


1981

# The Haitian Boat People: An Overview of the Present Situation Concerning Their Illegal Immigration to Florida

Peter Gordon LaLime  
*School for International Training*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp\\_collection](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection)

 Part of the [Civil Rights and Discrimination Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), and the [Immigration Law Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

LaLime, Peter Gordon, "The Haitian Boat People: An Overview of the Present Situation Concerning Their Illegal Immigration to Florida" (1981). *MA TESOL Collection*. 339.  
[https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp\\_collection/339](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection/339)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the SIT Graduate Institute at SIT Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in MA TESOL Collection by an authorized administrator of SIT Digital Collections. For more information, please contact [digitalcollections@sit.edu](mailto:digitalcollections@sit.edu).

THE HAITIAN BOAT PEOPLE: AN OVERVIEW  
OF THE PRESENT SITUATION  
CONCERNING THEIR ILLEGAL  
IMMIGRATION TO FLORIDA

Peter Gordon Lalime  
October 1981

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Master of Arts in  
Teaching degree at the School for Inter-  
national Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

This project by Peter Gordon Lalime is  
accepted in its present form.

Date: Jan 5/82 Principal Adviser: Alvin J. Fantini  
Project Adviser/Reader: Richard C. Esler II

### ABSTRACT

Beginning about 1972, many of the impoverished people of the Caribbean nation of Haiti have fled their country for Florida. Because they come in sea vessels -- invariably of questionable quality for an open sea voyage -- a name which has been attached to them is that of "boat people." The Haitian boat people leave their homeland for reasons both economic and political in nature. Both their departure from Haiti and their arrival in the United States are illegal events. Once they reach Florida, therefore, immigration authorities attempt to deport them, viewing the Haitians as "economic refugees" not entitled to political asylum. Those who are detained by authorities have been subjected to discriminatory practices, and those who have escaped detection remain vulnerable in a variety of other ways. Recently, two American Presidents have attempted to address the question of the Haitian boat people in the face of illegal immigration from many other countries simultaneously.

This paper attempts to explore more fully the situation in which the Haitians find themselves, and to draw conclusions from the body of facts.

THE HAITIAN BOAT PEOPLE: AN OVERVIEW

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CHAPTER ONE: FROM WHAT DO THEY FLEE?

There are both economic and political motives why Haitians leave their Caribbean homeland.

### CHAPTER TWO: HOW DO THEY GET HERE?

The illegality of leaving Haiti or arriving in the United States without proper papers has given rise to an ugly smuggling trade.

### CHAPTER THREE: A PUBLIC OPINION BACKLASH.

National -- and Florida -- public opinion reflects little sympathy for immigrants, frustration with U.S. immigration law and anger for the Haitian government.

### CHAPTER FOUR: THE CONSEQUENCES OF DETECTION.

The recent volume of illegal Haitian immigration has caused overcrowded detention facilities and subsequent controversial practices.

### CHAPTER FIVE: THE HAITIAN ARRIVALS NOT DETECTED.

Haitians who escape INS detention become vulnerable to everything from debt collectors and disease to dilapidated housing and a new language.

### CHAPTER SIX: JIMMY CARTER AND THE HAITIANS.

The Cuban Boatlift raises the question of an immigration "double standard" and a federal suit is brought against the INS.

### CHAPTER SEVEN: RONALD REAGAN AND THE HAITIANS.

The "immigration iceberg" forces a new President to propose new immigration laws.

## PREFACE

Although this paper is written in fulfillment of the requirements for a degree in teaching English, it has only a few brief references to language. The text is about a people, rather than about linguistics or approaches or language methodologies.

But this is no contradiction. For if we aspire to be humanistic teachers of language who see our students as "whole people," is it not important that we sense the background and the conditions from which they have come to us to ask: "Teach me English."





1.

From What Do They Flee?:

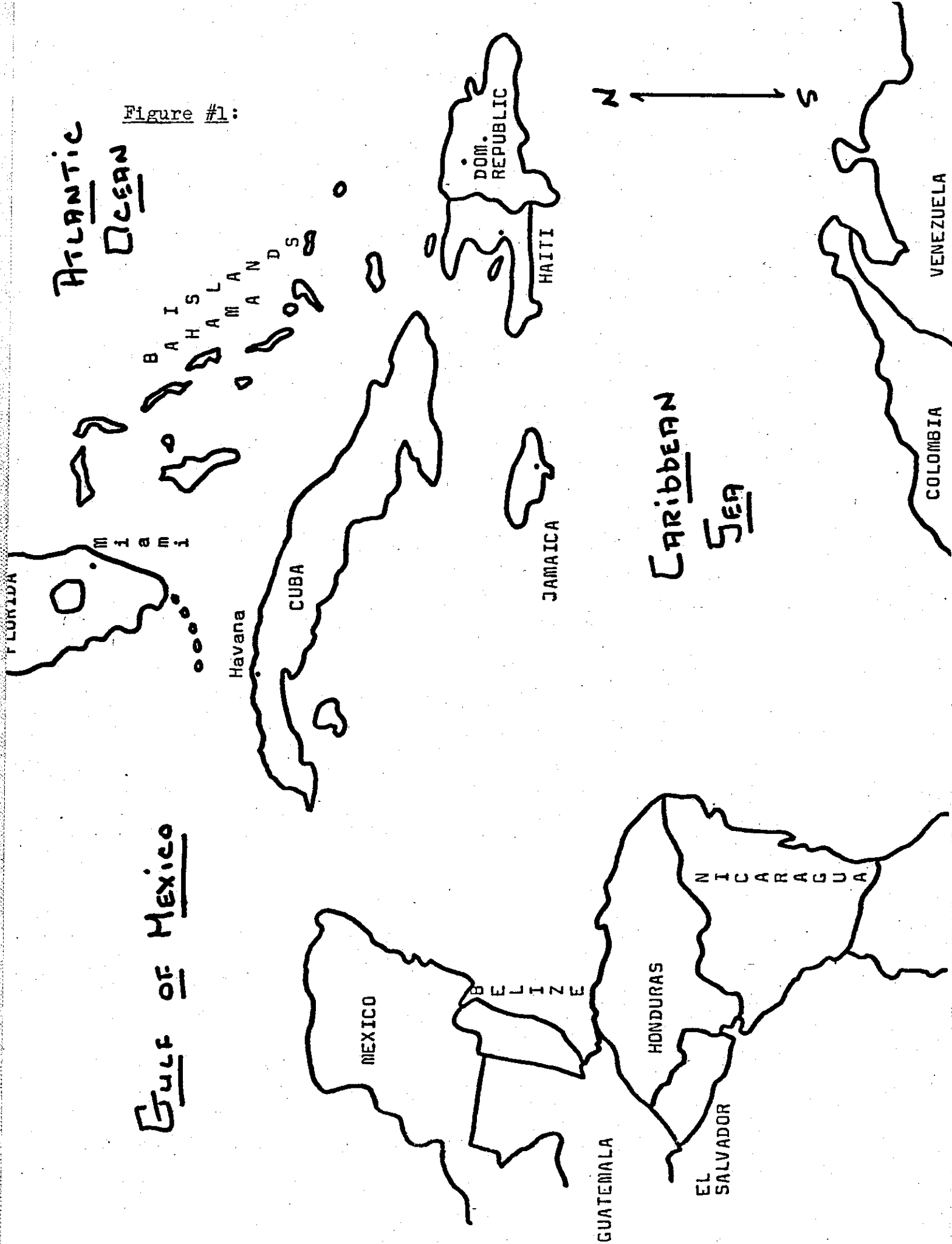
They drift to the shores of the United States, the boat people of Haiti do, to escape the most abject and hopeless poverty of the entire Western Hemisphere. Few peoples anywhere on the face of the earth, in fact, must endure such utterly penurious living conditions as the Haitians must.<sup>1</sup>

Because of geographical proximity, the flow of Atlantic Ocean currents, and the golden promise of material betterment in the United States, the overwhelming number of these Haitians make their landings on the beaches of South Florida. Often they come after stopovers along the Cuban coast, or especially on the lower Bahamas islands, but frequently, many boatloads arrive without having seen land during the entire passage. Customarily, the small, rickety, hand-crafted wooden

---

<sup>1</sup> Among the tables of economic, health, and other statistics compiled, one invariably finds Haiti at the bottom of such lists for the Western Hemisphere and the world.

Figure #1:



boats of questionable seaworthiness are dangerously overloaded. As many as 150 persons have been known to arrive aboard a 55-foot vessel. During the warmer summer months, the Florida landings become almost commonplace events. Even a brief explanation of conditions in Haiti offers some understanding of why:

Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. A burgeoning population has stripped its forests to supply charcoal for cooking and heat. The result is a vicious erosion of the country's already inadequate agriculture capacity.

It is little wonder that Haitian families flee by the hundreds to the relative affluence of the Bahamas and, ultimately, to the unimaginable wealth of the United States. Haitian parents seek for their children what conscientious parents everywhere want: regular meals, the opportunity to work, and a safe place to sleep. They can find none in Haiti. <sup>2</sup>

On this western third of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola which is Haiti, estimates of the average annual per capita income range from as low as \$120 to only \$380. Whatever the case, these dollar figures are among the most dismal in the world. Life expectancy in Haiti is about 50 years and infant mortality is very high. Illiteracy is between

---

<sup>2</sup> "Finding a Handle on Haiti," Miami Herald, 13 May 1981, sec. 4, p. 6.

75 and 90 percent. Necessities and conveniences taken for granted in more fortunate nations are scarce luxuries among the Haitian poor. There is one telephone, one hospital bed, one doctor, one dentist, one school desk, one television for every thousand -- or thousands of -- persons.

What -- more than any other factor -- makes Haiti such a sadly unimproving country is a political history of stormy unrest and a present-day government hardened against betterment for its 5.6 million people. In 1957, in the fashion of the many corrupt and manipulated "elections" of the decades which preceded him, François "Papa Doc" Duvalier became president of the impoverished nation. To secure for himself further entrenchment in power, Duvalier established a secret police force to become notoriously known as the "Tonton Macoutes." Using their loyalty, Duvalier eliminated all political opposition. He diverted millions of U.S. aid dollars targeted for well-intended development projects for his own use, and surrounded himself with a circle of well-paid, loyal government personnel.

Prior to his death in 1971, Duvalier installed his son

Jean-Claude -- soon to be known as "Baby Doc" -- as Haiti's new President-for-Life. But those who had hoped for a better country under the younger Duvalier were soon disappointed. Jean-Claude Duvalier has followed, perhaps less harshly, in the elder's footsteps, continuing to promote the interests of Haiti's wealthy inner circle while ignoring the blatant needs of the masses.

Under this self-serving and totalitarian approach of the Duvalier family's rule over the previous 25 years, the government and the well-placed few around it have profited from many aspects of Haitian life. It has been estimated that perhaps only 10 to 20 percent of the hundreds of millions of dollars poured toward Haitian development during these years has actually filtered through the hands of greedy government officials and reached designated projects. A timely example, Jean-Claude recently syphoned to his personal use up to \$4 million of a \$20 million loan extended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to relieve a severe foreign exchange shortage. The money was paid to the Tonton Macoutes, now more palatably named "Volontaires de la Securite Nation-

ale," whose function despite the change in title remains "the eyes, ears, and iron fist that keep the Haitian populace in line by sheer terror." <sup>3</sup>

An important point should be raised here. We have seen two clear reasons why the Haitians emigrate in such large numbers: (1) horrid economic conditions, and (2) political conditions which keep Haiti stagnant. In the United States, past, present -- and, it appears, future -- immigration law allows refugees shelter in the U.S. if they are fleeing politically abrupt changes. Traditionally, this has meant that refugees from communist regimes -- Cuba, Nicaragua, Viet Nam -- have been welcomed. If, however, the refugees arrive from a "friendly" nation such as Haiti, immigration law tends to view them as "economic refugees" not entitled to automatic asylum in the U.S.

The Haitians argue that it is an arbitrary matter to state categorically on an either-or basis that they are refugees from economics or from politics. For the masses of Haitian poor who constitute 95 percent of the population,

---

3 Jack Anderson, "IMF is Plundered," Miami Herald, 23 March 1981, sec. A, p. 7.

unabated poverty on one hand, and unhearing government on the other, are the same enemy. This question, nevertheless, is of importance later.

To many observers it is clear that:

If ever there were a country that needed a revolution, it is Haiti. According to a recent news report, 1 percent of the Haitian population gets 44 percent of the nation's wealth. This elite Haitian class also pays very little in the way of taxes.

