that 70% of the Mariel refugees, taking into consideration the various skill levels, belong to this category. The proportion at the professional-managerial level is quite small (4.7%), in contrast to the earlier exile waves of whom 22.2% were in that category.

**Sex Composition:** The fact that a large number of men were forced to leave without their families is borne out by statistics. The Mariel exodus completely reversed the sex discrimination of those arriving through the earlier Varadero-Miami airlift, of whom the vast majority, 57.9%, were women.<sup>32</sup> In 1981, males made up a lopsided majority, 78.2%, of the arrivals, and it is precisely unaccompanied men who now constitute the bulk of the unresettled refugees at the camps.

**Age Distribution:** A smaller portion of the Mariel refugees are under 18 years of age (24.1%), also constituting a departure from the airlift arrivals, in that this group comprised a third (33.2%) of the population.<sup>33</sup> However, the median age of the Mariel arrivals tends to be younger, with 68.5% below 39 years of age.

**Other Demographic Characteristics:** The marital status of the Mariel arrivals according to the Lasaga survey contrasts sharply with those of the Cuban exile population up to 1971. The much larger percentage of the single individuals (33.7% vs. 15% up to 1971) is a reversal of previous trends.<sup>34</sup> The new group also has a much higher proportion of divorce (18.7%) in contrast with that of the earlier exile waves (7%), indicating a higher rate of family disintegration in the present day Cuban family.<sup>35</sup>

Another important feature of the present exodus is its racial element. Some have estimated the proportion of non-whites, between 20% and 40%.

The average level of education of the refugees in a survey taken in Miami was the 9th grade, which is close to the educational levels of the arrivals in the 1970's.<sup>36</sup> It has been estimated that only about 2% to 5% of the new exiles could communicate in English upon arrival.

Concerning their family situation, the vast majority (89.2%) of the Mariel refugees processed in the Miami area had relatives in the U.S., while 28.5% actually had immediate family in the country. According to the Lasaga survey, 39% of the respondents were actually picked up by their relatives at Mariel, while the rest (61%) came on their own initiative or were forced to leave by the Castro regime. In this sense the Mariel exodus will further contribute to the Cuban family crisis since more than a fifth of the surveyed refugees had to leave their spouses, mostly



United Press International

**HELP AND COMPASSION —** But not from Castro. This elderly woman had to risk her life in order to reach the United States.

because the government did not allow them to depart. This implies that approximately 50,000 men came without their families. A rough estimate indicates that at least 20,000 married men were separated from their spouses in a gross violation of human rights.

**The Refugees' Prison Record.** Much has been said about the extremely high percentage of Mariel arrivals with a criminal record. Official figures appear to contradict that common belief. According to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures, a total of 1,761 persons, representing 1.4% of the new emigrants, were classified as felons (convicted of murder, rape or burglary).<sup>34</sup> These individuals have been detained on a permanent basis and are being subject to deportation proceedings.<sup>35</sup> In a very unfortunate mix of statistical records, an additional 23,927, or 19.1% of arrivals, have been placed by INS into the combined category of "non-felonious criminals and political prisoners." It has been estimated that the latter constitute about 2,000 of that figure.<sup>36</sup>

Among those with a non-felonious record, a high percentage would not be considered criminals under U.S. laws. Cuban law makes it a crime to buy or sell food from any other than the government outlets, and to participate in the black market in relation to any type of goods (many of them originating as government supplies — the only source of imports). Black market activity is universal in Cuba and is unavoidable for such things as the replacement of machine parts. Recent reports on the 1,761 detained refugees indicate that a number of them could not really be considered felons. These had actually been in prison in Cuba for what may be considered politically related crimes such as "desertion from the Army, attempting to escape Cuba or keeping unbalanced books."<sup>37</sup>

## Who The New Refugees Are And Why They Came

### *Basic Demographic Characteristics*

The Mariel refugees exhibit important characteristics regarding the continuation of an occupational trend as well as the reversal of others such as sex composition, marital status and past criminal record.

*Occupational Background.* Consistent with the trend of the continuous increase of working class people established by earlier arrivals, the 1980 exiles are predominantly blue-collar workers. Table 2 indicates that 71% of the Mariel refugees, taking into consideration the various skill levels, belong in this category. The proportion at the professional-managerial level is quite small (8.7%), in contrast to the earlier exiles of whom 22.2% were in that category.

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*Age Distribution.* A smaller portion of the Mariel refugees are under 18 years of age (20.1%), also constituting a departure from the airlift arrivals, in that this group comprised a third (33.5%) of that population.<sup>30</sup> However, the median age of the Mariel arrivals tends to be younger, with 68.5% below 36 years of age.

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**Table 2. Occupational Characteristics of  
Mariel Arrivals Contrasted With Those Of The  
Earlier Exile Population**

<u>Exiles 1959-1974<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Percentage</u>		<u>Mariel Exodus<sup>b</sup></u>
Professional, semi-professional, managerial	22.2	7.1	Professionals Managerial
		1.5	
Sales & clerical	27.8	1.0	Sales Clerical
		6.1	
Services	8.7	10.2	Services
Skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled	35.3	22.7	Craftsmen Machine Operator Transport Operator Laborer
		14.1	
		11.2	
		25.0	
Extractive: agricultural fishing, mining	6.0	1.1	Extractive: Agricultural

Sources:

- a. Juan M. Clark, *The Exodus from Revolutionary Cuba (1959-1974): A Sociological Analysis*, Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 1975.
- b. Brookings Institution Sample of 732 refugees at Eglin AFB, directed by Dr. Robert Bach. See, by that author, "The New Cuban Immigrants: their Background and Prospects," *Monthly Labor Review*, October, 1980.



### *Motivation to Leave the Country*

The recent exiles' reasons for leaving Cuba were explored in the Lasaga study. The refugees were asked in an open-ended manner why they left Cuba. Political motivation ("life was intolerable under a Communist regime," "you felt continuously under surveillance," "I don't like that kind of system") was mentioned at least once by 86% of the interviewees, followed by the economic stimulus ("living conditions were miserable," "there was no food") indicated by 36.5%, and the desire for family reunion, mentioned by 9.4%. (Since some respondents gave more than one motivation, the percentages add to more than 100%).

The order in which the responses were given was also considered important, since presumably the motivations mentioned first might be the most important for the person. Again, political motivation appeared in first place, with 78.9% indicating this as the initial choice, followed by economic reasons (11.7%), family reunion (5.8%), and other miscellaneous categories. These figures clearly indicate that the rejection of a totalitarian system was by far the main reason for leaving the country, while the simple desire for goods and services not available in Cuba played a secondary role, although one somewhat higher than in earlier exile waves.<sup>38</sup>

U.S. Coast Guard



**THEY CAME TO BE FREE** – The spectacle of a spontaneous exodus of thousands of Cuban workers made unbelievable Castro's claim that he has set up a proletarian society. Blue-collar workers made up over 70% of the refugees. Interviews show that rejection of Cuba's totalitarian system was by far the main reason for leaving.

## Aftermath Of The Demographic Bomb

### *The Dwindling of the Exodus and the Hijacking Explosion*

The massive arrival of refugees during the month of May subsided sharply during the first week of June, and thereafter remained low (See Table 1). More military bases were opened (Fort Chaffee, Indiantown Gap, and Fort McCoy) to accommodate the influx. In spite of the naval blockade, many boats still found their way to Mariel during the month of June, returning with additional loads of refugees. Among them were more individuals with prison records that Castro forced on the boatlift.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile, in Lima, Peru, refugees that arrived there via Costa Rica from the Peruvian Embassy were kept in a tent camp and began to show signs of acute frustration that would later lead to serious confrontations due to their desire to join their relatives in this country. Paradoxically, U.S. consular authorities, both in Peru and Costa Rica where the refugees were also arriving, announced they would not be able to help those wanting to join their families in the U.S.

