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VOICE OF AMERICA

INTERVIEW WITH ROLANDO BONACHEA  
OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING  
CBS 60 MINUTES

Tuesday, July 16, 1996

Tape Transcription

**Diversified Reporting Services, Inc.**  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005  
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## P R O C E E D I N G S

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible) broadcast  
(inaudible).

MR. BONACHEA: Well, in the Congress of the United States (inaudible) Television Marti, it was stated that the mission of Radio and, later, TV Marti was to promote freedom and democracy in Cuba and to do so by providing the people of Cuba with news information that is (inaudible), objective, (inaudible) and that provides the people of Cuba with the information that the Castro government has denied to them since 1959.

This is a phenomenal service to the people of Cuba and to the cause of democracy and freedom in the island.

If you consider that, since 1959, Castro took over all of the media outfits, where the radio, television, newspapers, and magazines were taken over by the Castro government, subsequently, after he had done that, during the decade of the 1960s, by the 1970s, he moved toward prohibiting the distribution of Latin American publications inside the island and, in

the 1980s, as perestroika and (inaudible) began to take root (inaudible) the former Soviet Union, Castro then began prohibiting the distribution of publications from the former Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries, and a newspaper as popular as Nostra (phonetic) News, which had enjoyed great popularity with the people of Cuba and the 1980s was forbidden from being distributed.

So, in 1985, Radio Marti broke the monopoly of information of the Castro government and, since then, and through Radio Marti and, to a lesser degree, through Television Marti, the people of Cuba have access to all kinds of information.

INTERVIEWER: How many people listen to Radio Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: The studies that we have done estimate that the audience of Radio Marti ranges between 65 to 70 percent of the audience inside Cuba. I think that these audiences are very large. It has certainly set a standard within Cuba for what radio broadcasting journalism should be all about.

We have no doubt that Radio Marti is the most

listened to radio station inside Cuba.

INTERVIEWER: It's the most what?

MR. BONACHEA: The most listened to radio station inside the island, and that the Castro government tries to compete with Radio Marti by even trying to improve their own radio programs which I would say is, most of the time, is rather boring, since what they do is to produce the propaganda machinery of the Castro government.

In Radio Marti, the people of Cuba find a great diversity of opinions, a great diversity of approaches to many complex issues.

This, I think, is the value of Radio Marti (inaudible) that it prepares the people of Cuba for the democratic transition that will come, and prepares them by showing, in diversity of opinions, that democracy is a complex process and that any given issue is going to have different shades of interpretation, different opinions, and that, therefore, it is important that they be exposed to the spectrum of political-economic opinions that is (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: What is the audience of

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Television Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: It is believed that -- the most recent studies that we have done estimate maybe 3 percent of the audience being able to tune in Television Marti, without any doubt that the Castro government has been able to jam, more or less effectively, the signal of Television Marti by pouring into this effort probably literally millions of dollars.

I think the people of Cuba know of this. They know of the lengths that the Castro government will go to to prevent them from receiving objective news information about what is going on outside Cuba and inside the island.

I think that the jamming of Television Marti is one of the greatest examples of the type of dictatorship that we are dealing with, obsessed with disallowing the people of Cuba from gaining news information, simply because they want to have a total control and a total monopoly of the information that reaches Cuba.

INTERVIEWER: We've been told by people in

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Washington that virtually nobody sees TV Marti.

MR. BONACHEA: You know, we have -- we know that the jamming, like I said, has been fairly effective but, at the same time, we have reports that, sporadically, the signal of Television Marti enters (inaudible) parts of the island. That brings the Castro government immediately to mobilize the jammers from one place to another in order to block the signal again.

So yes, we do not contest that, whereas it has been very difficult for him to jam Radio Marti, he has been fairly successful in depriving the people of Cuba from gaining access to the TV signal.

INTERVIEWER: How much does Castro spend to jam Radio Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: It is --

INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry. Let me add, how much money does it cost Castro to jam Television Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: It is -- I think it would be difficult for me to say, you know. I have heard that it ranges from \$100 million all the way to maybe 5, 6 hundred million dollars per year, in building the

jammers, maintaining the technological equipments that are required.

But this is the type of information that maybe technicians would be more (inaudible) to be able to say exactly what is the cost in energy, petroleum, that that is costing the Castro government to maintain these things.