Beyond this, the country is run by...a dictator whose only claim to power is that he was born to it....<sup>4</sup>

Ironical it is that Haiti was the world's first black republic -- and only the second republic founded in all the Western Hemisphere after the United States. Since its independence from France in 1804, Haiti has steadily evolved into a land where millions suffer all the ills of a plundered economy, and lack even the most fundamental human or political rights.<sup>5</sup>

Jean-Claude has even now passed a law which makes it a

---

4 Marvin Dunn, "The Haitian Problem: 'Baby Doc'," Miami Herald, 15 August 1981, sec. E, p. 5.

5 An American friend who lived in Haiti told of an incident she witnessed. A boy was seen stealing mangoes inside a neighbor's yard. Summoned to the house, the police shot the boy dead. There was no investigation into the shooting and the matter was ended.

crime to criticize him:

A Haitian court sentenced 26 dissidents...to terms ranging from a year in jail to 15 years at hard labor.

Sylvio Claude, 46, an opposition politician, got 15 years hard labor on conviction of attempting to overthrow the government...and insulting President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Twenty-one other defendants drew the same sentence....Four defendants were given a year in prison. All had pleaded innocent.

The trial started...10 months after Claude's arrest for printing a newspaper cartoon that implied Duvalier was ripe to be overthrown.

The cartoon showed Duvalier's picture with a question-mark among the crossed-out photographs of deposed dictators Idi Amin of Uganda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Empire, and the late Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua.

The government charged that Claude published the cartoon in a weekly newspaper "in order to incite a revolt." 6

Perhaps until there is an actual revolution in Haiti, or until the present government undertakes some type of miraculous reform upon itself, the Haitian people will continue to flee in the direction of Florida.

---

6 "25 Dissidents in Haiti Get Jail Terms," Miami Herald, 27 August 1981, sec. A, p. 27.



2.

How Do They Get Here?:

The movement of Haitian boat people from Haiti to Florida is an illegal affair. On the one hand, Haiti has a law against emigration from the island country without exit papers. The United States, on the other hand, views anyone who immigrates to its shores without proper entry papers as an "illegal alien" subject to deportation -- unless he can prove a "well-founded fear" of the consequences of returning to his native land. <sup>7</sup>

Many observers of the Haitian situation maintain that the incidents are becoming increasingly rare in which groups of Haitians load by the tens into 30 or 35-foot vessels of their own garnering, cast off in search of a northwesterly ocean current, and drifting totally unassisted in a weeks-

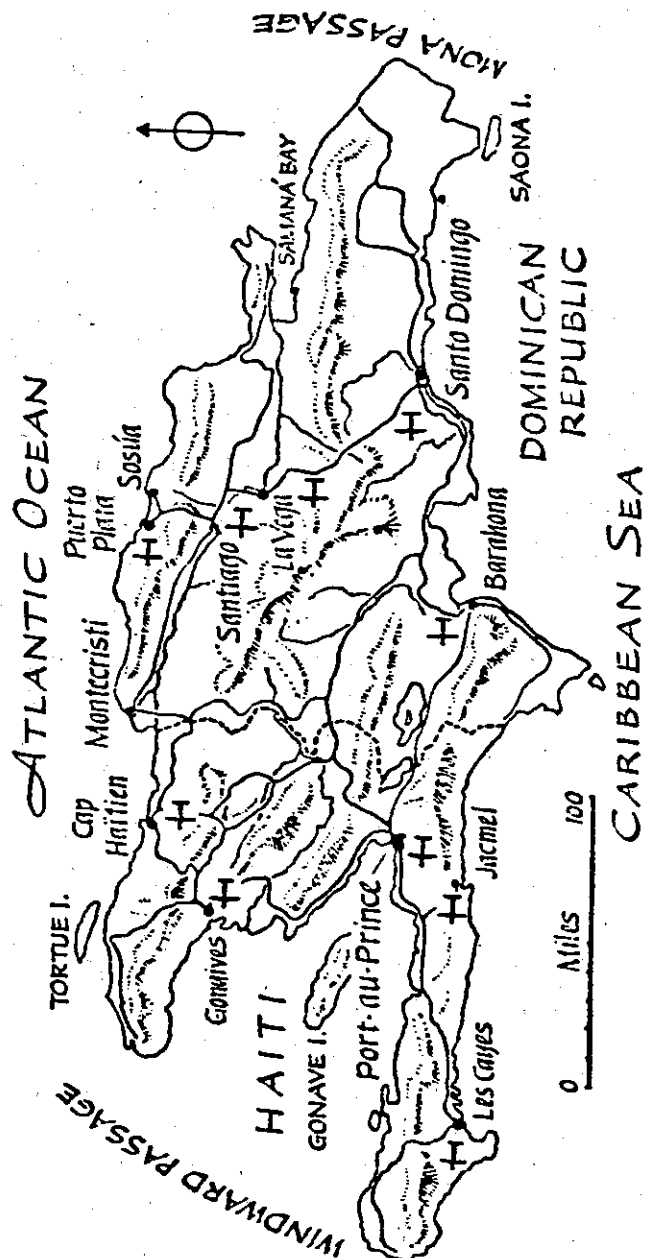
---

<sup>7</sup> Not all Haitians arrive illegally. One practice has been for them to obtain visas through the U.S. Embassy in Port-Au-Prince, travel via commercial airliner to South Florida, then illegally disappear into Haitian communities there, never intending to return.

long fearful voyage, make landing on some undetermined Florida beach. An ugly practice, consuming more and more of the traffic of Haitian boat people, is the operation of briskly active smuggling rings. What has arisen is a horrid commercial system -- resulting in huge profits for an unscrupulous few Haitians -- in the illegal transport of a human cargo into South Florida.

"David François" is one such smuggler. The owner of a medium-sized vessel, François operates his smuggling business out of Cap-Haitien, a port on the country's northern coast. From each of his passengers, he is able to collect the sum of between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for the voyage. Haitian peasants making the trip must sell their possessions, homes, animals, their very land in order to afford such a sum. If François is able to transport 50 persons, his earnings equal from \$75,000 to \$100,000 for a lone trip. A "cargo" of 75 persons would result in a profit as high as \$150,000. The abundance of Haitian poor willing to sacrifice everything to make the hopeful journey with men like François assures

Figure #2:



the smugglers of an active, secure business.<sup>8</sup>

The price of the voyage is high because of the illegality of such ventures, and because circumstances have grown so desperate in Haiti that many persons seek escape. By paying-off Haitian police, coast guard officers or government officials not to interfere with departing boats, smugglers have been permitted to make trips unharassed.

Although U.S. authorities have been alerted to arrest operators such as Francois, they will undoubtedly never be brought to justice under United States jurisdiction. These smugglers transport their passengers to outlying islands in the southern Bahamas. There, well outside U.S. waters, the passengers are loaded onto pre-arranged sailboats in which they drift toward Florida. On occasion, the sailboats are not delivered and the Haitians are left stranded, to become the problem of the Bahamian government -- which also reports a considerable influx from Haiti.

There is another active channel for illegal Haitian movement into South Florida. Some 50 or 60 cargo vessels called

---

8 WPLG (Channel 10/Miami), "Human Cargo," 10-13 August 1981, Mark Potter (reporter) and Lance Heflin (camera).

"island traders" carry on normal shipping business to and from Haitian ports and Miami. It is estimated that two-thirds of these traders are engaged in an extra source of income -- that of transporting aliens surreptitiously .

Several of these boats, in fact, have been modified so that passengers can hide inside walls, behind permanent-looking partitions, or under hidden trapdoors. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has boarded such 50 or 60-foot vessels and searched unsuccessfully for hours for Haitian illegals it was certain were housed within.<sup>9</sup>

The INS is not always unsuccessful:

The crew of a Haitian cargo ship, seized by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service this weekend, is believed to be the latest example in a trend of so-called Haitian merchants who smuggle illegal aliens into Miami.

INS officials are investigating whether the Haitian crew are part of a smuggling ring or just merchants who picked up the passengers of a sinking boat off the coast of Haiti, loaded them onto the 60-70 foot Haitian vessel Concierge.

Eight refugees, part of a group of 180 Haitians that arrived in Miami on five boats over the weekend, said Monday they are crewmen of a merchant vessel which makes regular shuttles to Miami to buy food and clothes for sale in Port-Au-Prince.

The merchant vessel...contained 78 Haitians when it was intercepted by the Coast Guard....

---

9 Ibid.

Sonders Jean Jacques claims he is the captain. He says his crew left Port-Au-Prince Thursday and spotted a sinking smaller boat with about 70 refugees off the coast of Haiti and rescued the Haitians.

Jean Jacques...says his crew has made weekend trips to Miami for almost a year and has never been stopped by authorities before....

But federal officials were dubious. 'It's not a very believable story. It is illegal for someone to enter the United States without a visa and I don't believe they have done this for a year and have not gotten caught,' said (an INS officer).

Another INS official said he is aware of that type of commerce, however. 'A fleet of about 60 does this all the time....They go to the port and buy rags and mattresses and take them back to Haiti and sell them.' 10

The most disturbing reports have surfaced of abuses suffered by passengers while aboard the smuggler or island trader vessels. At sea, the Haitians are at the mercy of their crews. Women are commonly raped, often by entire groups of deck hands, while helpless husbands or family members are present. There are frequent beatings, even killings. One Haitian told of her trip during which 18 persons were thrown overboard to drown in the open sea. The captain, believing that voodoo spirits were the cause of rough waters, sacrificed the 18 as an appeasement. Passengers are held to silence by voodoo curses and rarely tell of these sickly

---

10 "INS Investigates Haitian Arrivals; Is It New Trend?," Miami Herald, 12 May 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

abuses. <sup>11</sup>

Finally, there is another means by which undocumented Haitians reach Florida shores. Some U.S. immigration officers are convinced that larger, ocean-going freighters are now involved in the human cargo trade. Such an operation has never been witnessed by authorities, but conjectures are that by a pre-arranged signal Haitians launch their wooden sailboats off the country's north coast to rendezvous at sea with the passing freighter. Called "mother ships," these freighters of unknown size load both boat and passengers aboard, procede towards Florida, and well off the state's coast, set passengers and vessels back into the sea to complete abbreviated voyages. <sup>12</sup>

INS personnel who have processed some boatloads of landed Haitians have been sceptical of the passengers' neat, well-fed appearance. Individual questioning by investigators has also revealed discrepancies in the related details of their crossing, even though the passengers are apparently rehearsed in the "facts" of the trip.

---

<sup>11</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

A recent report from a Federal Aviation Administration official in Miami raised the suspicion that Haitians are also now entering the United States and the Bahamas by air:

Smugglers trading in illegal drugs and aliens are dodging detection in often-antiquated planes that fly without lights, skim low over the ocean and 'hide' behind commercial aircraft....

The planes avoid radar detection by flying on the tails of commercial airliners or carrying sophisticated radar scrambling gear that befuddles air traffic control as they cross the nation's southern borders....

The eastern coast of southern Florida is lined with 38 airports between Key West and Stuart. More than 8,000 takeoffs and landings are recorded a day, making the area's airways the fourth or fifth busiest in the nation, according to the FAA....

Besides drugs, more and more illegal aliens, primarily Colombians and Haitians, are being flown into the United States, U.S. immigration officials say....

...This summer, for example, agents tailed...a small plane believed jammed with Haitian refugees.

Customs followed the...plane across the Straits of Florida until it turned abruptly and landed on a remote dirt road on a Bahamian island.

'When the plane landed, we could see people running from the plane. We assume it was illegal aliens....' 13

An estimated 50,000 Haitians have arrived in Florida, by whatever illegal means, in the last three calendar years.

That another 17,000 have come in the first seven months of 1981 alone suggests that illicit operations are growing yet

---

13 "Smuggler Planes Crowding U.S. Air Lanes," The News (Mexico City), 7 September 1981, p. 8.



larger and more efficient.

At the same time, however, an American -- and especially a Florida -- public has grown increasingly alarmed and outraged.

3.

A Public Opinion Backlash:

Haitians are by no means the only undocumented foreign citizens entering South Florida. The Florida Peninsula has become a tempting geographical absorption point for Colombians, many of whom are involved in a thriving marijuana and cocaine trade; for Nicaraguans, doubtful of a secure future under a post-Somoza regime; for Guatemalans and Salvadoreans, whose countries are in the midst of bloody civil wars; and for West Indians, seeking after the "American Dream."

Nor can one possibly overlook 125,000 Cubans -- an estimated 90,000 of whom settled in the Miami area -- who arrived during the summer-long 1980 Mariel-to-Key West Cuban Boatlift. Though these Cubans were ultimately granted legal status in the U.S. -- as have many of the recent Haitians -- their coming via the private boats of Cuban-

Americans who travelled to Mariel to meet them was in violation of U.S. immigration law.