The federal government's economic assistance policy soon proved a liability with regard to smooth resettlement. The Mariel refugees were given the status of "entrants" or "applicants" for political asylum, which under the 1980 Refugee Act disqualified them from receiving any kind of financial assistance except food stamps. This put a considerable burden on the individual sponsors (one felt especially keenly, even if the sponsor was a relative) and on the local community, which ultimately had to bear the responsibility of providing assistance to indigent cases. The resettlement process received an additional setback through the diffusion of such erroneous facts as the existence of 20,000 homosexual refugees awaiting sponsors, an inaccurate statistic apparently divulged by camp authorities.<sup>40</sup> This information led to the cancellation of many sponsorship offers, according to resettlement officials.

FEMA, meanwhile, had transferred the direction of the boatlift to the State Department, which in turn created a Cuban-Haitian Task Force to handle the refugee problem. This decision overlooked again the leadership role and expertise that the 19-year-old Cuban Refugee Program could have provided. The work of voluntary agencies with experience in resettling refugees was utilized in this phase of the operation.

By the end of July, the influx of refugees had been reduced to a small flow (see Table 1), bringing the total to 118,052 arrivals. For the most part, the refugees coming at this time were family units rather than unaccompanied individuals. A shift occurred at the time of the meeting of Ambassadors Donald McHenry (United Nations) and William Bowdler, (Undersecretary for Latin America) with Fidel Castro in Nicaragua during the first anniversary celebration of the Sandinista revolution.<sup>41</sup> This was

regarded as a possible goodwill gesture towards Carter, whose re-election Castro apparently desired.

The month of August contributed a proportionately smaller number of refugees (3.2%) to the Mariel exodus, but it was another month to remember in view of the headlines generated. Riots in the camps, an extremely unusual and suspicious rash of hijackings, changes in the command post of the Task Force, and some tragedies in the boatlift were the main imprints left. The refugee camps at Indiantown and Ft. McCoy erupted again with disturbances, while a record total of 7 commercial jetliners was "coincidentally" hijacked to Cuba 3 in one day, most of them through the ingenious use of gasoline in bottles as Molotov cocktails).

In spite of sophistication of the method used, particularly for refugees without any flying experience in the U.S., these cases were presented as disgruntled refugees that, in spite of their deprivation, were able to afford expensive airline tickets.

The assertion by the Cuban authorities that all hijackers were detained and were being prosecuted was accepted at face value. There were testimonies stating just the contrary: that the hijackers were free in Cuba and actually being "shown off" in Havana's neighborhoods.<sup>42</sup> Cuban authorities never revealed their identities or presented proof of their prosecution. This set of evidence suggests the direct involvement of the Cuban government in the hijacking explosion, at least in its initial phase. To add insult to injury, the hijacked airplanes "were being charged (in Cuba) for everything in sight" according to FAA spokesman.<sup>43</sup>

While these hijackings occurred on U.S. flights, a separate, unprecedented incident took place in Lima, where dozens of Cuban refugees from the Peruvian Embassy took over a Braniff jet and asked to be taken to the U.S. This bizarre attempt failed, but it dramatized the desperation of the refugees there, who considered themselves the victims of an "orderly" exodus from Cuba but were now being deprived of a family reunion in the U.S. due to diplomatic red tape.

Earlier in August, Paul Bell, the head of the Task Force, and other co-workers in Miami resigned their positions, apparently out of frustration at their inability to do their job since "they were never granted the necessary authority nor the funds by the President".<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, a 7 year old girl died as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning inhaled below deck in a wooden boat. This 26th documented victim of the Mariel exodus died as the result of a deliberate policy of the Castro government to overload the refugees on unfit vessels. In this instance 31 persons had been squeezed in a 25-foot wooden craft.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of September, the conclusion of the Mariel boatlift was reached in a very similar fashion to that of Camarioca. This month also had its share of disturbances

at the camps, reports of an increase in crime in areas where the new refugees settled, hijackings, and surprising goodwill gestures towards the U.S. by Castro. Refugees at Ft. McCoy were the ones in the headlines this time after tearing down a fence. Great tensions prevailed there as well in connection with teenagers, who were kept totally isolated from the rest of the refugee population in a fashion resembling concentration camp conditions.<sup>46</sup> Strongly voiced complaints were heard about the increase in the crime rate in the Little Havana area (See *Saturation in the Miami Area*, p. 30), which was apparently tied to those members of the refugee population with criminal records.

Hijackings had a surprising turnaround this month. After two initial successful attempts, three more failed (most following the gasoline bottle-Molotov Cocktail-technique). Castro, in an apparent conciliatory gesture toward the Carter administration, decided not only to curtail the hijackings, but also to stop the boatlift in the same arbitrary way he had started it. On September 26, the 159th day of the exodus, the empty boats at Mariel were ordered to leave; in this abrupt manner, reminiscent of the ending of the Camarioca exodus, the Mariel sealift was brought to an end. A total of 124,769 refugees, borne in 2,011 boats and one aircraft, had arrived in the U.S. by that date.<sup>47</sup> President Carter's reaction was one of publicly expressed gratitude to Castro for ending the refugee flow.<sup>48</sup> Inasmuch as in 1965, at the time of Camarioca, when the U.S. and Cuba came to an "understanding" which led to the 1965-1973 Varadero-Miami airlift, experts have speculated about the possible existence of a similar "understanding" now.

Castro's goodwill gesture in ending the boatlift, however, was only the beginning. Surprisingly, he later returned the last two airplane hijackers to the U.S. for prosecution. This unprecedented action raises the suspicion that Castro was involved in the episode. Why were the other hijackers not returned and their identities not revealed before? This strongly suggests that the hijackings were another ploy to put pressure on the Carter Administration by the "carrot and stick" method. The heavy "stick (a "demographic bomb" "salted" with criminals and "spiced" with hijackings dangerously hindering the American transportation system) was applied first and then the "carrot" (a stop to all that, along with other gestures of goodwill) was offered. Ultimately this amounts to a form of blackmail on the U.S.

It is hard to believe that disgruntled refugees without prior knowledge of the sophisticated security system used to prevent hijackings would cleverly devise a new gimmick (the Molotov Cocktail) and carry out the plan with the coordination of a military operation. Too many things point at a well-planned intelligence operation. In fact, some evidence indicates that the Castro government has been training agents for the purpose of infiltrating the militant political organizations within the exile community and that the Mariel exodus offered him an opportunity to that effect.<sup>49</sup>

Castro's recruitment of agents is well known. Exiles visiting the island have been approached to serve as

contacts for the Cuban government. It has been reported within the exile community that a number of Cuban exiles have been serving as intermediaries to negotiate with the Castro government the departure of relatives in exchange for large sums of money amounting to thousands of dollars. Furthermore, there has already been cooperation between the two governments on exile matters. According to reliable sources available to this research, official agents of the Cuban government were actually given U.S. official protective escorts in the Miami area when the former were looking for "suitable" exiles to participate in the so-called "dialogue" with Castro in 1978.