INTERVIEWER: \$100 million?

MR. BONACHEA: I wouldn't be surprised that it costs him that much. You know, we hear that he has many Russian-made helicopters, equipped with jammers, that fly continuously, with the cost of fuel, trying to look for the signal of TV Marti in order to jam the signal.

INTERVIEWER: This comes as no surprise to you. There is some criticism in Washington, and there have been criticisms by some advisory boards about the amount of money that's being spent on TV Marti. And the question is, why spend millions and millions of dollars every year broadcasting a program that nobody in Cuba can see?

(Interruption to the proceedings.)

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INTERVIEWER: Hold it just a second.

(A recess was taken.)

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Are we rolling?

A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, we're on.

INTERVIEWER: Now, first of all, let me ask you, how much money does it cost for the government to fund Radio and TV Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: You are talking about \$22 million per year, about \$11 million for Radio, \$11 million for Television Marti.

INTERVIEWER: Why spend \$11 million broadcasting TV Marti when nobody in Cuba, or virtually no one in Cuba, can see it?

MR. BONACHEA: Let me say, first of all, that Radio and Television Marti have had very strong support from the American public, the American people, from the United States Congress, and from three consecutive Presidents.

The support of Radio and Television Marti within Congress, as you know, is a bipartisan support from both the Democratic and the Republican parties, and it has been a support that has been given to us

each year by very large margins of supports in both the House and the Senate.

Those of us who work in Radio and Television Marti are grateful for that type of support. We believe that Radio and Television Marti are essential to the promotion of freedom and democracy in Cuba.

I realize that, when we (inaudible) ourselves with the question that Television Marti does not reach as large an audience as we would like for it to reach -

INTERVIEWER: But the critics say it doesn't reach anybody.

MR. BONACHEA: Like I said, it's a small percentage that we feel that we are reaching, not large enough. We continuously try to reach more people, to fulfill our congressional mandate of delivering the information to the people of Cuba.

But I always say that, through the 40 years that the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries oppressed the peoples of those countries, the United States Congress, the American public, and the Presidents of the United

States had the great wisdom for supporting Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty, in spite of the jamming of those communist countries against those three major networks.

Today we know, in the retrospect of history, that Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty played a very important role in promoting freedom and democracy in all of those former communist countries, even though the Soviets never gave up their efforts at jamming their operations.

(Inaudible) faced with the same situation in Cuba, when it comes to Television Marti. It may be that Castro can be successful here and there and jamming the signal, but the truth of the matter remains that the people of Cuba are entitled to receive the information, that the United Nations Charter of Human Rights mandates that no government should prevent their people from obtaining free, objective, and (inaudible) information.

And, as we know, in light of the recent crises that we have had with Castro, the Castro government, that continues to be highly unpredictable, everything

that we can do to deliver information to the people of Cuba, even if it's very small, is going to serve a useful purpose to serve the national interest of the United States of America.

INTERVIEWER: I would agree, Dr. Bonachea, I would agree that the people of Cuba are entitled to the information. But they can't get the information, because Castro is jamming the signal.

MR. BONACHEA: But I say to you, Voice of America's audience, in many of the services, reaches 7 or 8 percent. According to our studies, we reach about 3 to 4 percent. The difference, I think, between the regular services of VOA in terms of audience and what Television Marti does is, in my opinion, not that -- not that great a difference.

And, mind you, I am not saying that -- I continuously, with all of the people who work with Television Marti, we are constantly trying to see how we can reach a wider amount of people.

But I do believe that the important thing for us to remember is that both Radio and Television Marti, including Television Marti, we serve the cause of

freedom and democracy by trying to deliver the information to the people of Cuba.

And again, like in the former Soviet Union, the American people, the President, and the United States Congress did not give up their support of Voice of America just because, at one point or another, the dictators of those countries were being more or less successful in jamming those signals.

INTERVIEWER: What would happen, what would happen if the United States Congress shut off funding for TV Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, I believe that, you know, like everything else, we live in a great democracy, Television and Radio Marti, like many other issues of importance, have been part of a continuing debate inside the Congress, in the media, in other areas. The debate continues, as you know.

But I would say that, if the funding for Television Marti was taken away, I do believe that will relieve Castro of a certain amount of pressure that we exercise by trying to deliver that information to the people of Cuba, and will give something to Castro

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while, on the other hand, it sort of would be like rewarding Castro's efforts at trying to prevent the people of Cuba from receiving the information.