What has resulted from these continuing streams of uncontrolled immigration into South Florida and the U.S. as a whole is a public opinion backlash. When Florida Governor Bob Graham stated that "national sentiment over the refugee question is at a low point," he was expressing more than a personal opinion. Americans have become frustrated at U.S. inability to check the illegal alien flow. <sup>14</sup>

At the height of the Cuban Boatlift, a nationwide survey posed the question of whether the Haitians -- based on their frequent contention that they are, in fact, "political refugees" -- ought to be admitted to the U.S. simultaneously with the Cubans. By a margin of 46 to 39 percent, the nation's sentiments were opposed. Had the survey been taken exclusively in the South Florida area where native residents sense a more direct frustration, the negative opinion would undoubtedly have been stronger. <sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Recently, Ronald Reagan advanced new proposals for illegal refugee control. They will be discussed in a later chapter.

<sup>15</sup> "Carter and the Cuban Influx," Newsweek, 26 May 1980, p. 25.

Letters to the Editor of the Miami Herald appearing on  
Independence Day, 1981.

Figure #3:

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# *Views on Immigration in the '80s*

To The Editor:

Illegal entry into this country by economic refugees masquerading as political refugees must stop. This fraud is being condoned by local, state, and Federal officials' inept and timid behavior.

Uncontrolled entry by another nation's poor is about to destroy the social and economic structure of South Florida — and of Miami in particular. Miami is a unique city in that its economy is dependent upon the image it projects.

With the tightening of the Federal budget, where are the funds to support the swelling number of illegal refugees to come from? Federal judges

rule in favor of attorneys and other special-interest groups because of possible violations of aliens' rights. But they have the right to food, shelter, and medical attention while being transported back to their homeland — nothing more.

FRANK J. TASTINGER  
Miami

To The Editor:

I wonder whether there are some human rights left for us American citizens. All we hear are screams for human rights of intruders into our country. They are forcing hard-working residents to leave their jobs

and homes and go elsewhere. We are all fed up with the situation in Miami — which is not getting any better.

VERA ONDRICEK  
Miami

gers to smaller boats for a landing on our coast? The machinery causing such chaos in our area should be promptly exposed as a first step to ending this continuing influx.

VIRGINIA U. PROUT  
Tequesta

To The Editor:

How do the poor and oppressed Haitians manage to gather together the boat fares to our shores? With a family annual income estimated at \$750, how can these people pay from \$700 to \$1,500 a person? Where do they embark from? How do the ships escape notice of a vigilant Coast Guard when transferring the passen-

A sampling of public opinion on the Haitian question from  
Today (Cocoa, Florida) newspaper in the summer of 1981.

Figure #4:

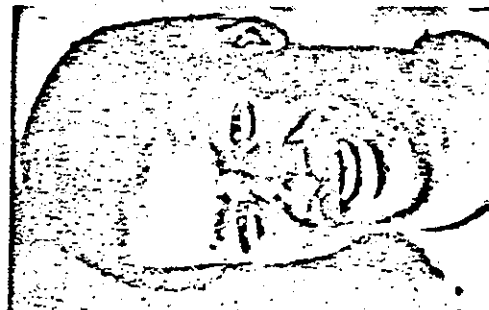
# *Inquiring Photographer*

## *Do you think that the recent Haitian refugees should be allowed to remain in the U.S.?*



**CHARLES SMALLWOOD**  
 Medical Student  
 Gainesville

I think we should have a quota or a limit. I don't think that they should get more government subsidies than Americans do, though.



**MARK WILLIAMS**  
 Landscaper  
 Melbourne

They should let some of them stay, but they're letting too many. Free is one thing; crowded is another.



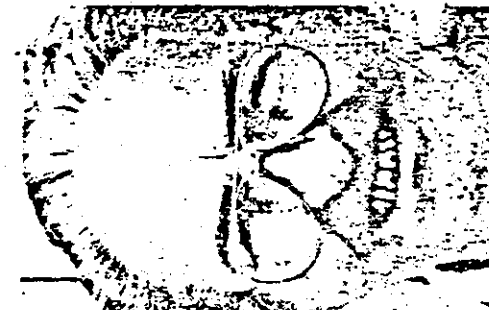
**DONNA HAWKINS**  
 Waitress  
 Merritt Island

They should let the ones here stay, but not let any more in.



**BRAD THRESS**  
 Student  
 Merritt Island

No, there are people all over the world waiting to be admitted through proper channels. The Haitians have merely shown up.



**JOHN FRANK**  
 Retired  
 Melbourne

No, I think they should have to come through the proper immigration procedures and quotas.

One writer recently offered a satirical vision of life in Miami a mere year in the future. Absurd as the account is, it nevertheless summarizes the sentiments of many a South Floridian:

I meant to start this journal last week, but there just wasn't time. Things have been hectic around here. There isn't a moment to spare. And worse, there's usually no place to sit down.

Someone has to record what has happened. As everyone knows, and as I will show, the Reagan Refugee Resettlement Plan of 1982 simply isn't working....

This morning, Joseph ate my toothpaste; the empty tube was there on the sink when I got up. His wife, Emilie, had filled the bathtub with washing, so I couldn't take a shower. Pedro and Alesandro, our middle-aged Cuban refugees, had argued half the night away in the kitchen and had finished off the coffee....

Pedro and Alesandro were snoring away out-of-sync on their mattresses in the kitchen, while Emilie and Joseph, our Haitian couple, huddled together on a pile of beach towels in the living room. Emilie, several months pregnant, will soon present us with another problem.

Dressed, I tiptoed into the bedroom and awoke my wife, Sally, by gently shaking her shoulder. Teresa, the 14-year-old Vietnamese orphan, clutching Sally's battered teddy bear, slept soundly in the space I used to occupy. I sleep on the floor. Sally and I haven't shared a bed for 32 days -- not since Teresa was assigned to us and we were made her unwilling foster parents. 16

The fictitious article eventually concludes with the writer and his wife moving to Haiti. They find it a restful

---

16 Charles Willeford, "He Has Seen the Future and It Is Crowded," Miami Herald, 16 August 1981, "Tropic Magazine," p. 13.

and lush country whose entire population -- "save for a few hundred people left in Port-Au-Prince" -- had migrated across the Atlantic to Florida. The writer's analogy, of course, is that South Florida has become as crowded with refugees as his imagined living room, bedroom and kitchen.

It would probably be fair to state that Floridians feel anger, not for the thousands of innocent Haitians themselves, but at the callous Haitian government. In June 1981, Duvalier declared in a Miami newspaper interview that his government was doing what it could to prohibit Haitian emigration. His hint that more dollars from Washington would be the solution to the problem was met, however, with immediate skepticism. Typical was an editorial printed in a Florida daily:

Showing more brass than a Dodge City spittoon, Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier is asking that the United States increase our aid payments to his Caribbean nation. The additional money would be used to help stem the flow of Haitian refugees to the United States, Duvalier assures us.

Haitians are leaving their home island not because of political repression, Duvalier maintains, but to seek better economic opportunities. And since Haiti has 930 miles of coastline, his poorly equipped patrol forces can intercept only a few of them.

Poverty...has come about even though the U.S. government has pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the Haitian economy since...1957.

The elder Duvalier's regime was notoriously corrupt....It was hoped that his son would initiate meaningful political reforms. Those hopes have not been realized, and today the plight of the Haitian people has not significantly improved.

Duvalier's appeal for increased aid is a cynical attempt to gouge the American taxpayers for still more money. No doubt these funds will also disappear into the Duvalier's bank vaults.

The Reagan Administration should refuse to send another cent to Haiti unless Duvalier removes himself from the political scene and free elections are held.... 17

Florida's political voices predictably echo the pent-up feelings of constituents. Senator Lawton Chiles (D.) has proposed that any further aid to Haiti be made conditional on that government's proven cooperation in stemming the flow of refugees at its source. Said Chiles: "We've got to know the Haitian government is working with us." 18

Chiles' Florida colleague in the Senate, Paula Hawkins (R.), has expressed like stern opinions. One state member of the House of Representatives has even advocated the use of military force to control the refugee tide from Haiti.

Caught between the greed of smugglers, the lack of con-

---

17 "No More Aid for Duvalier," Today (Cocoa, Fla.), 5 July 1981, sec. A, p. 14.

18 "Chiles: Haitian Solution Overdue," Today (Cocoa, Fla.), 27 June 1981, sec. B, p. 4.



cern by their own government, and the tough language from American voices are the thousands of Haitians who innocently enough seek only a better life. One wonders what becomes of those who, in landing on a Florida beach, are detected by authorities.

4.

The Consequences of Detection:

If a vessel bearing a Haitian cargo approaches the Florida coast near Miami, it is frequently intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard and escorted to dockage. There INS officers based in Miami can begin immediate initial documentation of the passengers -- their names, ages, and origins within Haiti.

Many landings occur, however, along less-populated stretches of Florida coast where the Coast Guard cannot always maintain as thorough a vigilance. In such cases, local city police or county sheriff personnel keep the Haitians in place until the INS arranges transportation to its nearest facility where documentation data is recorded.

In either case, the Haitians are next delivered to a holding site in the Miami area. Referred to as "detention camps" or "refugee centers," these fenced-in, INS-operated

facilities provide the Haitians with the immediate needs of food, medical care and shelter.

Usually within three to five days of arrival, each refugee is interviewed in his native Creole language by an INS investigator. The information the questioner gleans is of great importance because it is ultimately introduced as evidence in the detainee's hearing -- which usually follows within four to six weeks -- before an INS judge. Here, if the Haitian can show that his life or well-being would be endangered by the government of his homeland, he can be granted legal status which would permit him to remain in the United States. (Such a ruling is not likely, however, since the INS consistently maintains that the Haitians are largely "economic refugees.") If legal status is not granted, the INS begins deportation proceedings against the refugee.

During the summer months of 1981, Florida was absorbing as many as 1,500 Haitians every month. This enormous, ever-accelerating arrival rate has strained existing resources and created two controversial situations: (1) serious overcrowding in at least one detention camp, and (2) consequent

debatable practices undertaken by the INS in response to the overcrowding.

The center of controversy has been the holding facility known as the Krome Avenue center in Miami proper. Though there are other smaller camps in South Florida, the Krome center is the most utilized and houses the largest portion of illegal Haitians. As refugees were arriving by the weekly hundreds, Krome became the focal point of a back-and-forth legal battle between INS, trying to deport them, and lawyers of pro-Haitian groups, asserting their right to stay in the U.S. Caught in between these skirmishing sides of a difficult situation were the boat people themselves.

The Krome Avenue center was designed to adequately shelter 525 persons, but with the increased summer pace of illegal immigration, it housed three times its capacity as early as June, Haitians constituting nearly the entire population. To provide additional shelter, tents were erected outside the main building. Sanitary facilities became inadequate and water supplies contaminated.

The INS -- responsible for conditions within its detention facilities -- responded with the argument that rulings on detainees' cases had to be stepped-up. If the number of deportations could be augmented then the cramming could be alleviated. By this reasoning, the INS began holding detainee hearings (1) en masse, and (2) behind closed doors. This practice, however, was immediately challenged and became the first in a domino-like series of legal sallies between INS and pro-Haitian groups.

One of the foremost organizations representing Haitian refugee rights -- the Haitian Refugee Center, Inc. -- argued that the practice of en masse hearings essentially predetermined the detainees' deportation by assuming that each case was not unique. It also charged that the refugees could not have understood the proceedings because English, not Creole, was the language in use. Further, pro-Haitian lawyers were not permitted inside to provide translation or offer legal advice.

The organization appealed directly to Attorney General William French Smith -- the INS is under the jurisdiction

of the Justice Department of which he is head -- who agreed with its objections. The case-by-case rule was reinstated, Creole was re-introduced, and lawyers were readmitted. In the short days that had elapsed, however, the INS deported 11 refugees back to Haiti while 76 others were within hours of departure. Nevertheless, the practice of "expedited processing" had been stopped.

Faced now with the same unrelieved overcrowding at Krome, the INS began to release some refugees into the Miami area community. "Sponsors" such as individual families, volunteer agencies, or agricultural employers had previously been solicited for the refugees, though one wonders with what thoroughness. This INS practice, too, drew strong criticism such as that voiced in a Miami Herald editorial: 19

Last week, local INS officials bowed to the pressure of overcrowding and started releasing some of the camp residents into Miami. If past patterns continue, a high percentage of those released will not show up for future immigration hearings.

Typically, those releases were mishandled. Some people were dumped on the streets at midnight. Volunteer agencies were caught by surprise. So was the South Florida community, which reasonably had expected that no more undocumented arrivals would be released to compete for scarce housing and jobs.