Other goodwill gestures on the part of Castro towards the Carter Administration have included the resumption of the repatriation flights for American citizens who had long been denied permission to leave Cuba, as well as the release of those who took refuge in the American Interest Section in Havana on May 2, and the excarceration of Americans in Cuba's prisons. Some analysts have speculated on the cause of this sudden cooperation, particularly in view of Castro's earlier refusal to permit orderly departure from Cuba. Ironically, there is solid evidence that even now more than 2,000 of the original Peruvian Embassy refugees — the very people who triggered the Mariel exodus — have not been allowed to leave the country.<sup>50</sup>

Before the halting of the boatlift, plans were under way to use Puerto Rico as a processing center for newly arrived Cuban and Haitian refugees and to consolidate the remaining unresettled Cuban refugees in one location: Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. Because of the prevailing bad press on the refugees, the move to Puerto Rico generated considerable opposition in the island. Legal measures were implemented there — which have proven successful, so far — to prevent the transfer of refugees.<sup>51</sup>

The consolidation of refugees in Fort Chaffee, in the relatively mild climate of Arkansas, was apparently determined by economic factors in particular the high cost of "winterizing" the northern camps, and the expense of keeping several large facilities in operation for a comparatively small number of refugees. With increased security measures and assurances given to state authorities that troublemakers will not be sent to Arkansas, the remaining refugees were transferred to Fort Chaffee during the months of September and October. Although better accommodations were awaiting the refugees at Fort Chaffee, it appears that the basics of the previously established living patterns will persist. Again, the refugees face an indeterminate period living in a prison camp atmosphere while awaiting for a possible sponsor who may never come under the present system of resettlement. Also in early October, Miami's Tent City, considered to be the first Cuban slum in the U.S., was dismantled. The 700 refugees housed there were resettled at a cost of \$2,000 per person paid by the federal government to the voluntary agencies who found sponsors. On the other hand, it appears that the vast majority of the resettled refugees (some 85,000 in Miami-Dade County area) are making a hard, honest effort to adapt to the new life, despite inadequate assistance and the bad publicity generated by a small number of criminals.<sup>52</sup>

*Saturation in the Miami Area: Major Problems*

The sudden influx of more than 85,000 Mariel refugees in the Miami area has created major problems in housing, unemployment, and apparently crime as well.

*Housing.* As of April, 1980, apartment vacancies in Dade County were at 0.4 of 1% (4 per 1,000). According to the July-August Lasaga survey, only 8.7% of the Mariel refugees were living in dwellings paid for out of their own funds; 86.4% either were forced to share housing with relatives or friends and/or lived in rooms or apartments paid for by relatives, friends, or religious organizations. Another 4.5% lived in factory buildings, or cars owned by a friend, or had remained on the site in what was formerly Tent City.

On the average, homes sheltering refugees have 80% more people living in them than normal (for example, the home of 8 people might now house 14) and in 22% of these cases, people sleep in the living room, dining room, the den, the kitchen, the garage, or even outdoor sheds. General overcrowding, furthermore, has led to the use of places ordinarily considered unfit for human habitation.

*Unemployment.* Until last April, Metropolitan Miami enjoyed one of the lowest unemployment rates (5%). By

October it had one of the worst in the nation with 13% looking for employment.<sup>53</sup> By July 77% of the refugees had not found permanent employment, and even excluding part-timers and people on temporary jobs, the unemployment rate was still 66%. As refugees are not entitled to unemployment compensation, being unemployed for them has meant, literally, being close to starvation.

*Crime.* The press had repeatedly publicized crimes committed by recent refugees. Unemployment, lack of financial aid, and some apparent rejection or apprehension on the part of the established Cuban community in the area are factors to be taken into account. Official statistics appear to confirm the hypothesis that the increase in the crime rate, especially in the Little Havana area, is related to this influx.<sup>54</sup> Yet, within the Miami Metropolitan area, a survey of the Dade County Jail on December 26th showed that out of 1,051 inmates that day, only 103 were Mariel refugees representing "less than one tenth of one percent of the 90,000 Cubans who have resettled in Dade County since the boatlift began in April".<sup>55</sup> In this sense, it has been speculated that the Mariel refugees may actually have been used as "escapegoats" for the increase in the crime rate in the Miami area.<sup>56</sup>

# An Analysis Of U.S. Policy

## *Overall Policy Considerations*

The repetition of a mass Cuban exodus found the United States government totally unprepared, despite repeated warnings from knowledgeable Cuban-Americans and by agencies of the U.S. government. The former found out, with dismay, that few high officials remembered or even knew about Camarioca in 1965. A further warning was provided by Castro himself, who in a speech on March 8 alluded to the possibility.<sup>57</sup> In addition, the CIA apparently gave the same warning two months earlier, accurately predicting that Castro might use massive emigration "as a means to curtail internal unrest caused by economic deterioration in Cuba." Democratic Representative Les Aspin has charged that the Executive Branch paid no attention to the CIA warnings made as early as January 31 and repeated on five subsequent occasions: "With several months of warning the Administration did not even bother to plan for such a refugee flow".<sup>58</sup>



Associated Press

**SO GREAT WAS THEIR DESPERATION** — Refugees clamored aboard boats overcrowded beyond belief in order to take a chance at freedom. Here over 800 Cuban refugees line the rails of the "Red Diamond" after docking in Key West.

Once the boatlift was underway, with the Cuban-American community playing inadvertently into Castro's hands, the Carter Administration was caught in a critical situation. While desiring to stop it, the White House feared the reaction of the Cuban community in Miami. Significantly, by the second week of the exodus the abortive attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran forced the Administration to turn its full attention to the Iranian crisis. The Cuban exodus remained a low priority item, even as it became clear that the Castro government was making a mockery of his promise of family reunification, and was using the boatlift to send criminal elements and misfits into the immigration flow. Many wonder why at this point, with all necessary naval resources at hand and the now likely cooperation of the Cuban community, the flotilla

was not stopped. Instead, the famous "open arms, open hearts" statement was issued. Although the policy was once more reversed a week later, the flow nonetheless continued, allowing Castro to send whomever he pleased.

Once the Federal government took over the administrative processing functions from the demonstrably competent south Florida community, the Administration had the option of following established and proven avenues to handle the refugee influx. A practical model existed in the Cuban Refugee Program, which had successfully processed close to 500,000 Cuban refugees in the 1960's and 1970's. Community leaders in the Miami area strongly urged the President to make use of it, but to no avail.<sup>59</sup>

For this instrument to be used, the new arrivals had to be legally declared "political refugees" under the 1980 Refugee Act — and here political constraints intervened. The Administration apparently concluded that such an action would set a costly precedent, leaving it little choice but to offer the same benefits to other Caribbean — particularly Haitian — arrivals. Such a move, it decided, could be interpreted as an open invitation to other Caribbean nationals to migrate to the U.S. In the opinion of Jerry Tinkler, chief refugee advisor to the Senate Judiciary Committee, ultimately "the Administration adopted a policy that instead of elevating the Haitians to the status of Cuban refugees, it relegated the Cubans to the same low level of treatment we've always given to Haitians. Now we treat both abysmally."<sup>60</sup>

Cubans and Haitians were placed in the broad new category of "entrants" or "applicants" for political asylum. Denying them political refugee status, an option available to the President under the law, denied them the benefits of the 1980 Refugee Act, which in practice had only applied to refugees from Asia and the Soviet Union. The result was open discrimination against the Cubans, who like the Vietnamese were being expelled by their government or were fleeing from totalitarian oppression. The policy put the entire burden of resettlement and handling of the refugees "upon local governments, private charities, and families" in spite of the obvious Federal responsibility for the entire matter.<sup>61</sup>

The incongruous nature of the situation is best expressed by Msgr. Bryan Walsh, a top expert on Cuban and Haitian refugees, who observes that, "Once a person is here and allowed to remain, he should receive equal treatment of eligibility for services," and points out that, "It makes no sense to have different sets of eligibility for Soviet Jews and Indo-Chinese, and Haitians and Cubans on the other hand."<sup>62</sup>

The Administration not only denied the Mariel refugees the benefits of the Cuban Refugee Program, but also ignored the support and active cooperation of the vast Cuban-American community. It made no use of the organized help it could have provided throughout the



country, and although using large numbers of bilingual Cubans would have helped in handling the refugees in the camps and the resettlement process, no major appeal was made to recruit Cuban college students or others to aid at those troubled centers. Despite the Cuban community's proved success in handling the flow while it centered in the Miami area, no Cuban-American was given a policy-making or executive position in the overall operation or at the refugee camps.<sup>63</sup>

The enthusiasms and effective assistance generated during the initial days of the exodus by the Cuban community was circumvented or ignored when Federal authorities took control. Observers agree that the initial attitude displayed by FEMA, which they characterize as one of superiority, and which involved issuing orders without interest in receiving advice (with personal exceptions), alienated possible help, and in turn generated many crucial problems that still linger within the refugee population.