INTERVIEWER: Propaganda victory?

MR. BONACHEA: It would be, to a certain degree, yes, a propaganda victory for Castro, though I think that that should not drive our argument, because I really think that, when you look at the operation of Radio and Television Marti, I am more concerned -- I am less concerned about what Castro may or may not think is a propaganda victory, and I am more concerned about serving the national interests of the United States in our cause of promoting freedom and democracy in the island, and television, I think can play, will play as important a role as Radio Marti.

INTERVIEWER: You could make the argument that Castro doesn't even need to jam the signal of Radio Marti because of the problems, the technological problems, with the blimps. We're told that it's nonoperational.

A PARTICIPANT: You might want to re-ask that. You said Radio Marti. You mean Television Marti.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. I'm sorry. We're told that you could make the argument that Castro doesn't even need to -- you could make the argument that Castro doesn't even have to jam the signal of TV Marti. We're told that the blimp is nonoperational about 45 percent of the time.

MR. BONACHEA: No, that is a false allegation completely. The aerostat (phonetic) that was developed by American scientists for this particular project is, in my opinion, a tribute to American science, American technology. We have no doubt that the quality of the signal that enters the coast of Cuba is an A-quality type of television signal.

Now, once it gets inside, that's where the jammers are in, in order to block the signal. What is true is that there is maybe about 15, 20 percent of times that we are not able to complete the entire broadcast because of weather conditions. It has nothing to do with technological reasons, but with weather conditions.

As you know, in the part that the aerostat is located at, the (inaudible) north of Key west, during

certain times of the year, there are heavy rains and, therefore, we have to be very careful and, when we are told that we should lower the aerostat to protect the integrity of the aerostat, we, of course, immediately do so.

INTERVIEWER: So it's not out of commission 45 percent of the time?

MR. BONACHEA: No, absolutely not.

INTERVIEWER: What do your listenership surveys for Radio Marti tell you?

MR. BONACHEA: That we are in an audience that is around 70 percent. Sixty-five, 70 percent of the people of Cuba tunes in regularly to Radio Marti. This is -- this type of audience places Radio Marti as the most successful service of international broadcasting of the United States government.

But, in addition to that, it places Radio Marti as the most listened to radio station inside Cuba.

INTERVIEWER: More listened to than the radio stations in Miami?

MR. BONACHEA: More listened to, in my

opinion, than their own radio stations, like Radio Travelte (phonetic) and Radio Congress (phonetic).

Let me say that, for whatever the reasons, the Castro government does not make an effort, a sustained effort, at jamming the radio broadcasts that come from the city of Miami. They do make a great effort at jamming the broadcasts of Radio Marti.

INTERVIEWER: How do you explain this Gallup poll that was done -- and many people think it's the most accurate survey of listenership in Cuba -- that puts the audience for Radio Marti at about 16 percent of the population?

MR. BONACHEA: No, I believe that that (inaudible) poll was completely flawed, and the main reason why it was flawed, as I am sure --

INTERVIEWER: Flawed?

MR. BONACHEA: Deeply flawed. -- the main reason why it was flawed, in my opinion, as I am sure the people who conducted the poll will acknowledge, is that, within hours after they began to interview people in Cuba as to what radio stations they were tuning in, the Secret Police of Castro began to arrest the same

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people that the Gallup poll was interviewing.

In my opinion, that plays a complete (inaudible), as you can imagine, as to the responses that the Cuban people were going to give to these interviewers.

I do want to say that we of Radio Marti would very much like to be able to bring into Cuba professional, scientific polling organizations that could receive all the guarantees necessary for them to undertake that type of polling, but I assure you that the Castro government will never allow that, because the government knows that Radio Marti is the most listened to radio station inside the island of Cuba.

INTERVIEWER: Even more popular than the commercial stations from Miami?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, you know, I truly cannot say. I would say that, yes, that we are more popular, that we are more listened to. And, for whatever the reason, like I have said, the Castro government tries to continuously jam but, on the other hand, the jamming of the radio station in Miami are not as sustained as it is against Radio Marti.