---

19 INS released the first group of Haitians to Miami area "sponsors" in late June.

Neither the refugee nor the community is fairly treated when the INS spins an unpredictable revolving door at the gates of its Krome camp. New arrivals should be detained -- safely and humanely -- and their day in court should be prompt and proper. 20

Consequently, this unpopular practice was also halted, leaving conditions at Krome still unimproved. Left with few other alternatives, INS now announced its intention to fly groups of detainees to various federal prisons throughout the United States. In mid-July, INS-scheduled planes -- after court delays sought by pro-Haitian lawyers -- began transporting hundreds of Haitians to prisons at: Lake Placid, N.Y.; Big Spring, Texas; Morgantown, West Virginia; Brooklyn, N.Y.; Lexington, Kentucky; and Fort Allen, Puerto Rico. 21

But this scattering of the Haitians around the country drew predictable, continued criticism from the Haitian rights side. Many insisted the new INS action was unjustly motivated: "INS put them in upstate New York, two-and-a-half hours from the nearest attorney who can help them, or in Big Spring,

---

20 "INS Incompetence Traps Haitians and Community," Miami Herald, 29 June 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

21 Florida Governor Bob Graham sued the federal government in July to correct conditions at Krome. This action contributed to the commencement of flights.

Texas, three or four hours away from an attorney. They've put these people in the middle of nowhere and there's no question why they did it. They're going to institute deportation procedures against them." <sup>22</sup> As we will see, these suspicions would later be realized for all Haitian detainees who arrived in the U.S. after 1 January 1981. <sup>23</sup>

The INS-Haitian rights controversy is still unresolved, however, if proposals now before the Congress are approved it would appear that INS has gained the upper hand.

That illegal Haitians must be detained, and that present facilities are obviously inadequate gives rise to several significant points: (1) The State of Florida has legitimate claims that it has been asked to shoulder the consequences of an immigration problem that is truly federal in nature; (2) If the INS is to be held responsible for illegal immigrant care, then detention facilities must be improved; (3) The provision of immigration law which permits an alien to appeal an INS court ruling has now been questioned, and (4) Overcrowding and like conditions will continue to exist so

---

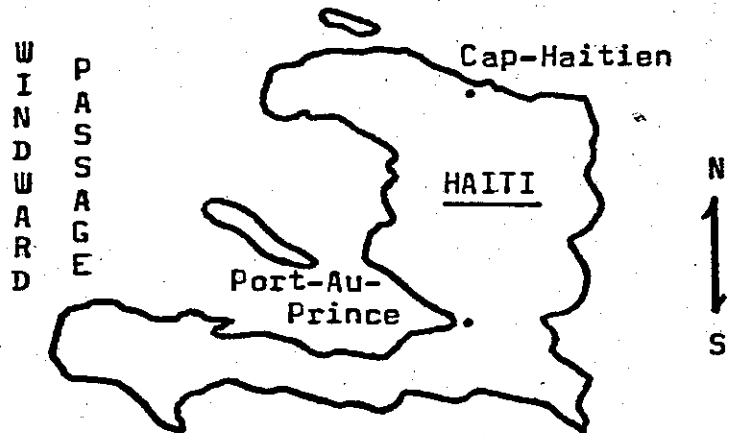
22 "Haitians' Legal Position Threatened -- Lawyer," Today (Cocoa, Fla.), 21 July 1981, sec. 8, p. 4.

23 This and other specifics of the Reagan immigration proposals will be discussed in a later chapter.



## THE INS-HAITIAN RIGHTS CONTROVERSY:

In early 1981 as warm temperatures and good sailing conditions returned from their winter character, an unprecedented number of Haitians arrived on Florida beaches. The detention of these refugees resulted in severe overcrowding at the INS holding camp in Miami:



(1) Arguing that accelerated deportations would relieve the cramming, INS initiated the practice of en masse, English-language, closed-door hearings.

(2) But Haitian-rights lawyers successfully appealed to the U.S. Attorney General to reopen case-by-case, Creole-language, open-door proceedings.

(3) INS, still facing overcrowding, began releasing Haitians to "sponsors" in the Miami community.

(4) But public outrage and concern over the possible spread of disease forced a halt to this practice.

(5) Following legal delays, INS resorts to distributing the refugees in the federal prison system.

(6) Pro-Haitian groups fear this action is the antecedent of vigorous INS deportation procedures.

(7) Consistent with proposed guidelines by President Ronald Reagan, INS announced its intention to deport illegal Haitians who arrived after 1 January 1981.

long as no effort is made to halt illegal immigration at its source. Recent proposals by Ronald Reagan attempt to address these questions.

In the meantime, it would be naive to state that all arriving Haitians are detected and subsequently held at facilities like Krome Avenue.

5.

The Haitian Arrivals Not Detained:

The lucrative profits which attract smuggling activity, together with the inability or seeming unwillingness of the Haitian government to control their operations explains why the secretive transporting of refugees has continued.

The given number of undocumented Haitian entrants -- 17,000 through the first seven months of 1981 -- is, of course, a mere estimate. The Florida coast has hundreds of miles of rural beach, and to make an undetected landfall is no impossible matter. Could the stated "estimate" be perhaps yet higher? Said one INS officer: "If the public were really aware of the number of illegal aliens who have come into South Florida, it would scare the hell out of them." <sup>24</sup>

What becomes, then, of Haitian arrivals not detected.

---

<sup>24</sup> Idem, WPLG (Channel 10/Miami), "Human Cargo," 10-13 August 1981, Mark Potter (reporter) and Lance Heflin (camera).

by authorities nor detained by the INS?

Their vulnerability becomes an immediate problem. Many of the refugees cannot afford the full price of the ocean crossing. Paying what they can surrender, the refugees promise smuggling operators the balance of their debts once they have gained entry, settled and found work. Smugglers payroll thug-like debt collectors within South Florida Haitian communities who visit the homes of those owing money and extract remaining payment, often with brutal force. Because of their illegal status, however, the victims are powerless to reveal these abuses to local police.

Illegal Haitians who find work on Miami construction crews are routinely forced to pay bribes for the silence of corrupt union employers. They are similarly made victims of exploitation due to their vulnerable status in the U.S.

Disease is another serious and imminent reality. Landed Haitians are 15 to 20 times more likely to have tuberculosis on entering the U.S. than any other refugee group. Due to the poor housing to which they gravitate, the fact that as many as 20 persons are commonly known to occupy a single

dwelling, and denied INS health care, Haitians are subject to an alarming spread of this sickness. Such living conditions also lend themselves to the festering of other communicable illnesses such as typhoid, diphtheria or influenza epidemics. 25

While it has always been illegal for undocumented aliens to work in the U.S., it has never been -- except under the proposals of the Reagan plan which have yet to become law -- illegal for American employers to hire them. Illegal Haitians find menial jobs waiting tables, making shoes, baking bread, washing dishes, unloading trucks and working on construction sites. But Florida abounds in expansive agricultural districts thousands of acres in size, mostly located in the soil-rich areas around Lake Okeechobee. It has been said that numbers of Haitians are met at their secretly landed boats by friends who take them directly from beach to field where they find work as migrant laborers. As undocumented agricultural workers, the Haitians' vulnerability remains.

Migrants become prey to dilapidated, disease-conducive

---

25 CNN (Cable News Network: Channel 34/Atlanta), 26 August 1981.

housing that is "what's left over by the general public.

It's the poorest that can be found." 26

Belle Glade, an Okeechobee area town, is the center of one such agricultural district where migrants find employment during the November-to-April Florida harvest season:

Even before dawn begins to erase the black sky, the streets of Belle Glade are jammed with flesh.

Out of run-down concrete-block rooming houses, migrants by the thousands lumber toward the city-owned loading ramp. There, if they're lucky, they are picked by crew chiefs, packed inside buses and taken to the fields.

Belle Glade, on the southeast tip of Lake Okeechobee, is a hub of Florida's 322,000-acre sugar industry, which produces almost 20 per cent of the nation's yearly supply. But the town, with a year-round population of 17,800 that swells to about 25,000 during the harvest, is more than a center of commerce.

Legal definitions to the contrary, most of downtown Belle Glade is little more than a poorly maintained migrant-labor camp.

Belle Glade's own master plan, adopted in late 1979, admits that 49 per cent of the town's 6,060 housing units are 'substandard.' More than 80 per cent of the substandard units lie in the downtown migrant-camp district....

'What this town needs is a good B52 strike,' grumbled (a local attorney).

In virtually all of the privately owned rooming houses, hallways are unlit, exposed wires dangle from ceilings and children wash their hands in filthy, clogged sinks. 27

Migrant camp owners -- like some city governments which

---

25 Frederick Burger, "Housing Problem Tough to Solve: They Get What No One Else Wants," Miami Herald, 25 March 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 14.

27 Idem, "What this Town Needs is a Good B-52 Strike," Miami Herald, 25 March 1981, sec. A, p. 14.

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS:

Florida abounds in expansive agricultural areas where Haitians -- in competition with traditional migrant labor groups -- find employment as farm workers.

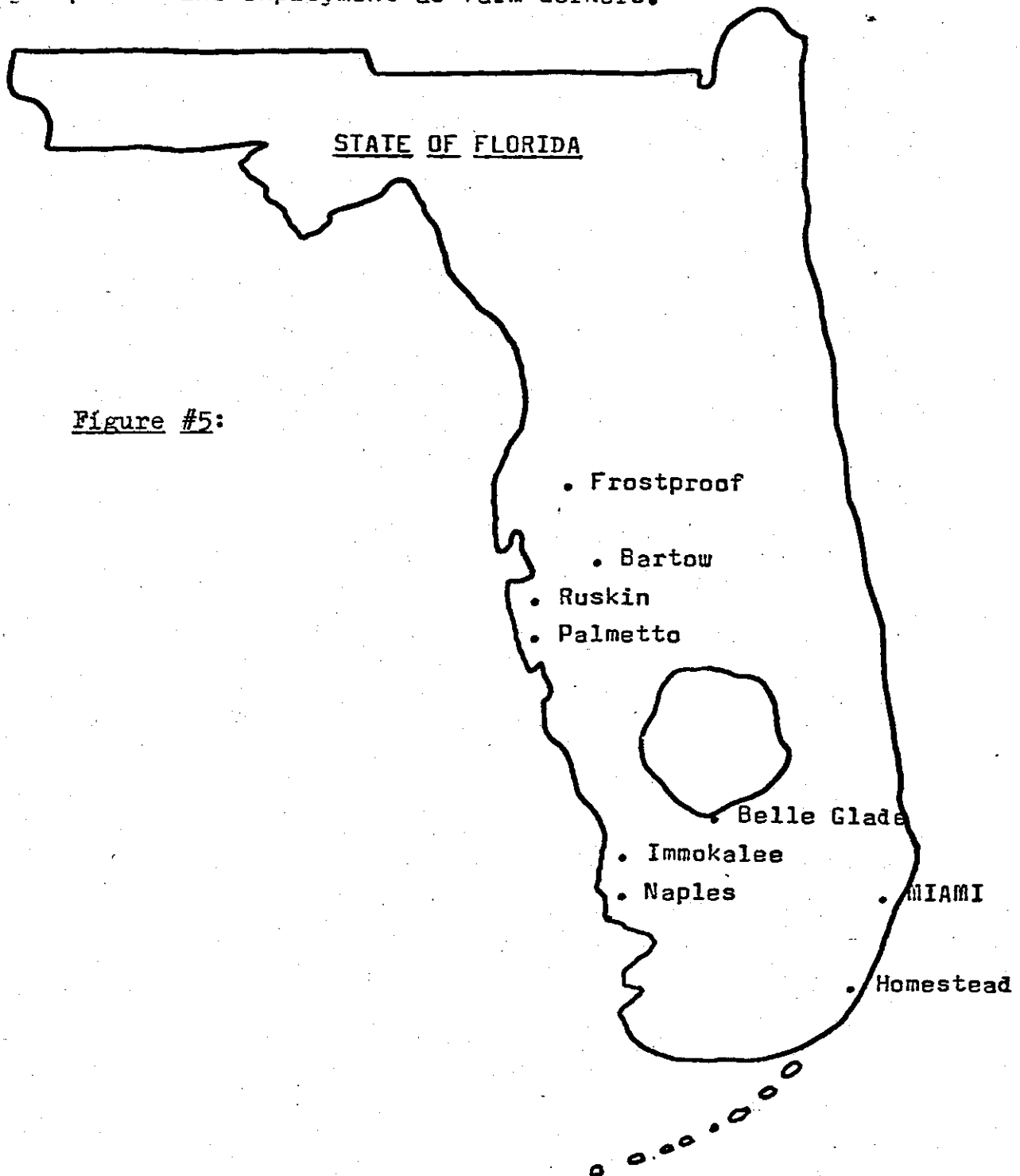


Figure #5:

fear that improved housing might attract too many farm workers -- are rarely motivated to correct the shortcomings of their units. A recent University of Central Florida survey found over a four-county Okeechobee-area district that 44 percent of migrant housing provided "less than adequate protection and safety," and that 23 percent was "dilapidated." Thirty-four percent did not have hot water, 27 percent did not have toilets, and 15 percent had no indoor water. <sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, disproportionate sums in rent are collected: "...Haitian sugarcane cutter Murat Noel, 22, lives in an eight-foot-square room with his sister and brother. All sleep on the same queen-size mattress. There's nowhere to walk except down the hall. They scraped together a \$200 deposit for the cubicle in this two-story house....Their rent: \$160 a month." <sup>29</sup> It is common for two or more Haitian families to live in a single dwelling. In such cases,

---

<sup>28</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



tenants are charged individually. Yet without legal status in the U.S., such is the exploitation migrants must endure in housing.