By contrast, "a number of retired governmental personnel who knew nothing about the Cuban situation were brought in to handle the processing of the refugees apparently with very high salaries," according to a source familiar with that aspect of the operation. Institutional offers to collaborate on the part of Cuban organizations or task committees created for that purpose — outside and within the Miami area — were ignored or practically rejected.<sup>64</sup> This ultimately had very negative consequences at the refugee camps.

Experts and events indicate that the handling of the refugee situation has been plagued with inadequate leadership and lack of coordination, both between the various government agencies, and in the relations of these with the voluntary agencies involved in the resettlement process. A vivid example was the policy on security clearances in the camps, which apparently changed daily, resulting at one point in a strong confrontation between FEMA and the U.S. Catholic Conference, the main voluntary agency.<sup>65</sup> Frustration and the lack of adequate authority and funds led to the aforementioned resignation of Casey, the first coordinator of the Cuban-Haitian Task Force sent by the State Department to Miami. Ultimately, the victims of this situation were the refugees, who had to live with the bureaucratic chaos and contradictions in a highly inadequate environment that inevitably led to explosive events in the camps.

Legislation recently enacted (The Stack Act and the Fascell-Stone Amendment) will bring welcome help in the areas of education of refugees and reimbursement of local communities for expenses incurred. But important gaps remain. No policy has yet been developed to cope with the perhaps more serious problem of resocialization, unemployment and housing. Considering the likelihood of a return to the Miami area by many of those resettled elsewhere, especially on the arrival of winter, these issues may reach an explosive level in Dade County if effective measures are not implemented. It has been suggested that a massive housing project — long overdue in that area — may help in coping with both problems.

As with the Camarioca exodus in 1965, there is a

consensus regarding one aspect of the government's performance which should be highly praised and which Cubans have not forgotten, but receives little, if any, press coverage. This is the humanitarian aid rendered by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Navy. These two entities contributed significantly to the saving of hundreds of lives. Their aid was particularly meaningful in view of Castro's policy concerning the unsafe loading of boats and the nature of the boatlift itself. Not only were vessels grossly overloaded in many cases, but they were frequently ordered to leave under unfavorable weather conditions. Many were not seaworthy to begin with. American ships not only prevented the death toll from going over the 26 confirmed victims, but also their sailors showed, through their concern, that the American people cared for the welfare of the refugees. Unfortunately, this generalization is not applicable to all the personnel handling the refugees, especially those in the camps.

### *The Refugees in the Camps*

As an inevitable result of the large numbers of refugees arriving in the U.S. in May and early June, military bases had to be opened to accommodate them. But in spite of the knowledge that criminals and mental patients were being sent along with families, minors, unaccompanied males, homosexuals and prostitutes, no effort was made from the beginning to segregate those categories. This population mix would constitute one of the most serious causes of conflict within the camps. More than 78,000 have been in the camps at Eglin, North Florida (10,734), Fort Chaffee, Arkansas (19,524), Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania (19,010), and Ft. McCoy, Wisconsin (14,469).<sup>66</sup> By late December only about 6,000 were still at the camps. These were primarily unaccompanied Black males and were considered difficult to resettle due to their lack of kin and the bad publicity resulting from disturbances in the camps.

Although the low number remaining in the camps can be considered a success story, that proportionally small amount may prove very difficult to resettle. The testimony of refugees who experienced camp life and of personnel working with them in some capacity yields some clues on what could be done in the future to prevent recurrences, and perhaps to help in the resettlement of this population.

Several common denominators could be found in all the camps. Very few complaints exist about the lack of the essentials for life: food, shelter, and clothing. The refugees have had these minimal needs adequately covered. Rioting and disturbances did not occur for any of these reasons. It was instead in the social atmosphere of the camps — in the interrelationship of the refugees, the camp administration, and military guards — where the explanation for the disorders lie.

Authorities within the camps lacked a clear understanding and orientation of what to do with this population. Contradictory and constantly changing policies frequently succeeded each other with the inevitable consequence of frustration. For a number of administrators, working at the camps meant simply the opportunity of making good money. They didn't have much concern for the welfare of the refugees who did not speak English

or who could not understand the complexity of the processing involved. Because of this a number of officials were obviously not interested in ending this "financially rewarding experience" and thus failed to move as diligently as they could have to expedite resettlement of the refugees. Some administrators perceived it as a sad and unrewarding duty to guard a number of "undesirables" for whom they could only feel contempt. In spite of the interpreters, the language barrier proved to be a serious obstacle to peace at the camps. It must be emphasized, at the same time, that there were also dedicated individuals who disregarded the language barrier and worked with dedication and personal sacrifice for the welfare of the refugee population.

Even more important than the language barrier was the lack of knowledge prevailing "outside the fences" about the totalitarian oppression from which the refugees came. No adequate orientation on the subject was given to the personnel assisting the refugees. In this sense, it is significant to point out that no major disturbance occurred in south Florida, where the majority of the refugees were processed, even when they had to be held in camp-like situations for long periods of time. Experts agree that the large number of Cuban-American volunteers made the difference.

On the refugee side, the large numbers in the camps contained an inherent seed for much trouble that would later germinate. There was, indeed, an unfortunate mix that included some hard-core and petty criminal elements, mentally disturbed, social misfits, and sexual perverts, as well as a majority of perfectly normal and respectable individuals.<sup>67</sup> Some brought to the camps old feuds from their past experiences in Cuba's prisons, and most of all, the conditioning of a totalitarian society that promotes to some degree behavior considered deviant by our standards.<sup>68</sup>

This heterogeneity, combined with the long stay in the camps under conditions of almost absolute idleness, was sufficient to cause great conflict during the hot summer. In addition, there was an inefficient bureaucratic process which unnecessarily slowed down resettlement in spite of the availability of sponsors, who often were awaiting their close relatives outside the camps. One can then explain the frustration of many refugees who came with very high expectations about this country. There were also charges of provocations and abuses on the part of the Military Police as well as accusations against Castro agents (some of whom were actually removed) for sparking the violence in which ultimately only a small minority participated. In some instances, these explosive circumstances were clearly detected by Cuban-Americans who, on an institutional basis, approached camp authorities warning them of the impending trouble. But they were unfortunately disregarded.<sup>69</sup>

Further factors provided even more fuel to the explosive situation prevailing in varying degrees at all camps. Among them — and not necessarily always and everywhere — was the lack of Federal authority within the refugee compounds, a vacuum which allowed criminal elements to take internal control into their own hands and abuse

others.<sup>70</sup> Considerable demoralization was caused by the "camp syndrome" promoted by idleness, insecurity, lack of accurate information on developments, and the mixing of homosexual couples with families and children. There were allegations of apparent favoritism displayed by some resettlement officials in response to bribes to expedite exit. Furthermore there were allegations of drug traffic between some guards or officials and some refugees at the camps.

