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THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

00072

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JANUARY 21, 1993

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE CONNIE MACK

SUBJECT: URGES THE PRESIDENT TO ANNOUNCE HIS POLICY ON
THE ISSUE OF HAITIAN REFUGEES SINCE SOUTH
FLORIDA'S RESOURCES ARE STRAINED BEYOND ITS
ITS CAPACITY AS A RESULT OF HURRICANE ANDREW

		ACTION		DISPOSITION	
ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS		ORG	93/01/21	CP2	A 93/02/03
REFERRAL NOTE: ATTN: HOWARD PASTER					
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COMMENTS: INCOMING REC'D IN CORRESP. ANALYSIS ON
JAN 21 93

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1220
MAIL USER CODES: (A) (B) (C)

*ACTION CODES: *DISPOSITION *OUTGOING *
* * *CORRESPONDENCE: *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION *A-ANSWERED *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL * OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE *C-COMPLETED * CODE = A *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET *S-SUSPENDED *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC * OUTGOING *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * * *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE * * *
*X-INTERIM REPLY * * *

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOb) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 3, 1993

Dear Senator Mack:

I share your belief that the world's best response to prevent a mass exodus from Haiti is to restore democracy to that nation.

For this reason, I have strongly supported the current United Nations/Organization of American States negotiation effort, which includes plans for the deployment of a substantial number of human rights monitors in Haiti. I believe that deployment of these monitors will help to prevent human rights abuses and enhance the climate for political dialogue.

I hope and expect that an improvement in the human rights situation and progress toward a political settlement will encourage Haitians to remain in their country to build a better future for themselves.

I also share your concerns about the dangers of boat departure from Haiti. That is why I spoke to the people of Haiti on January 14, urging that they not attempt to depart by boat and indicating that the practice of direct return would continue for the time being.

At the same time, my Administration is attempting to provide fair and safe alternatives to boat departure for those who continue to fear persecution. I have instructed the U.S. Embassy in Haiti to reduce substantially the time it takes to process refugee applications received at the Embassy in Haiti, so that Haitians who fear persecution are not subjected to long waiting periods during which they might be at risk. In addition, I sent a

technical mission to Haiti last week to explore ways to make in-country processing safer and more accessible for Haitians, and to examine ways to enhance safety for repatriates. The mission will offer its recommendations to me shortly.

This is a highly complex issue that requires first and foremost a change in the human rights situation in Haiti and a political settlement that restores the democratically elected government of President Aristide. The U.S. response on the migration issue must maintain our commitment to fairness while taking all practical steps necessary to protect against tragic loss of life.

I will end the practice of direct return when I can do so without contributing to a humanitarian tragedy. In this respect, I believe your suggestion about the importance of hemispheric cooperation on asylum/resettlement issues is a very useful one. I will certainly take it into account as we examine alternatives for future action in this area.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Clinton".

The Honorable Connie Mack
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Howard Raster

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0904

January 5, 1993

The Honorable Bill Clinton
President-elect of the United States
Clinton-Gore Transition Office
105 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Mr. President-elect:

I am writing with a plea to immediately announce your policy on dealing with the issue of Haitian refugees. As you know, earlier today some 350 refugees arrived in South Florida after traveling shark-infested waters and placing their lives at risk.

The signals have been present for several weeks that there may be an exodus of refugees headed for Florida. Today's arrival has sent shockwaves that a mass exodus may occur sooner than many had anticipated. That is why a clear policy declaration is so desperately needed.

I firmly believe that freedom is the core of all human progress. In Haiti, we have witnessed the brutality of a military regime that continues to rob the Haitian people of their freedom and democracy.

We all must be morally outraged by the repression of the Haitian people and realize the free world must come together to provide the resources and assistance to return democracy to Haiti, even if it means the use of force.

The free world's best response to prevent a mass exodus of Haitians is to restore democracy to the nation soon.

I have expressed my concerns that it is wrong to single out Haitians for different asylum standards than other immigrant groups. We cannot ignore life-threatening persecution.

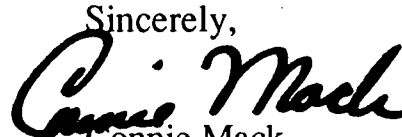
As a Senator from Florida, I have a unique sensitivity to the so-called magnet effect for Haitian refugees and its tremendous impact on the state, especially at this time. Hurricane Andrew has strained South Florida's resources beyond the capacity to care for a mass exodus of Haitian refugees.

Please keep in mind that Washington's immigration decisions -- especially those affecting the Caribbean and Latin America -- often impact South Florida tremendously. In many cases, South Florida is stuck with the cost of the federal government's foreign and immigration policies.

The consequence of tyranny in Haiti cannot be South Florida's challenge. The nations of this hemisphere must absorb Haitian refugees and share in the responsibility to help those seeking asylum.

Again, please address this issue publicly -- for the sake of Haitians planning to risk their lives on the open sea and for the people of Florida who are on the frontlines of the issue.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Connie Mack
United States Senate

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