It would be wise to caution here that not all Haitian farm workers are undocumented entrants. Some have been released by INS to agricultural sponsors, and others who arrived before 1 January 1981 can legally work due to the recently proposed Reagan amnesty plan. Those who arrived after the 1 January deadline, however, remain illegal. Regardless of the individual's legal characterization, Haitians who find work as migrants do not find the fields empty of other national groups.

There are four established "streams" who work Florida's copious fruit and vegetable harvests: (1) The oldest is the American black grouping which began field work in the 1920's when acres of fertile "muckland" were opened to planting on Lake Okeechobee's south shore; (2) Second in "seniority" are the Jamaicans and other West Indians who, from the mid-1930's, have come to harvest sugarcane; (3) Mexican-Americans (Chicanos) arrived in Florida when a new breed of tomato was

developed in the 1950's, exiting Texas where machine harvesters were being introduced to pick cotton and unearth potatoes; and (4) A second Mexican group formed about the same time who, because of their skill in picking citrus, have been labelled "reachers."<sup>30</sup> To these groups now must be added the Haitians.

The "Haitian stampede" into the South Florida farm labor force over recent years has translated into keen competition for work and housing with the already existent groups. External conditions -- (1) The mid-January 1981 freeze which destroyed orange and vegetable crops, diminishing potential harvests and reducing required man-hours, and (2) soaring gasoline prices which have kept many workers in Florida who would normally have moved to "picking seasons" northward in South and North Carolina, Indiana, Michigan and New York -- have created yet tighter competition. The result is the resentment of competing groups. Said one American black worker

---

<sup>30</sup> Susan Burnside, "By Truck or Plane, from Texas or Haiti, Streams Flow to Florida," Miami Herald, 22 March 1981, sec. A, p. 24.

who in earlier years had rarely had difficulty finding a job: "I only worked an hour today. I go to picking, a Haitian jumps in front of me. I turn around, a Haitian jumps in back of me. I had to quit before I killed one of those damned savages." 31

Farm work is an uncertain, day-to-day opportunity at best, and the migrant wage is hardly enviable:

Migrants don't get better pay because agriculture has a strong state and national lobby. Migrants don't. Few migrants vote. Few have enough education to read or write, let alone lobby.

In short, migrants find themselves caught in a vicious cycle.

Farmers say they can't pay higher wages unless consumers are willing to pay higher prices. Consumers, hurt by inflation and taxes, say they can't afford higher food prices. Yet both consumers and farmers pay taxes to subsidize federal programs that provide health care, housing and food for farm workers.

Many migrants say they would be willing to scrap those programs -- if they could get higher pay. 32

One cannot underestimate the reliance migrants have on the food stamp program, which normally constitutes up to 20 per-

---

31 Michael Browning, "Haitians Are the Newest, Hungriest and Hindmost; They're Grateful Anyway," Miami Herald, 23 March 1981, sec. A, p. 16.

32 Joe Starita, "A Day in the Life: Beans, Rice, Rotgut and Silent Fields," Miami Herald, 22 March 1981, sec. A, p. 24.

cent of a farm worker's family income. In Immokalee, a farming town to the southwest of Lake Okeechobee, 33 per cent more households received food stamps in January 1981 than the same date in 1980. In the intervening year, 500 Haitian families moved into the area's labor force. "Usually, November is the peak month" in Immokalee's food assistance program because of "migrant farm workers arriving here. But with the Haitians coming in, we're peaking every month. This office has been absolutely swamped."<sup>33</sup> The President's new immigration proposals recognize the importance of food stamps to the Haitian income.

Language, finally, is yet another baffling problem. One man with a bad case of head lice was given a bottle of shampoo at a rural medical clinic. Not understanding its directions, he drank it. Doctors are trying to combat this problem by labelling medicine bottles with picture directions in place of written words.

Spoken English poses like impasses for Haitian workers:

---

<sup>33</sup> "Refugees Freeze Out U.S. Poor," Miami Herald, 23 March 1981, sec. A, p. 15.

'I don't know how you can work Haitians,' says Immokalee farmer Johnnie Goodnight....

'I remember once we were picking cherry red peppers, and the crew chief was trying to make the Haitian understand he was only supposed to pick the red ones, not the ones with chocolate (brown spots) on them.

'So he threw the ones with chocolate on the ground and showed the Haitian the red ones. "These! These!" he says. "Not these!"

'And the Haitian, he just said, "Yessir, boss! Thank you, boss! Thank you, boss!" and when the crew chief walked away and turned around, there was the Haitian, picking up all the chocolate peppers and putting them into his basket.' 34

It is estimated that about half the Haitians who arrive in South Florida, legal or otherwise, are able to find work. Invariably, their jobs are menial in nature. Despite this, the Haitians are grateful for whatever work they find. If a refugee can make \$300 a month -- low by U.S. standards -- he has already equalled or surpassed what he could earn in his island homeland in an entire year. The "menial" jobs make possible an enormous flow of dollars back to Haiti -- dollars that feed family members, that enable children to go to school, that buy small parcels of land, or make possible modest home improvements. Entire towns are dependent on this money life-line:

---

34 Ibid., p. 16.

Today, but for one thing, there would be no hope for Jean Rabel.

...Florida, 700 miles west-northwest across the Windward Passage, along the coast of Cuba, north to Key West, is what keeps Jean Rabel alive.

Florida is where the Haitians have gone in such an unrelenting flow that its people wonder how many more it can possibly absorb....

But Jean Rabel, a miserable lump of nothing crouched on the margin of the modern world, is sending its sons and daughters away on an important errand. There are 75,000 people hanging on at home, and the Florida pilgrims are earning the money that saves them from the abyss....

What they talk about here is that one "boat person" carrying hod on a Dade County construction project can make enough to support 10 people in Haiti....

Florida money is what is making the port towns of the northwest boom. The people of Mole St. Nicolas have new clothes. The captains of Anse Rouge are building boats.... 35

In 1981, this "remittance economy" will generate \$100 million for Haiti -- about 5 percent of the country's gross national product. The town of Jean Rabel has 8,000 "cousins" in Florida, each working person able to send back an average of \$60 a month. Sixty dollars is sufficient to support five people. Jean Rabel will receive almost \$3 million in 1981. 36

There are three major means by which money is sent from the Florida "cousins" back to Haiti. One is to transmit

---

35 "Lifeblood of Jean Rabel Flows from South Florida," Miami Herald, 28 June 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 26.

36 Ibid.

funds through an established agency in Miami to its Port-Au-Prince outlet, a small fee being charged for the transaction. A second means is simply to write dollar checks on Florida banks and mail them. Often, however, these checks must be cashed in rural country stores whose proprietors routinely charge a 5 or 6 percent fee. The most popular means, therefore, is through men like Rev. Jean-Marie Vincent, a trusted "mule" who visits South Florida two or three times yearly. Haitians give him cash to carry back to family across the horizon.

On a recent trip, Vincent was able to visit with only 60 Haitians. But he carried from them over \$24,000 collected in a mere two days.

6.

Jimmy Carter and the Haitians:

It was not until the Presidency of Jimmy Carter that the phenomenon of the "boat people" developed in full. Haitians had been arriving in their fragile boats since about 1972. However, in June of 1978, the government of the Bahamas -- no stranger to the problem of immigration from the south-east -- began to expell its many Haitian illegals, citing unemployment pressures as the reason for its action. Not surprisingly, 600 Haitians arrived in South Florida by boat the same month. Settled Haitians were quick to report back to their homeland of U.S. work opportunities, and the exodus has since accelerated.

Meanwhile, as boatloads of Haitians continued to arrive in predictably larger and larger monthly averages, one of the most significant events of Carter's tenure took place -- the emigration of 125,000 pecole from Fidel Castro's Cuba



during the summer in 1980. The event was of importance to the Haitian question because at the height of this "Cuban Boatlift," Carter declared in a now well-known pronouncement that the United States would welcome this latest wave of refugees from communism with "an open heart and open arms." The President reasoned: "Those of us who have been here for a generation, or six or eight generations, ought to have just as open a heart to receive the new refugees as our ancestors were received in the past." 37

But Carter's "soft" policy towards the Cuban influx created consternation among spokesmen for the Haitian cause who now indignantly asked why refugees from Haiti were not accorded a like embracing spirit. These arriving Cubans did not have proper visas either, the critics pointed out. In fact, the entire "boatlift" was clearly illegal in the eyes of U.S. immigration law. Far from being detained and subjected to deportations hearings, these Cubans were being welcomed with "an open heart and open arms." Detractors in-

---

37 Steven R. Weisman, "President Says U.S. Offers 'Open Arms' to Cuban Refugees," New York Times, 5 May 1980, sec. A, p. 1.

sisted the Haitians were victims of "a clear double standard" in American immigration policy.<sup>38</sup> The "double standard" question deserves more careful and lengthy examination.

The claim that a discrepancy existed centered around the fact that U.S. immigration tradition has always viewed left-wing or communist regimes as repressive, as causing "sudden and intolerable political changes," entitling those who flee such governments to almost automatic haven in the United States. A refugee from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe or Cuba has but to demonstrate "a well-founded fear of persecution" if returned to his native government. Having made this declaration through the proper INS interviews and procedures, the "political refugee" can be granted legal status that could ultimately mean citizenship.

But what of refugees from right-wing, "friendly" governments such as Haiti? The State Department, instrumental in determining INS policies, maintains in a recent report that while Haiti is far from being a free society, general condi-

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

tions there have improved somewhat, if not substantially since the death ten years ago of the elder Duvalier. The opinion of an American who had travelled at length in Haiti would be typical of the Department's stance: Since the coming to power of Jean-Claude, there has been "a tremendous relaxation of (secret police) surveillance. There is still a certain degree of fear, but nothing like it was under the father." 39

The Department contends, then, that there is "no reason to believe that every Haitian is persecuted." Consequently, there can be "no blanket asylum" given Haitians for political causes as is the case with Castro and Cubans. Refugees from Haiti, the report concludes, are largely motivated by economic, non-political desires.

The pro-Haitians assert, however, that the supposedly "relaxed" degree to which persecution exists in Haitian life is a matter of definite contention:

Some efforts at political liberalization (in Haiti) have been undertaken in recent years, but without much real success. For example, a brief period of freer speech ended last fall with the

---

39 John M. Crowlson, "Florida Haitians Struggling to Get Political Asylum," New York Times, 24 May 1980, sec. A, p. 1.

enactment of a strict press censorship law and the arrest (and 15-year sentencing) of Sylvio Claude, the leader of a short-lived opposition political party.

There were even a few human rights rallies in Haiti, but they also stopped after American and other diplomats attending one last November (1980) were menaced, and some of them beaten, by men armed with sticks and clubs.

A little over three years ago, in response to a gentle, continuing pressure from the United States (Carter Administration) to increase his Government's sensitivity to human rights, President Duvalier declared an amnesty for political prisoners and released 104 of them from jail.

The Government said that no others remained, but last December (1980) Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization, asserted its belief 'that political imprisonment and torture still take place' in Haiti. And the State Department has acknowledged that a 'system of authoritarian rule continues' there, and has recognized that some claims for (political) asylum 'could well have merit.' 40

Citing the double standard theme, pro-Haitians ask: Why does the United States government -- through the INS -- openly accept the refugees of a left-wing, communist dictator it opposes, rejecting the refugees of a right-wing, friendly government it aids, while the actions of both regimes are equally repressive and totalitarian?