The segment of the refugee population that probably suffered the most from inadequate processing at the outset and improper handling of the camp situation was the unaccompanied minors. About a thousand of these were indiscriminately mixed with the rest of the population. In many instances these were youngsters afflicted by serious psychological problems, often compounded by having served prison sentences among common criminals. Close to half of this population had been actually coerced by the Cuban regime to leave and be separated from their families. Under these highly adverse conditions, these minors came to the United States and encountered prison-like conditions very similar to what they had left in Cuba.

No adequate screening had taken place within the different camps to separate youngsters with serious criminal records and the mentally disturbed from the rest. These minors, furthermore, shared the idleness that plagued the rest of the camp. Inevitably this led to an intolerable situation bursting into violence and bloodshed. Official statistics for the month of July alone recorded 125 cases of fractures, 175 stabbings, 82 rapes and 5 suicides within this population.<sup>71</sup> It seems that authorities used unprofessional methods to discipline these youths and resorted to the excessive use of force. Such were the cases of handcuffing an individual by hand and feet to a bed. Alternative methods were no better: putting youths to sleep or keeping them drugged whenever they became troublesome.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, the resettlement situation became even more entangled in red tape for these youngsters as to who had, ultimately, legal custody of them, since gradually they would be reaching the legal age of 18 and would, in all likelihood, end up on the streets without receiving psychological or any other kind of care. Reports received by this research by the end of the 1980 indicate that conditions have improved considerably for this population.<sup>73</sup>

If the cost in bad publicity from the riots was great, the economic cost of the refugee camps is probably even greater. No official estimates on this matter were available to this research, but some have estimated the official cost, including the budget for the Navy and Coast Guard Operations, to be close to \$1 billion.<sup>74</sup> Estimates made in September at Fort McCoy placed the cost of supporting each refugee at \$125 per day. That cost could have been reduced considerably. "If a fraction of that per diem would have been given to help the sponsors, all refugees would have been out of the camps a long time ago," said a refugee leader at that camp who was former political prisoner in Cuba. "Perhaps," he added, "there are some who don't want this operation to end too soon."<sup>75</sup> Indeed,

in the resettlement procedure itself lay the crux of the resolution of the remaining refugees without sponsors.

### *The Resettlement Process*

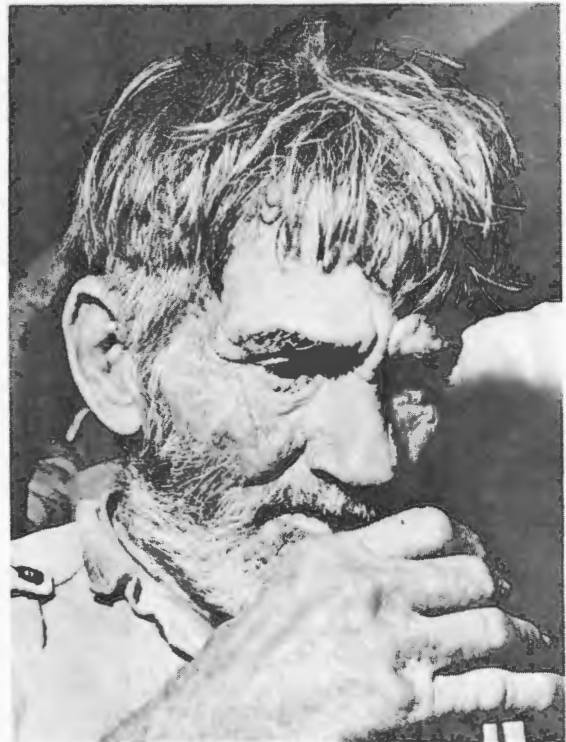
Consistent with conventional procedures for dealing with refugees and immigrant adjustment in the U.S., the federal government assigned the role of determining where the individual or family would immediately resettle to several private voluntary agencies with substantial experience handling these matters.<sup>76</sup> The customary procedure has been to locate a sponsor (preferably a relative or friend) willing to assume the care and orientation to the refugees. This was the method used in relation to the Mariel arrivals. For those who had immediate relatives, resettlement was accomplished fairly rapidly in most cases. No financial assistance was given them for rent or other expenses, and the only aid a person under 65 could receive

The sponsor was morally responsible for the complete care of the refugee once he agreed to the sponsorship. Indeed, this could be considered a highly unfair burden, especially, if there was no family relationship involved.

The magnitude of the Mariel exodus prompted the use of rather unconventional procedures to obtain a sponsor. Often the telephone book was used to reach someone with a similar last name. This led to the situations of total mismatching, especially concerning race. Sometimes when the refugee pleaded to be accepted, the sponsor agreed to help out of pity, only to realize later there was great incompatibility or that the landlord would not accept that many individuals in a residence. At times the lack or minimal cross-checking of sponsors apparently led to exploitation of refugees that were "sponsored" for cheap labor and even illegal activities. But by September, most refugees remaining in the camps were the single or unaccompanied cases. These constituted the hard-core, difficult to resettle cases with prospects of a long stay at the consolidated holding area at Fort Chaffee.

On top of the inherent difficulty of finding sponsors for single or unattached males, possibility of resettlement has been reduced further by the bad publicity on the riots and the exaggerated accounts on the number of criminals among the arrivals. "After all," points out an expert on the refugee situation, "the proportion of hard-core criminals among the refugees was lower than the percentage of congressmen indicted last year." In any event, the present resistance in finding sponsors cause some to question the viability of the traditional resettlement system under present circumstances. The whole picture is aggravated even more by the lack of sufficient funds to aid in the initial months after resettlement. It has been suggested that new approaches that have proven effective under other circumstances could be tried with these refugees. Halfway-homes, successful with other populations, might be an adequate alternative.

In addition to the problem of finding sponsors for the refugees, another dimension concerning the future should also be considered. This is the damaging effect upon individuals caused by 21 years under an oppressive totalitarian system — a matter of great importance that has received little attention so far. It is not only that they are unfamiliar with modern conveniences and that they lack insight on the functions of a free, democratic society, but also that they must overcome other negative influences brought from the totalitarian culture where they had to live. Cuban society prohibited and looked down on entrepreneurship and individual initiative, thus in effect promoting passiveness. Simulation and constant lying is the normal adaptative mechanism to a system that attempts to control the complete individual. Many Cubans on the island, especially over 40 years of age, have reacted with ingenuity to those oppressive conditions, effectively by-passing that control apparatus, relying on their experience of the pre-Castro era. To others, especially the younger, more inexperienced refugees, their arrival in the U.S. represents their first exposure to a free socio-economic system. This problem suggests the urgent need for some form of "re-socialization" program to help especially the younger ones to adapt successfully to the new society.



**THE FACE OF A REFUGEE** — This old man made it to the United States a few years ago and claims to have been the fisherman Ernest Hemingway made famous in his book *The Old Man and the Sea*. Many like him are still in Cuba, longing to be free.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

The Mariel exodus represents the latest manifestation of a totalitarian system imposed upon the Cuban people for more than two decades. It has a precedent in the Camarioca boatlift in 1965, but this experience and ensuing airlift that served Castro as a convenient safety valve were largely ignored by the Carter Administration — despite repeated warnings even by Castro himself — thus catching the U.S. government totally unprepared to deal with such an enormous number of refugees in such a short period of time. There are indications and even threats on the part of Castro to use the same procedure again — perhaps as a bargaining element between the two governments.<sup>77</sup>

An effective policy must be devised to prevent the reoccurrence of such an episode, not only with the use of appropriate security measures, but also by enlisting the cooperation of the Cuban-American community. They must not be used, again, as instruments in the hands of the Castro regime. But as long as a totalitarian oppressive system prevails in Cuba, the resumption of the exodus will always remain a possibility. Humanitarian measures must be taken to promote true family reunification, especially important after the great amount of family disruption promoted by the Mariel exodus.

