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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 18, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD A. HAUSER

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS

SUBJECT: Cuban Immigration Issues for  
President's Visit to Miami

Renee Szybala identified three immigration issues of current concern to the Cuban community in Miami. Questions on these issues may arise during the President's visit:

1. This is a ridiculously trivial issue but reportedly a very topical one of great concern to Cuban-Americans in Miami. The INS Miami district office recently moved to a new building, prior to completion of the parking lot. This caused great inconvenience to many Cuban-Americans with immigration problems. INS claims GSA insisted on the early move. The parking lot should be finished Friday or Monday.

2. A Cuban stowaway, Reina Monica Ramirez, arrived on board a vessel in New Orleans. She was sent to the detention facility in Miami and, before her asylum claim could be processed, was sent to board a plane back to Cuba, via Mexico. Fortunately Mexican authorities would not accept her. Szybala describes this as an INS comedy of errors: it is established policy to review such asylum claims at the highest level within the Justice Department, but this was not done in this case. If asked the President can say the case was not properly handled, but fortunately nothing irrevocable has happened, and the matter will be reviewed at the highest levels. (He cannot guarantee Ramirez will be granted asylum.)

3. The Cuban community may be upset about reductions in legal migration from Cuba. Under the immigration laws restrictions may be placed on acceptance of legal immigrants if the Attorney General certifies that the country in question does not take back excludable aliens. The State Department has asked the Attorney General for such a certification with respect to Cuba, in light of Cuba's refusal to take back the excludable

Maribel boat lift immigrants. None of this is officially public, but the Cuban community may be aware of the potential problem. Cuban Americans are aware that the American interest office in Havana is only issuing visas to immediate relatives. Normal issuance of visas has not been restored since the 1980 difficulties. If asked the President should refer to those difficulties and simply note that we have not yet been able to restore normal visa procedures.

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

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BOATS

MIAMI (UPI) -- THE ADMINISTRATION HAS EXPANDED ITS POLICY OF INTERCEPTING ALIENS IN BOATS OFF THE COAST OF HAITI TO INCLUDE THOSE IN WATERS OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA, IT WAS REPORTED TUESDAY.

OFFICIALS HOPE THE POLICY WILL STOP BOATS CARRYING IMMIGRANTS FROM THE BAHAMAS FROM REACHING FLORIDA SHORES, THE MIAMI HERALD REPORTED.

"INTERDICTION MEANS THAT SINCE JUDGES ARE RULING AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION, WE ARE GOING TO STOP THEM (THE HAITIANS) BEFORE THEY GET HERE," SAID SEN. FAULA HAWKINS, D-FLA.

HAWKINS TRIGGERED THE NEW INTERPRETATION LAST MONTH WHEN SHE DEMANDED AN EXPLANATION FROM FEDERAL OFFICIALS ABOUT WHY 101 UNDOCUMENTED HAITIANS IN TWO BOATS HAD BEEN RESCUED BY THE COAST GUARD AND TOWED TO FLORIDA A FEW DAYS EARLIER, THE HERALD SAID.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY HAD BEEN TO INTERCEPT BOATS OFF THE COAST OF HAITI, AND ALL U.S. INTERDICTIONS HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT IN THE WINDWARD PASSAGE NEAR THE HAITIAN COAST.

HOWEVER, HAWKINS COMPLAINED THE POLICY HAD NO EFFECT ON HAITIANS COMING TO FLORIDA BY BOAT FROM THE BAHAMAS.

SHE CALLED COAST GUARD ADM. JAMES GRACEY AND IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE COMMISSIONER ALAN NELSON TO HER OFFICE AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF THE TWO BOATLOADS OF HAITIANS IN FLORIDA LAST MONTH, THE HERALD SAID.

DURING THE MEETING, HAWKINS CALLED ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY GENERAL RUDOLPH GUILLIANI TO CLARIFY THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY.

GUILLIANI AGREED THAT BOATS SHOULD BE INTERCEPTED OUTSIDE THREE MILES OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND GRACEY SAID HE WOULD INSTRUCT COAST GUARD CUTTERS TO COMPLY WITH THAT POLICY.

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