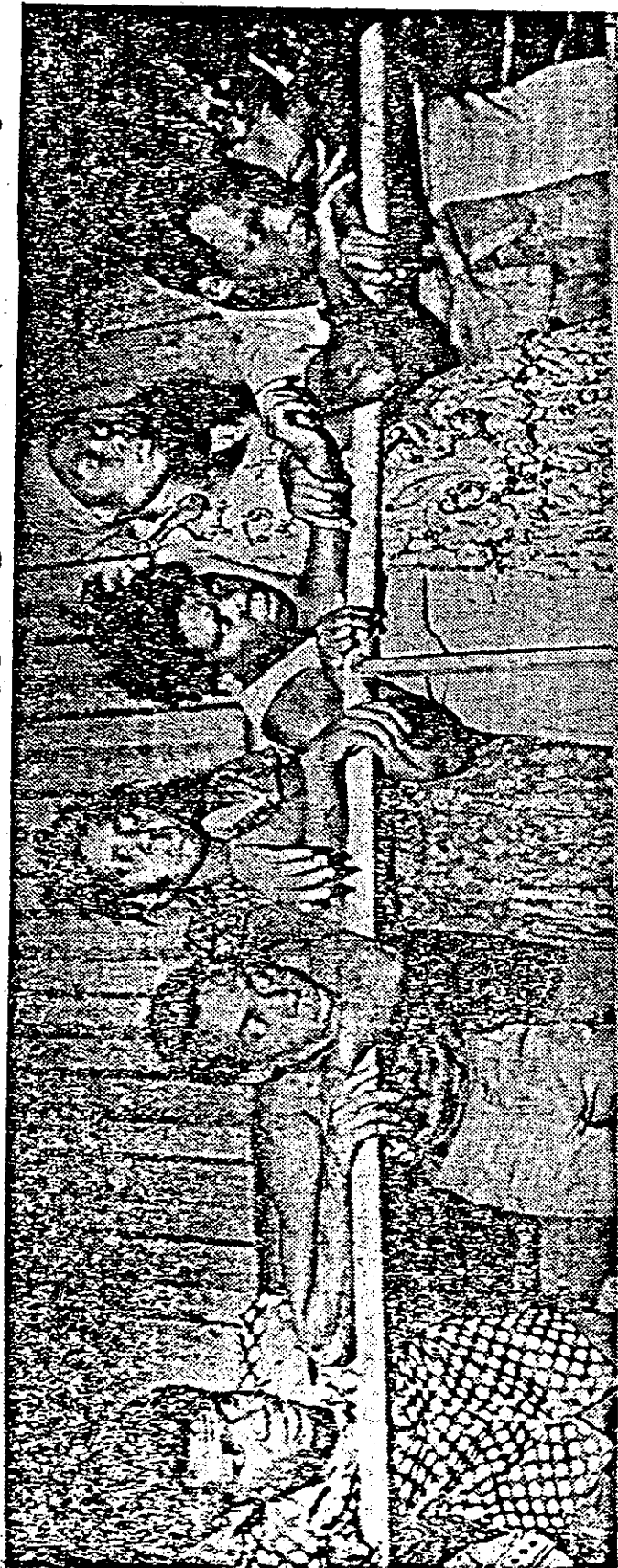
Haitian spokesmen also say that Washington policy-makers really understand their argument, but that the U.S. must

---

40 Ibid.

Figure #6:

## *Haitian Refugees in Florida Struggling for Political Asylum*



Haitian refugees, among 223 rescued from a small vessel in rough seas on their way to Florida, arriving in Miami last week aboard a Panamanian container ship

Associated Press

maintain its hard policy toward Haitian immigration. The Haitians are the first refugees from a right-wing government, and as one lawyer stated, "if they can stay, the whole hemisphere is eligible."<sup>41</sup> Spokesmen charge that even though Washington privately knows its Haitian policy has been inequitable, it must publically keep its tough position for the "practical" reason that it cannot realistically absorb refugees from all right-wing governments in the Americas and elsewhere.

In response to the Haitians' double standard argument, Carter signed a new refugee law in April 1980 which eliminated any preferential treatment accorded those leaving communist societies. The law, however, still apparently allows the INS to apply the "economic refugee" argument in the absence of abrupt political changes and "a well-founded fear of persecution." One INS official said: "If we're going to let Haitians in because they're hungry, then how can we stop people from India, Southeast Asia and China?"<sup>42</sup>

---

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

Finally, spokesmen have offered the further argument that the number of Haitians in Florida "is insignificant in comparison to all the other refugees who have been admitted to this country." <sup>43</sup> Among those given entry over the years have been almost a million Cubans, a quarter of a million Indochinese, tens of thousands of Hungarians, thousands of Nicaraguans, Chileans and others.

Another important legal event which transpired during the Carter years was a federal class action suit brought on behalf of the Haitians in 1979, decided in 1980. In it, lawyers cited the INS for "a continuing pattern of illegal and discriminatory conduct" in its efforts to deport Haitians. Because other immigrant groups were allegedly not subject to similar discrimination, INS behavior constituted another example of the double standard theme. In the INS practice of "expedited processing" of the Haitians, three specific illegal patterns against these Caribbean refugees were underlined in the suit: (1) Haitians were denied effective representation by lawyers; (2) Haitians were victims of fraud by

---

43 Ibid.

immigration investigators; and (3) Haitians were returned to Haiti against their will without being informed of their right to apply for political asylum.

First, what exactly was "expedited processing?" From INS headquarters in Washington, directives were given which:

...Included the suspension of an immigration service regulation requiring that deportation proceedings be halted for any individual who had filed an application for political asylum.

Following that step, (the Washington directive) suggested that the (INS) monitor 'community reaction' before proceeding. But the reaction was not adverse -- almost no one but the Haitians' lawyers took notice -- and the expedited processing continued apace.

By July 1978 the immigration service, which previously had handled fewer than a half-dozen Haitian cases a day, increased its load to 55. By September the number had climbed to more than 100 a day, due in part to instructions to INS judges -- who make up an administrative arm of the Justice Department and are not an independent judiciary -- from Mario T. Noto, then the Deputy Commissioner of Immigration, to 'triple' their productivity.

'The importance attached to this program' at the service's headquarters in Washington 'cannot be overstated,' wrote (a Miami district director). 'All supervisory personnel are hereby ordered to take whatever action they deem necessary to keep these cases moving through the system.' One (INS) lawyer testified that he had never seen a comparable number of cases disposed of in so short a time, and that there was no relationship to the increasing numbers of Haitians facing deportation. 44

---

44 Idem,... "Ruling Nears in Haitians' Lawsuit Alleging U.S. Bias," New York Times, sec. A, p. 1.



In the INS' eagerness to deport Haitians through this "expedited processing," the suit charged, officers (1) frequently failed to advise the refugees of their right to a lawyer without cost. "When the Haitian Refugee Center, Inc., a private agency, sent representatives to the Miami immigration office to inform arriving Haitians of the availability of free legal counsel,...a guard was posted to keep the representatives out." Some Haitians were allegedly told by INS personnel that "an attorney will get you in trouble" and that the alternative to returning to Haiti voluntarily was "spending the rest of your lives" in an American jail.<sup>45</sup>

INS behavior also allegedly (2) led to incidents of fraud:

There (were) questions about whether the content of the asylum interviews was faithfully recorded. Five-minute answers to such questions as 'What do you think would happen to you if you returned to Haiti?' were reduced to a single sentence, and the sentences often bore a remarkable similarity. One lawyer...said that on more than half the written forms he had seen, the question 'Why did you come to the United States?' was answered with the phrase, 'I came here to find work,' as if each of the Haitians had used precisely the same words.

The interview reports were crucial to the Haitians' cases...because they were used as evidence in later deportation hearings....

Several of the Haitians...testified that the (INS) agents who interviewed them simply fabricated answers to the questions they were asked.

---

45 Ibid.

Gracia Carida's form shows, for example, that she answered 'no' when asked whether she had been politically active in Haiti, and that she did not want to return because 'It's impossible to make a living in Haiti.' Actually, 'I said that I could not go back to Haiti because the Government had killed my cousin, that the Government was looking for everyone in my family,' she said. <sup>46</sup>

Finally, INS "expedited processing" (3) reportedly resulted in many Haitians being returned without having exercised their right to apply for political asylum. Over the years prior to the suit, 179 Haitians had been formally deported and another 450 were listed as having returned "voluntarily." On arriving in the U.S., many Haitians were directed to sign a form requesting that they be "permitted to withdraw application for admission and to return abroad." Immigration law clearly states, however, that if no such request is made, "an alien is...entitled by law to apply for political asylum, and deportation proceedings normally can continue only if the asylum claim is disallowed." <sup>47</sup> To circumvent this regulation, officers induced many Haitians to sign the forms for "permission" to return voluntarily.

---

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

Ultimately, the federal suit was decided in favor of the Haitians. Accordingly, Carter established the "Caribbean entrant" classification that legitimized the presence of the thousands of Haitians in South Florida. Recognizing the double standard argument, he issued an amnesty to all illegal Haitians who had arrived prior to 10 October 1980.

A month later, Jimmy Carter was voted from office, leaving the Haitian question to his successor.

7.

Ronald Reagan and the Haitians:

One of Ronald Reagan's most vigorous platforms as he was seeking the Presidency from Jimmy Carter was that "the United States has lost the integrity of its borders." Numbers readily support that claim.

The U.S. ceiling for annual legal immigration is set at 270,000 persons. Presently, however, between four and six times that figure -- or one million to 1.5 million persons -- illegally cross into U.S. territory yearly: (In 1980, 530,000 Cubans and Haitians arrived with a million Mexicans.) Meanwhile, INS deportations total "only" about 900,000 annually. Like number trends over recent years have added up to the present fact that at least three million -- and perhaps as many as 12 million -- illegal immigrants live in this country. It is no secret that United States immigration policy and enforcement have been notoriously lax. In Miami, a popular bumper sticker jests: "WILL THE

LAST AMERICAN LEAVING SOUTH FLORIDA PLEASE BRING THE FLAG." 48

The long-overdue need for government to implement stronger immigration measures has been repeatedly voiced in Florida's newspaper editorials:

The influx of hundreds of thousands of Indochinese, Cuban and Haitian refugees in recent years, plus the influx of illegal Mexican workers in the Southwest, have brought Americans -- even if reluctantly -- to the belief that we must tighten controls on access to our country by aliens.

Polls show that to be the overwhelming sentiment of the American people. In a sense, it is a rejection of the earlier American philosophy that said: 'Send us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free.'

...Sen. Alan Simpson, R.-Wyo., said the American people are suffering 'compassion fatigue' in connection to the alien situation. 'The name of that statue is "Liberty Enlightening the World," not "Open to anyone who can get to our shores, legally or illegally,"' Simpson remarked.

...It is the responsibility of our government to look out first and foremost for the welfare of Americans. For our political leaders to allow a continued flood of people into the U.S. -- primarily into Florida -- despite problems of economics, unemployment, public health and crime would be to neglect their responsibility. 49

The result of Reagan's campaign stance on the immigration issue was the creation of a Cabinet-level task force chaired by Attorney General Smith. This high-level group studied the

---

48 "Controls for an Alien Invasion," Time, 3 August 1981, p. 19.

49 "Reagan Immigration Plan Step in Right Direction," Today (Cocoa, Fla.), 3 August 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

alarming immigration picture and made recommendations to the President. Finally, in an announcement 30 July 1981, Reagan revealed his long-awaited policies designed to be "fair to our own citizens while it opens the door of opportunity for those who seek a new life in America." All the specifics of the plan were subject to the approval of the Congress.