The vast majority of the Mariel refugees are good working people who want to start a new life in freedom. They bear a close resemblance to the arrivals of the 1970's who have proven very successful in adapting to the American way of life.<sup>78</sup> It is well-known that they, as well as the Cuban refugees of the 1960's, have made significant contributions to the geographic areas in which they have settled.<sup>79</sup> But in both previous instances they counted on initial support to help overcome the conditions of destitution imposed upon them when they chose to leave a totalitarian regime under which they had lived for a rather short period of time. This support was either from relatives or friends or included assistance extended under the Cuban Refugee Program. That made a big difference. The 1980 Cuban refugees may well match the accomplishments of their predecessors, if adequate help is provided. The Mariel "entrants" that are accepted in this country should be given the status of refugees and be entitled to receive the same assistance as other refugee groups. Based on their proven experience, the Cuban Refugee Program should assume the major responsibility on this matter.<sup>80</sup>

In contrast with previous Cuban exile waves, this one contains a minority identified as "antisocial" or criminal

— most of whom were forced to leave the island. Many of these have been detained but others may have escaped detection. These individuals should be sent back to Cuba as well as those without a criminal record who want to do so. Those caught breaking the law must be dealt with swiftly through the criminal process.

Due to the negative impact of a totalitarian system, many will need some form of special resocialization that may help overcome negative attitudes, acquired in the struggle for survival under extremely oppressive conditions, especially among the young. Because of this, the Mariel refugees need special assistance — particularly those without relatives — along the lines of orientation and "coaching" into American life, which they may obtain largely from the already-established Cuban community. Language and retraining in skills should be a top priority regarding occupation.

Special assistance is also needed, particularly within the Miami metropolitan area, to help solve the acute housing shortage and rising unemployment problems caused by the concentration of about 90,000 refugees in that area.

It would be advisable to monitor the current socio-economic conditions of the Mariel refugees in the Miami area as well as in other areas of major concentration in order to determine the degree of adjustment to American life and to identify the areas where special assistance is most needed.<sup>81</sup>

It is, above all, essential that no gap develop between the Cubans of the 1960's and those of the 1980's, since this could have a disastrous effect on all concerned. For that reason the motivation to help on the part of the Cuban community needs to be reactivated and the exiles need to play a much more active role to end the isolation in which approximately 6,000 refugees still find themselves at Fort Chaffee. New avenues must be urgently explored to properly resettle those who are still without a place to call "home." The use of the film on the plight of the Mariel refugees "in their own words" produced by the United States International Communications Agency is particularly recommended for this purpose.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, the Mariel exodus constitutes a challenge for the Cuban exile community, for the people of south Florida, and for the federal government. In a very deep sense, it is also a challenge for the American people, who with traditional compassion and understanding have, over the past two centuries turned this land of immigrants into a unique and great nation.

## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The official ration that Cubans could buy only in government stores, often after standing in long lines, is inferior in caloric content than the one the slaves were entitled to receive during colonial times. See, Alberto Arredondo, *Reforma Agraria, La Experiencia Cubana*, Editorial San Juan, 1969, p. 39.  
Cuba in this sense was more repressive than Russia and China, who never eliminated the free market of food. Beginning in 1980 the remaining small private farmers are being allowed on an experimental basis to sell their surplus freely.
- <sup>2</sup> See interview with Humberto Perez, head of the Central Planning Board of Cuba, "Lo Que el Pueblo Debe Saber," *Bohemia* (Havana), February 16, 1979, pp. 59 & 78.
- <sup>3</sup> See Juan M. Clark, "La Discriminacion Politica en la Cuba Actual," *Ideal* (Miami), January 11, 1979.
- <sup>4</sup> 1979 saw a rash of wall graffiti, including the University of Havana; many storage places and factories were burned.
- <sup>5</sup> This has been another of Castro's arbitrary use of the law. Any one can experience the effects of the "peligrosidad" law since there is no one to appeal. One can serve up to four years in prison just on account of his moral convictions as a result of this law.
- <sup>6</sup> According to statistics from the Cuban Refugee Program, cited in Juan M. Clark, "Reflexiones en Torno a una Balsa," *El Miami Herald*, November 12, 1979, p. 4.
- <sup>7</sup> See Juan M. Clark, *The Exodus from Revolutionary Cuba (1959-1974): A Sociological Analysis*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 1975, p. 97.
- <sup>8</sup> One of the guards was killed as a result of the shots fired at the bus used by the would-be refugees. The inside of the bus had been cleverly lined with special metal sheets to protect the passengers against gunshot. A bullet fired by one of the guards ricocheted and caused the death of another. This was later confirmed by the diplomats who refused to extradict the refugees.
- <sup>9</sup> Being caught in their own trap, the Castro government had no alternative but to allow the departure. Safe conducts were issued at the Embassy so the refugees could go to their homes until their departure date arrived. At that point another ordeal began due to the "spontaneous" harassment they had to suffer, ranging from having their houses egged and their utilities cut to verbal and physical abuse.
- <sup>10</sup> These included signs of beatings that required stitches and dog bites witnessed by this researcher upon the refugees arrival in Miami.
- <sup>11</sup> *Time Magazine* had estimated at 900,000 the number who wanted to come to the U.S. at that time; see "Cuba the Freedom Flood", April 1, 1966, and Clark, *The Exodus*, pp. 91 & 103 n45.
- <sup>12</sup> Clark, *The Exodus*, p. 86.
- <sup>13</sup> According to unpublished records of the Comite de Planificacion de Poblacion of the Central Planning Board of Cuba by June 1980, a total of 1,285,000 had applied to leave. Diplomatic sources in Havana has estimated that by the end of August that figure reached 1.5 million. By the end of December the U.S. Interest Section in Havana had received 130,000 letters from Cubans waiting to leave the country. These letters represented approximately 600,000 persons from Havana's metropolitan area alone, a fourth of the nation's capital. See, "Millares Solicitan Asistencia a E.U. para Salir de Cuba," *El Miami Herald*, December 16, 1980, p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup> Able-bodied persons leaving through the Varadero-Miami Airlift or Freedom Flights were forced to work in agricultural fields under very harsh conditions and with practically no pay. Length of stay there was usually until departure time, and there were cases of persons spending more than three years under those conditions.
- <sup>15</sup> See "Exile Boats Arrive Near Havana" *The Miami News*, April 21, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>16</sup> See "Escape from Bedlam and Boredom," *Time*, May 12, 1980, p. 38. Examples of prices: \$30 for take-out chicken dinner, a bottle of Scotch \$50. See also "Negocios de los Comunistas en Mariel," *Diario Las Americas*, May 8, 1980, p. 16B.
- <sup>17</sup> According to interviews with refugees that experienced such conditions.
- <sup>18</sup> Clark, *The Exodus*, p. 74.
- <sup>19</sup> "Navy Ordered to Help Move Refugee Flotilla," *The Miami Herald*, May 1, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>20</sup> "U.S. Opens Arms to Cuban Exodus," *The Miami Herald*, May 6, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>21</sup> "FBI Discovering Some Undesirables, Among Flood of Refugees from Cuba", *The Washington Post*, April 29, 1980, p. A1.

- <sup>22</sup> "Some Refugees Suffer Psychological Problems" *The Miami Herald*, May 1, 1980, p. 16A. "Three Cases of Leprosy", *The Miami Herald*, May 17, 1980, p. 1C.
- <sup>23</sup> "Obligan a una Cubana a Recorrer las Calles de la Habana con un Cartel Infamante Colgado del Cuello," *Diario Las Americas*, May 22, 1980, p. 10, and "Mini-Rallies Jeer Cubans Wanting to Join Exodus," *The Miami Herald*, May 23, 1980, p. 28A.
- <sup>24</sup> "Cuban Multitudes March in 'Carnival' for Castro," *The Miami Herald*, May 18, 1980, p. 24A.
- <sup>25</sup> See "Four on Cuban Tug Ask Asylum," *The Miami Herald*, May 27, 1980, p. 8A and "Se Asila Entrenador de Natacion en Puerto Rico," *El Miami Herald*, May 30, 1980, p. 2.
- <sup>26</sup> "Cuban Spies Among Refugees FBI Says," *The Miami Herald*, May 8, 1980, p. 1A.  
Wiley Thompson, a spokesman of the FBI, said there were a number of Cuban government agents found among the refugees.  
"Group Says Cuban Revolutionaries Infiltrated With Refugees," *The Washington Star*, February 13, 1981, p. A3.
- <sup>27</sup> Testimony to this research by Msgr. Bryan Walsh, Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, a long time expert on the Cuban exodus and refugee matters.
- <sup>28</sup> Don Bohning, "Fidel Turns Embarassment into Advantage," *The Miami Herald*, April 27, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>29</sup> Clark, *The Exodus*, p. 241.
- <sup>30</sup> Clark, *The Exodus*, p. 228.
- <sup>31</sup> See Clark, *The Exodus*, p. 234 for statistics on earlier arrivals. Statistics for the Mariel exodus are from the survey directed by Dr. Jose I. Lasaga with a representative sample of 400 refugees in the Miami area. This is the first in-depth study conducted with the recent arrivals exploring more than simple demographic characteristics. The survey was conducted between July 15 and August 10, 1980, when more than 95% of the total influx had arrived.
- <sup>32</sup> Cuba has today one of the highest divorce rates in the world, according to United Nations statistics. See *Demographic Yearbook*, 30 (1978), pp. 431-433.
- <sup>33</sup> See Alejandro Portes, Juan M. Clark and Robert L. Bach, "The New Wave: A Statistical Profile of Recent Cuban Exiles to the United States," *Cuban Studies*, January, 1977.
- <sup>34</sup> According to statistics released by INS to this researcher.
- <sup>35</sup> These cases have been separated from the rest of the refugee population. They have been mostly concentrated at detention centers in Atlanta, Georgia; McNeil Island, Washington; Levenworth, Kansas, Talladega, Alabama, and a number of other centers.
- <sup>36</sup> According to estimates made by former political prisoners in the Miami area.
- <sup>37</sup> See Willard P. Rose, "Some Refugees are Imprisoned without Crimes," *The Miami Herald*, December 21, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>38</sup> See Juan M. Clark, *El Exodo de 1980: Antecedentes y Motivaciones*, paper presented to the II Congress of Dissident Cuban Intellectual, Columbia University, New York, August 29, 1980.
- <sup>39</sup> See "Blockade Fails to Stop 276-Foot Cruise Liner" *The Miami Herald*, June 3, 1980, p. 16A and "As Boatlift Wanes, Castro Sends Hundreds of Criminals", *The Miami Herald*, June 5, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>40</sup> See "20,000 Gay Refugees Await Sponsor," *The Miami Herald*, June 7, 1980, p. 1A, and "Camp Personnel Deny Report of 20,000 Gay Refugees," *The Miami Herald*, July 8, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>41</sup> See "Duro una Hora la Reunion de Castro Con McHenry", *Diario Las Americas*, July 20, 1980, p. 1. U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua was also present.
- <sup>42</sup> According to testimony to this research of WRHC radio journalist Tomas Regalado, based on his interviews with incoming refugees.
- <sup>43</sup> See Fitz McAden & Joan Fleishman, "U.S. Gropes for Answer to Hijacks," *The Miami Herald*, August 28, 1980, p. 1A. On August 14 a hijacked National Airlines DC-10 was charged \$12,500 for fuel, immigration and customs fees, food, beverages and other expenses.
- <sup>44</sup> See "Parte de Miami Grupo a Cargo de Refugiados," *El Miami Herald*, August 8, 1980, p. 1.
- <sup>45</sup> Robert Rivas & Janet Fix, "Fumes Kill Refugee Girl Abroad Boat", *The Miami Herald*, August 30, 1980, p. 18A.
- <sup>46</sup> "Refugees Rip Down Fence" (at Fort McCoy), *The Miami Herald*, September 8, 1980, p. 10A. As in other instances of disturbances, this was the minority, and agitators were apparently involved. By contrast, the bulk of the refugees on their own accord put up the fences which the rioters had torn down.
- <sup>47</sup> According to figures released to this research by INS.
- <sup>48</sup> See "Fidel Calls Off Crisis for Carter," *The Miami Herald*, September 17, 1980, p. 1A, and "Agradece

Carter a Castro la Decision de Terminar con el Exodo de Cubanos," *Diario Las Americas*, September 28, 1980, p. 1.

- <sup>49</sup> See Dan Williams, "Cuba Team Stalks Anti-Communist, Miami Police Say," *The Miami Herald*, November 15, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>50</sup> According to estimates made in Miami by the Junta Patriotica, a coalition of Cuban exile organizations, and given to this researcher by its president Dr. Manuel A. de Varona.
- <sup>51</sup> See Thomas Dorney "2 Suits filed to Stop Influx of Cubans, Haitians," *The San Juan Star*, September 30, 1980, p. 3; Manny Suarez, "Island Files Suit to Bar Opening Refugee Camp," *The San Juan Star*, October 1, 1980, p. 1; Bartolome Brignoni, "Comite Amenaza con Para General en Protesta Llegada Refugiados," *El Mundo*, 3 de Octubre, 1980 p. 5; Julio Ghigliotty, "March Through Juana Diaz Protests Refugees," *The San Juan Star*, October 6, 1980, p. 3.
- See also Zita Arocha, "Oposicion Boricua Aprovecha tema de refugiados," *El Miami Herald*, October 6, 1980, p. 1.
- <sup>52</sup> "Desenvuelvan una vida normal en el EE.UU. 100,000 refugiados en la Florida," *Diario Las Americas*, September 21, 1980, p. 1.
- <sup>53</sup> See Michael Capuzzo, "Refugees Fill Ranks of Jobless; Dade's Rate is at Record High," *The Miami Herald*, December 20, 1980, p. 1B.
- <sup>54</sup> See George Stein and Guillermo Martinez, "Little Havana Attacked by Boatlift Criminals", *The Miami Herald*, September 8, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>55</sup> Ana Veciana and Morton Lucoff, "103 Refugees in Jail Count," *The Miami News*, January 3, 1981. This was based on a survey of the jail population directed by Silvia Unzueta, Special Projects Administrator for Refugee Affairs of Metropolitan Dade County government. Her report, *Study of Hispanic Inmates of the Three Metro Dade County Correction and Rehabilitation Facilities* was released on December 31, 1980.
- <sup>56</sup> See Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh, Archdiocesan Director, "Mariel, Crime and Scapegoats," *The Miami Herald*, December 29, 1980, p. 6A.
- <sup>57</sup> Speech of Fidel Castro on March 8, 1980, before the general assembly of the Federation of Cuban Women, broadcasted by Cuban radio.
- <sup>58</sup> "CIA: Castro Uso Exodo para Refrenar Descontento," *El Miami Herald*, June 2, 1980, p. 4. See also Roberto Fabricio, "His Warnings Were Unheeded Until Too Late," *The Miami Herald*, December 6,

1980, p. 1B, where the case of David Henderson of the State Department Cuban Desk who predicted the occurrence of a Mariel-like boatlift but was totally ignored and actually reassigned to Paraguay after his third memo on the subject.