The specific proposals offered by the President for Congressional consideration include the following:

New Amnesty Program:

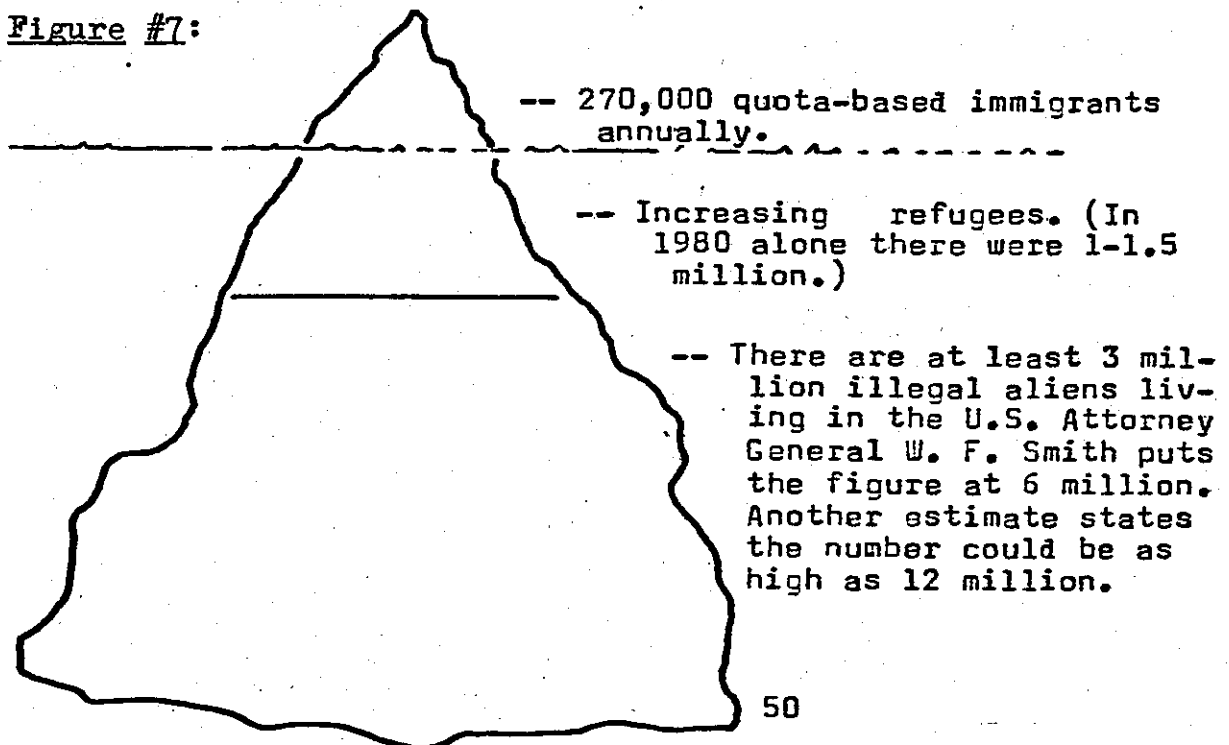
An amnesty had been extended by Jimmy Carter to illegal Haitians and Cubans in the United States prior to 10 October 1980. The Reagan plan extends this deadline by 12 weeks to 1 January 1981. An estimated 5,000 Haitians, who were considered to be deportable under the Carter deadline, would no longer need to fear exclusion because of this change of date.

The Reagan amnesty program actually favors Cubans and Haitians over all other immigrant groups. The amnesty deadline for illegal Colombians, Nicaraguans, Mexicans, Indochin-

### THE IMMIGRATION ICEBERG:

Legal immigration into the United States -- about 270,000 persons annually -- has been compared to "the tip of the iceberg" since a far greater number enter illegally. This situation has prompted President Reagan to devise what has been characterized by many as a new "get-tough" immigration policy.

Figure #7:



ese, and all other national origins falls a full year earlier -- 1 January 1980 -- than for the two favored Caribbean groups.

Moreover, the Cubans and Haitians -- if, after five years of their present "temporary resident" status they can pass an English test -- can gain "permanent residence." Another five years later they would be eligible for U.S. citizenship with the right to petition INS for the legal admission of immediate relatives. Non-Cubans and non-Haitians, however, would be temporary residents for ten years before applying for permanent residence. Cubans and Haitians, then, could become citizens in 10 years while a Mexican or Laotian would wait 15.

Finally, all immigrant groups would be permitted to work and obligated to pay taxes, but only Haitians and Cubans would retain the right to collect welfare, food stamps or unemployment assistance.

#### Detering Future Illegals:

While the Reagan proposals have some elements of leniency,



they contain other strong measures in an attempt to "draw the line" on continued illegal entry. Explained Attorney General Smith:

'We have neither the resources, the capability, nor the motivation to uproot and deport millions of illegal aliens....

'By granting limited legal status to the productive and law-abiding members of this shadow population, we will recognize reality and devote our enforcement resources to deterring future illegal arrivals. Our purpose is to deter illegal immigration and to prevent the recurrence of the circumstances we are now facing.' 51

Because the amnesty "line" was "drawn" on 1 January 1981 for the Haitians, those who arrived after that date are now subject to apparently rigorous deportation proceedings:

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials...promised nationwide...hearings for the 15,000 (one estimate as of 1 August 1981) Haitian refugees not covered by the Reagan...amnesty proposal.

The hearings...will be held at all detention centers holding Haitians.

The announcement by INS and Justice Department officials...was the first step in a determined new drive by government...to cope with the backlog of...Haitians who arrived...after 1 January 1981. 52

INS reasoning is that successful en masse deportations back to Haiti would be a strong deterrent for other Haitians

---

51 "Illegal-Aliaen Amnesty Urged," Miami Herald, 31 July 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 14.

52 Brenda Eady and Guillermo Martinez, "INS Plans Deportation Hearings," Miami Herald, 1 August 1981, sec. A, p. 10.

contemplating a Florida voyage.

Denial of Court Access:

Under present immigration law -- and especially due to the influence of the many pro-Haitian lawyers who encourage the practice -- a Haitian or other illegal is entitled to due process through the court system over and above any ruling in an INS court. That is to say that even if an INS judge rules an alien to be inadmissible, the latter may appeal through the external courts for political refugee status, allowing him to remain in the country. Because of the enormous backlog of such cases in South Florida, this procedure can take as long as three years. In order to alleviate this bottleneck:

The Reagan Administration will ask Congress to approve a major change in immigration law that would effectively deny access to the courts by... any...undocumented aliens who enter the country....

'For those Cubans and Haitians who do, by one means or another, arrive in the U.S., our policy must be one of immediate detention and prompt exclusion of those found to be inadmissible to this country,' declared (a spokesman). 53

---

53 Robert D. Shaw Jr., "U.S. Wants to Prevent Undocumented Aliens from Going to Court," Miami Herald, 1 August 1981, sec. A, p. 10.

Detention:

Closely coupled to the concept of denying court access is the proposal to establish permanent detention camps for illegal entrants. Under the present system, it is simply not realistic to assume that the INS can maintain complete responsibility for the well-being and whereabouts of every alien while he is pursuing a three-year court decision. We have the example of the Krome Avenue camp where overcrowding developed risky health conditions and forced the INS to release many detainees into the general community where they could easily escape future court dates. Further, the INS is responsible for the health, feeding and shelter of its detainees for as long as their legal status is undecided. The INS is not capable of these duties at present:

It is pointless to discuss new immigration... procedures...until the INS is given the money...to implement policy. The INS...in South Florida (is) overwhelmed.

...Congress must make a major investment in... INS. Without that investment, new immigration policies will be as worthless as the old ones....<sup>54</sup>

---

54 "Investment in INS a Must," Miami Herald, 2 March 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

The Reagan plan, towards this end, requests Congress to authorize \$35 million for the INS to establish adequate permanent detention centers that would: (1) remove the need to rely on the federal prison system, (2) provide sufficient and humane care for alien detainees, and (3) ensure that detainees be held only in INS custody.

#### Enhanced Border Enforcement:

An additional \$40 million is requested for increased border enforcement. At present, only 350 Border Patrol Officers are on duty at any single time along the 2,000-mile national boundary with Mexico. This money would be spent in part for the hiring of another 236 officers.

#### A Role for the Coast Guard:

Except in times of immigration emergency such as the 1980 Mariel Boatlift, the Border Patrol is barely active in Florida. A new role for the Coast Guard has already been implemented. On 29 September 1981, Reagan issued an executive order authorizing the Coast Guard power of interdic-

tion -- to intercept and turn around ships on the high seas suspected of carrying illegal Haitian immigrants. The order was issued only after negotiations with, and the agreement of the government of Haiti:

Boats carrying Haitians will be stopped, boarded and escorted back to Haiti if the passengers don't have emigration papers required by Haitian law.... The program will be in force for three months, at which time federal authorities will re-evaluate it.

An INS investigator and a Creole-speaking interpreter will accompany the Coast Guard boarding party....

'Their role will not be to solicit political asylum claims, but to listen to the answers the passengers give the Coast Guard. If, in their mind, there is possible grounds for granting political asylum, they will take a sworn affidavit from the individual passengers.'

The Haitians will be asked three questions by the INS agent: 'Why did you leave Haiti, why do you want to go to the United States, and do you fear returning to Haiti?' 55

It is apparent that the so-called Haitian "mother ships" will be the prime target of Coast Guard activity.

#### Fines for Employers:

The Reagan plan recognizes that while it is illegal for the undocumented to work in the U.S., it has never been il-

---

55 "U.S. Coast Guard to Begin Intercepting Haitians," The News (Mexico City), 1 October 1981, p. 7.

legal for employers to hire them. Reagan proposes to fine businesses that employ four or more people up to \$1,000 for each illegal they hire. An alien job seeker must produce two forms of identification for employers and must sign a form swearing that he is in the U.S. legally. Affected by this provision would be Florida's large agricultural employers.

For years, the more adamant proponents of immigration reform have argued for the introduction of a national identity card, whose most likely form would be that of a forgery-proof Social Security card. Although Smith himself favored such a system to give employers some insurance they were hiring legal persons, Reagan was "explicitly opposed to the creation of a national identity card," even though recent polls have shown a majority of Americans are in agreement with the Attorney General.<sup>56</sup> Detractors, like Reagan, argue that the computerized data of such an identity plan could be wrongly used for purposes other than hiring. The idea was therefore rejected, in place of which the two forms of "nor-

---

56 A Gallup Poll survey in November 1980 showed 62% felt "everyone in the United States should be required to carry an identification card such as a Social Security card...."

mal" identification must be produced such as a driver's license, birth certificate, or INS documentation.

Immigration is a controversial issue of itself, consequently, the Reagan proposals have already received praise and criticism from all quarters. "The libertarians scream about getting the government off the backs of the people, while the law-and-order types see our laws as a mockery. The pragmatists see all pain and no gain and wonder why the Administration got involved at all." 57

In the meantime, what portions of the Reagan proposals will survive Congressional scrutiny, and with what alterations imposed upon them, remain to be seen. Then there is the question of how effective the policies would be even if approved in whole form.

---

57 Idem, "Controls for an Alien Invasion," Time, 3 August 1981, p. 19.

### Conclusions:

Whatever conclusions one draws from the recent and present picture of the Haitian boat people, the foremost among them must be that the Haitians themselves cannot be faulted. By all accounts, they are a gentle and hard-working people who -- no matter how grave and difficult life can be -- always find it within themselves to smile.

The Haitians' only crime is that of hunger and want, their only sin that of dreaming of a better life. These unassuming and humble people, however, are victims from all sides: Their own government represses them totally yet makes it illegal to emigrate freely; given no other choice, they flee across the Atlantic at the cost of every material possession; and arriving in the land of the "American Dream," they find a government eager to send them back from whence they came. Even those who escape authorities become prey to everything



from disease to resentment against their presence. The Haitians are a people who in every way suffer.

And so there is a sense of justice to be felt in the fact that Presidents Carter and Reagan have recognized their plight by granting amnesties. The 50,000 Haitians who arrived here between 1972 and the turn of the present year can now begin -- having been accorded the legal right to live in the United States -- to peel away the exploitation and vulnerability that have surrounded them in their illegality. There is justice, too, that the new legal status will carry many Haitians to citizenship. As Americans, their family members in Haiti can be brought to the United States without having to endure a fearful, open sea.

It is sad that those 17,000 or more who arrived after the turn of the year -- a cruel, arbitrary line drawn at 1 January 1981 -- now face the vigorous deportation efforts of the United States. But another conclusion which must be faced is that such a line must be drawn at some point. The flood of illegal aliens -- be they Cubans or Haitians, Cambodians or Vietnamese -- simply cannot be allowed to con-

tinue unchecked. The United States must find ways -- even if they are hard -- to control its borders. A nation which respects itself must have enforcement over its own laws.

But even given the present mood of the majority of American people and the probability that Ronald Reagan's "get tough" policies will become law, the question arises: Will the plan work?

The key element of the policy is in deterring further illegal immigration. One way to successful implementation is fines for employers who hire illegals, but some question just how effective such sanctions can be when employers cannot ask for positive proof of the job-seeker's legality through a national identity card. Without such a card -- its potential dangers understood -- the idea that employers must request instead "two forms of identification" may simply give rise to a thriving market in forged driver's licenses and birth certificates. There will always be unscrupulous persons ready to undertake such a "business."

Another key to deterring entry is the new role of the Coast Guard in "selectively intercepting" Haitian mother

ships, island traders or other smuggling vessels. But there is no automatic guarantee of success. The Coast Guard was created with the original, uncomplicated role of patrolling the nation's ocean boundaries and providing safety at sea. Today, two centuries later, it finds itself with an increasing number of complex duties but fewer resources. At a time when the Coast Guard is having difficulty retaining its enlisted personnel, and unable to attract qualified replacements due to low pay, it has become a more active, "catch-all" force. Among other tasks, the Coast Guard is responsible for containing oil spills, patrolling the nation's new 200-mile fishing zone, providing "the first line of defense" in the drug war, and smashing its way with icebreakers into scientific and military bases on the polar icecap. But the budget-conscious Reagan Administration has recommended no additional dollars or resources to accompany the Coast Guard's new Haitian role.