- <sup>59</sup> Carlos Arbolea, president of a Miami bank with other 100 civic leaders led a petition on June 16, 1980, to President Carter concerning this matter, but were ignored. A representation of these citizens including Horacio Aguirre, director of *Diario Las Americas*, the main Spanish daily newspaper of the area tried, also in vain, to meet with Mr. Carter during his brief visit to Miami after the Black, MacDuffie riots in May.
- <sup>60</sup> See Tom Fiedler and Guy Gugliotta, "How Resettlement Has Become a Mess," *The Miami Herald*, June 1, 1980, p. 1A.
- <sup>61</sup> The most dramatic example of the overburdening of local institutions is the case of Jackson Memorial Hospital, a semipublic institution, that has had to bear the brunt of the sick refugees that will not be accepted by the private hospitals in the area. Through October 23, 1980, they had spent \$5,710,017 with Cuban, Haitian and Nicaraguan refugees, but have received reimbursement for only \$1,644,600.20, not having any hope of \$701,008 spent on Nicaraguan cases, according to testimony to this research by Cristina de Falla, director of International Relations of the hospital.
- <sup>62</sup> According to Msgr. Walsh's testimony to this researcher.
- <sup>63</sup> Sergio Pereira, assistant to the Dade County Manager, who had an excellent performance in the processing of the refugees in that area, was appointed only as advisor to Ambassador Palmieri, in charge of refugee affairs. It appears that by virtue of his lack of decision-making authority. Pereira's role has been extremely limited.
- <sup>64</sup> The best example of this rejection occurred with the *Liaison Committee from Illinois with Cuban Refugees at Fort McCoy* who managed to promote 500 sponsors in the Chicago area. But after their press conference in which they expressed their concern about conditions at the camp were turning rather explosive, they were institutionally barred from the camp, according to Dr. Marcelino Miyares who presided over that liaison committee. Riots erupted there shortly after the warning. In a similar fashion, an Ad Hoc Committee created in Miami under the leadership of Dr. Manolo Reyes, was totally ignored. See "Declaraciones del Comite Ad Hoc que se Creo para Ayundar a los Refugiados Cubanos," *Diario Las Americas*, September 12, 1980, p. 12. Only the already mentioned Junta Patriotica was allowed a very limited role in an advisory capacity, but its recommendations were practically ignored.

- <sup>65</sup> See Fiedler and Gugliotta, "How Resettlement . . ."
- <sup>66</sup> According to State Department statistics.
- <sup>67</sup> The American Psychiatric Association issued on October 6, 1980, a news release in which they expressed their deep concern with the callous treatment given by the Cuban government to the mentally ill who apparently "were abused from Cuban mental hospitals to the Freedom Flotilla to the United States." They also commended the National Institute of Mental Health for their work with these cases. A similar situation of expulsion of deaf-mute patients without their consent or that of their families, was detected by this researcher.
- <sup>68</sup> Participation in the illegal black market is a must in present day Cuba. Because of that, theft from government facilities is widespread. Negligence and lack of initiative at work are also very popular as a form of conscious or subconscious opposition to the government.
- <sup>69</sup> See note 2, p. 35.
- <sup>70</sup> This instance was well documented by *Time*, "Camp of Fear is Wisconsin," September 8, 1980, p. 28.
- <sup>71</sup> See *Fact Sheet, Cuban Refugee Children*, September 30 briefing for the Juvenile Justice Federal Interagency Coordinating Council, by Hershel Saucier, Associate Commissioner ACYF/HDS/HHS.
- <sup>72</sup> See Michael Browning, "Web of Uncertainty Traps Homeless Refugee Teenagers," *The Miami Herald*, September 27, 1980, p. 1D, and Cathy Trost and Dave Zurawick, "Fort McCoy Branded a Concentration Camp for Cubans," *The Miami Herald*, October 23, 1980, p. 6D. Testimonies from persons who had experience with the minors' situation in the camps were also used.
- <sup>73</sup> See Paul Health Hoeffel, "Fort Chaffee's Unwanted Cubans: *New York Times Magazine*, December 21, 1980.
- <sup>74</sup> See Juan de Onis, "U.S. and Cuba: Still Far Apart," *The New York Times*, October 16, 1980. p. A11.
- <sup>75</sup> According to testimony to this research by Sergio Fernandez, a top refugee leader at Fort McCoy. His estimate was based on figures given to him and others by the military chief at that time.
- <sup>76</sup> The main voluntary agencies resettling refugees with their corresponding percentage of resettlements have been: the U.S. Catholic Conference (58%), The Church World Service (17.3%), International Rescue Committee (10.4%), the Lutheran Immigration Refugee Service (5.9%), World Relief Rescue Service (4.9%), the Hebrew Immigration Society (1.6%), the American Council for Nationalities Service (1.2%), the Tolstoy Foundation (0.5%) and the Southern Baptist Convention (0.2%).
- <sup>77</sup> In his twelve hour report to the II Communist Party Congress on December 17, 1980, Fidel Castro again used the threat of opening Mariel or any other port for another boatlift for those who want to leave if the U.S. does not curtail the flow of escapees (in boats or rafts) from Cuba.
- <sup>78</sup> See Alejandro Porte and Juan M. Clark, *Cuban Immigration to the United States, 1972-1979, A Preliminary Report of Findings*, Press Release, Miami, May 13, 1980. This longitudinal study followed in time 590 refugees, mostly of blue collar background, that arrived in 1972-1973. They were interviewed then and in 1976 and 1979. The final wave of interviews shows a very high level of adaptation of individuals. By 1979, only 5.2% were unemployed, mostly because of disability; 93.5% felt satisfied or very satisfied with life in the city they were residing; 40% already owned their homes, and the vast majority (84.8%) were planning to become citizens of the U.S.
- <sup>79</sup> See, *The Cuban Refugee Problem in Perspective, 1959-1980*, The Heritage Foundation, Washington D.C., July, 1980; also Carlos Arboleya, "Cuban Influx: Miami's Explosive Blessing," *The Miami Herald*, June 8, 1980, p. 4E, and the expanded, full version of that work, *The Cuban Community 1980*, and Juan M. Clark, *Why? The Cuban Exodus, Background, Evolution and Impact in USA*, Union of Cubans in Exile, Miami, 1978.
- <sup>80</sup> By mid-January, 1981, the Mariel "entrants" that qualify will be entitled to receive financial and medical aid. It seems that the procedure to be used is rather cumbersome, preventing the case from receiving immediate aid if it is needed.
- <sup>81</sup> A follow-up of the survey conducted during the summer within the Miami refugee population ascertaining their status in terms of unemployment and housing problems, under the direction of Dr. Jose I. Lasaga, should be carried out nation-wide in the major areas of concentration. Other items such as changes in attitudes should also be explored.
- <sup>82</sup> Special permission would be required to show this bilingual film in the U.S. due to the inherent restrictions imposed to material produced by that agency.