Asked what reason he had to believe the Reagan policy would be effective when the programs of other administrations have failed, the Attorney General replied: "Quite

possibly determination. (Immigration) is one (problem) this country has to come to grips with, and we're determined to come to grips with it." <sup>58</sup> But is this to say that other administrations enacted policies it did not believe would be effective? Isn't there something more tangible than "determination" to guarantee the success of the policy?

There is the further question of whether INS procedures aboard Coast Guard-intercepted ships will be truly fair and objective. An agency which has a proven record of discriminatory practices can probably not be trusted to be compassionate and just when operating out of sight and beyond earshot on the high seas:

It is sheer nonsense to believe that these asylum hearings to be held on board overcrowded, floating toilets that are bouncing around the high seas will be at all fair to anyone. At best the hearings will allow the administration to present the 'appearance' of granting due process to the would-be immigrants. <sup>59</sup>

Finally, is there the uncomfortable possibility that the Reagan policy is racist?:

---

58 "'Determination' Can Stem Tide of Refugees, Smith Says," Miami Herald, 3 August 1981, sec. A, p. 4.

59 Ibid., "The Haitian Problem: 'Baby Doc'," Miami Herald, 16 August 1981, sec. E, p. 1.

Some black Americans who are concerned with the Haitian problem see the interdiction policy as unprecedented and racist. Whether intentionally racist or not, the policy is decidedly more tolerant of the millions of Mexicans who illegally cross our western borders. While the administration speaks of detaining the several hundred Haitian refugees who may continue to arrive here weekly at this time of year, it does not express a similar intent to detain the hundreds of thousands of Mexicans who each week, illegally cross our borders at will....

...It is the relatively small flow of Haitians that has resulted in the most active expressions of concern from the Florida congressional delegation.<sup>60</sup>

If there is one state that deeply hopes the policy will work, it is Florida. Illegal immigration -- Florida's ever-more frustrated voices have maintained -- is a national and federal problem and should not become the burden of one particular state simply because of its geographical position near the Caribbean Basin and South America. Kansas, for example, does not experience immigration troubles.

Florida's financial resources were strained by a Cuban Boatlift which brought 90,000 new residents into South Florida in a five-month period. To deal with the crisis, state-payrolled personnel were utilized, state funds were allocated, and additional state monies are needed to fight

---

60 Ibid.

a rising crime rate. Since 1 January 1980, refugee-related events have cost Florida an un-reimbursed \$80 million or more. This figure does not include the Haitian arrivals of 1981.

Then on the tails of the Cuban influx has come a heightened Haitian immigration at a time when the new President is curtailing or eliminating, not expanding, federal programs that traditionally aid state and local government. Coming under the budgetary ax to one degree or another have been: the Farmer's Home Administration which provides migrant populations with federally-funded housing, funding for rural health clinics, migrant education, food stamps, CETA and free legal services to the poor. Predictably, Florida's Haitians will now turn increasingly to state and local resources to fill the aid vacuum. Florida wants more, not less federal aid.

In Dade County (Miami), for example, about 10 percent of that health department's total budget -- supported by local tax money -- was spent on Haitian health care. In a single month during the past summer, 146 Haitian babies were born

in Dade's county-owned hospital.

There is no end to the list of burdens that South Floridians bear -- for the most part with a generosity unequalled anywhere in the nation -- in sharing with the Caribbean refugees their facilities for education, recreation, health care, transportation, commerce, employment, and safety. The Federal Government, whose incompetence created the problem, has provided only minimal help -- and grudgingly, at that. 61

It is thus understandable why Florida's Governor, Bob Graham, has shown some militancy by: (1) Suing the federal government in July to relieve the Krome overcrowding because "the refusal by the...government to resolve the vexing problems of immigration policy has caused nothing but a tide of human misery;" (2) Demanding that refugees be counted in monthly jobless rates, statistics which determine the amount of federal money available to counties; (3) Criticizing the Reagan immigration policy over its failure to reimburse state and local government for strains on law enforcement and public school systems caused by past refugee influxes; and (4) Pressuring Reagan to begin Coast Guard interdiction immediately by executive order, rather than waiting for approval of this specific by Congress.

---

61 "Cut in Dade Refugee Aid a Callously Hurtful Idea," Miami Herald, 23 August 1981, sec. E, p. 2.

One has the sense that if the Reagan policy is not ultimately effective, Florida will be the first to let the President know.

Another observer of the Reagan policy has characterized it as "a giant leap sideways" because it "basically ignores...the crucial political, social and economic problems within Haiti itself."<sup>62</sup> In recent discussions with Duvalier, Governor Graham acknowledged that measures must be taken to alleviate the problems causing the exodus from Haiti.

But Reagan does, in fact, have some sense of this. In the Caribbean Basin, of which Haiti constitutes a substantial part, more than 45 percent of the population is younger than 15. The imminent population explosion upon the already-strained resources of these countries will inspire, if anything, yet greater initiative to emigrate to the United States. It is, therefore, easy to understand the logic of the President's recent aid suggestion for the Caribbean: Establish a one-way free trade agreement which would allow

---

62 Op. Cit.



Haiti, for one, to sell its goods in the U.S. without trade restrictions, while not requiring similar concessions for U.S. manufacturers. In this way, it is theorized, productivity within the Caribbean would be stimulated to the point of self-sufficiency "in 10 or 15 years." But would this one measure be enough of an answer?

Perhaps something like a population explosion would cause one "good" effect in Haiti, that of a political revolution. For until the Haitian nation undertakes some profound changes upon itself, its people will flee to the United States -- one way or another.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Newspaper Articles:

"A Little Help on Refugees." Miami Herald, 3 April 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

Anderson, Jack. "IMF Is Plundered." Miami Herald, 23 March 1981, sec. A, p. 7.

Anderson, Jack. "Mexico's Reaction Key to Reagan Trade Plan." Today (Cocoa, Fla.), 15 August 1981, sec. B, p. 6.

Anderson, Jack. "Trade Plan Benefits Caribbean Nations." Today, 16 July 1981, sec. A, p. 19.

Balmaseda, Liz. "INS Investigates Haitian Arrivals; Is It New Trend?" Miami Herald, 12 May 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

Balmaseda, Liz and Voboril, Mary. "22 Haitians Are Accused of Smuggling 92 Aliens." Miami Herald, 15 May 1981, sec. C, p. 4.

Bohning, Don. "Caribbean Initiative: Good Start, But Time Will Tell Its Real Impact." Miami Herald, 13 July 1981, sec. A, p. 14.

Browning, Michael. "Haitians Are the Newest, Hungriest and Hindmost; They're Grateful Anyway." Miami Herald, 23 March 1981, sec. A, p. 16.

Burger, Frederick. "Housing Problem Tough to Solve: They Get What No One Else Wants." Miami Herald, 25 March 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 14.

Burnside, Susan. "Solutions Are Elusive for Woes of Migrants." Miami Herald, 26 March 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 19.

"Chiles: Haitian Solution Overdue." Today, 27 June 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

"Closed Refugee Hearings Halted." Today, 7 June 1981, sec. B, p. 10.

Credson, John M. "Florida Haitians Struggling to Get Political Asylum." New York Times, 24 May 1980, sec. A, pages 1 and 16.

Credson, John M. "Ruling Nears in Haitians' Lawsuit Alleging U.S. Bias." New York Times, 11 June 1980, sec. A, pages 1 and 14.

"Cut in Dade Refugee Aid A Callously Hurtful Idea." Miami Herald, 23 August 1981, sec. E, p. 2.

"'Determination' Can Stem Tide of Refugees, Smith Says." Miami Herald, 3 August 1981, sec. A, p. 4.

Dunn, Marvin. "The Haitian Problem: 'Baby Doc'." Miami Herald, 16 August 1981, sec. E, p. 1.

"Duvalier Asks U.S. Aide to Halt Refugee Tide." Today, 1 July 1981, sec. A, p. 16.

Eady, Brenda and Martinez, Guillermo. "INS Plans Deportation Hearings." Miami Herald, 1 August 1981, sec. A, p. 10.

"Eleven Refugees Sent Back to Haiti Home." Today, 5 June 1981, sec. B, p. 6.

Fiedler, Tom. "U.S. Links Aid to Haiti to Emigration Controls." Miami Herald, 8 May 1981, sec. A, p. 25.

"Finding a Handle on Haiti." Miami Herald, 13 May 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

"Florida Governor Seeks to Stem Haitian Flow." The News (Mexico City), 1 October 1981, p. 6.

Gallup, George. "Majority Favor Ban on Hiring." Sunday Oregonian, 30 November 1980, sec. A, p. 24.

Grimm, Fred. "200 Haitians Flown to Kentucky Camp." Miami Herald, 3 August 1981, sec. B, p. 2.

Hackley, Randall. "Coast Guard Awaits Role in Rebuffing Refugees." Today, 2 August 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

"Haitian Hearings Resume Monday." Today, 13 June 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

"Haitian Shut-off Sought." Today, 7 July 1981, sec. A, p. 1.

"Haitians' Legal Position Threatened -- Attorney." Today, 21 July 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

Holmes, Cynthia. "Haitians Processed in Miami." Today, sec. B, p. 1.

"Illegal-Alien Amnesty Urged." Miami Herald, 31 July 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 14.

"INS Incompetence Traps Haitians and Community." Miami Herald, 29 June 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

"Investment in INS Is a Must." Miami Herald, 2 March 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

Johnson, Sharen and Mecham, Michael. "Florida Suing to Move Haitians." Today, 18 July 1981, sec. B, p. 6.

King, Sandy. "59 Haitians Land North of Inlet." Free Press (Vero Beach, Fla.), 4 June 1981, p. 2.

"Lifblood of Jean Rabel Flows From South Florida." Miami Herald, 28 June 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 26.

Martinez, Guillermo. "Detention Camps Possible for New Refugees." Miami Herald, 9 February 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 18.

Martinez, Guillermo. "Hawkins: Stop Entry of Cubans, Haitians." Miami Herald, 27 January 1981, sec. B, p. 3.

Martinez, Guillermo. "U.S. to Move 285 Haitians to Other States." Miami Herald, 18 July 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 13.

"No More Aid for Duvalier." Today, 5 July 1981, sec. A, p. 14.

Weisman, Steven R. "President Says U.S. Offers 'Open Arms' to Cuban Refugees." New York Times, 5 May 1980, sec. A, pages 1 and 12.

Magazine Articles:

"Carter and the Cuban Influx." Newsweek, 26 May 1980, pp. 22-28.

"Controls for an Alien Invasion." Time, 3 August 1981, p. 19.

Hamburger, T. K. "The National ID Dispute." This World (Sunday magazine of the San Francisco Chronicle), 30 November 1980, p. 35.

Moseley, Jack. "Illegal Aliens: Can We Stem the Tide?" Family Weekly (Sunday magazine of Today, Cocoa, Fla.), 7 June 1981, pp. 7-8.

Willeford, Charles. "He Has Seen the Future and It Is Crowded." Tropic (Sunday magazine of the Miami Herald), 16 August 1981, pp. 12-17.

Norcross, Bett. "28 Haitians Land in Vero." Today, 2 June 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and back page.

"Reagan Immigration Plan Step in Right Direction." Today, 3 August 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

"Reagan Orders Coast Guard Stop, Turn Away Haitians on High Seas." The News (Mexico City), 30 September 1981, p. 6.

Risen, James. "State: Count Refugees in Jobless Rate." Miami Herald, 7 April 1981, sec. B, p. 1.

"Sen. Chiles Points Way to Unsnarl Immigration." Miami Herald, 28 March 1981, sec. A, p. 6.

Shaw, Robert D. Jr. "U.S. Wants to Prevent Undocumented Aliens from Going to Court." Miami Herald, 1 August 1981, sec. A, p. 10.

Smith, Stephen C. "Beleaguered Coast Guard Finds Itself with More Roles but Fewer Resources." Miami Herald, 18 May 1981, sec. B, p. 4.

"Smuggler Planes Crowding U.S. Air Lanes." The News (Mexico City), 7 September 1981, p. 8.

Starita, Joe. "A Day in the Life: Beans, Rice, Rotgut and Silent Fields." Miami Herald, 22 March 1981, sec. A, p. 24.

Starita, Joe. "The Situation Here Is Pretty Damn Bleak." Miami Herald, 22 March 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 25.

"26 Dissidents in Haiti Get Jail Terms." Miami Herald, 27 August 1981, sec. A, p. 27.

"U.S. Coast Guard to Begin Intercepting Haitians." The News (Mexico City), 1 October 1981, p. 7.

"U.S. Vows to Restrict Alien Flow." Miami Herald, 28 June 1981, sec. A, pages 1 and 27.

Voboril, Mary. "75-Minute Tour Shows Graham Krome's Better." Miami Herald, 23 August 1981, sec. B, p. 2.