INTERVIEWER: You know Dr. Christian  
(phonetic) (inaudible)?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Your former director of  
audience research?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: She said in -- she swore, in two  
affidavits, that virtually no one listened to  
Television Marti, that studies were conducted and that  
virtually no one listened to TV Marti, and that the  
audience for Radio Marti was falling off sharply. What  
is your reaction to that?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, I believe that first of  
all, the allegations are completely false. I think  
that something like that would have to be placed in its  
proper context. I have already provided to several of  
the people who have been investigating the information  
that is available to me as the acting director of the  
Office of Cuba Broadcasting.

I think the main thing to keep always in mind  
is that audience studies always have to be placed in  
the context. If you have a declining audience, what

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may be the causes for the declining audience?

Is it poor programming? Well, in my opinion, the programming of Radio Marti is excellent, which is the reason why the Castro government continuously tries to jam us. If the programming of Radio Marti was not any good, Castro would not even have to bother because, you know, in radio, all the listener has to do is to tune us in or tune us out.

As a result, I believe that, when it comes to, you know, people say, well, "The audience of Radio Marti declines," well, yes, maybe it did; maybe it had to do because of the electrical blackouts that the people of Cuba are experiencing, the intense jamming in certain months of the year. It could be related to many different things.

One of our audience studies done by Dr. Jeffers (phonetic) (inaudible), as I arrived to Radio and Television Marti, indicated that the audience of Radio Marti was about 95 percent inside the island of Cuba.

Well, myself, even though I always distribute whatever information is given to me, I did tell Dr.

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Jeffers that I did not believe that Radio Marti had an audience of 95 percent, because I do not believe that the BBC of London has an audience, a 95 percent audience, in London; so I found it difficult to believe that Radio Marti has a 95 percent listenership.

But I say this also with the (inaudible) that the important thing, in my opinion, was always to enhance our methodology for these types of studies, so that we who are involved in radio and television can have a poll for the audience, because that is the best way that we can compete with the radio stations inside Cuba.

INTERVIEWER: Dr. Jeffers says, when she came to you with the two reports, that you killed the messenger, that you relieved her of her duties. True?

MR. BONACHEA: False.

INTERVIEWER: Not true?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, you have to place that in the proper context. Dr. Jeffers and the Office of Audience Research was transferred to the Office of Audience Research at the United States Information Agency. That transfer has absolutely nothing to do

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with whatever audience study Dr. Jeffers may have produced.

In fact, I remember that when I and Director Navarro (inaudible) discussed this particular issue, one of the things that we discussed was, in the type of operation that we run, if we say that the audience of Television Marti or Radio Marti is X, there is always going to be somebody who says, "No, it is not X, it is B." And, if we say that it is B, they're going to say that it's A.

So, what we thought that made sense was, well, in large -- to a degree, the fact that Dr. Jeffers produces those studies inside the operation, inside Radio and TV Marti, that also opens up for critics to say, "Yeah, but you're producing the audience research inside the house."

So what we decided that would make sense was to transfer Dr. Jeffers and the function of audience research to the Office of Audience Research of the United States Information Agency, completely independent from Radio and Television Marti, so that she and the people of USIA could undertake whatever

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audience research they did, and that at least it would have the (inaudible) of being completely independent from Radio and Television Marti. I think that that was a good decision.

INTERVIEWER: I don't think that -- I don't think that Dr. Jeffers sees it that way. She says that you told her personally -- she says this in a sworn affidavit -- that you told her not to release the reports and that you personally delayed the releasing of the audience survey studies for two-and-a-half years.

MR. BONACHEA: That is completely false allegations. A lot of information that I have provided the people who have been looking into those allegations, I am convinced that, at the end, Radio and Television Marti will be completely exonerated from those false allegations.

I think that it is in the best interests of Radio and Television Marti to know exactly what is the type of audience that we have.

And, just as I have said that we acknowledge that the audience of Radio Marti is fairly large, that

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the audience of Television Marti suffers from jamming of the Castro dictatorship, I believe that it is always in the best interests of what we're trying to do to know accurately what is the audience.

And I am very pleased, by the way, by the work that the Office of Audience Research of the USIA has been doing.

INTERVIEWER: What about the Inspector General's Office of USIA, that's been conducting an investigation, for several years? Have they interviewed you?

MR. BONACHEA: First of all, I'm very glad that the Congress decided to close down the Office of Inspector General of the USIA and to transfer all of the personnel to the Office of Inspector General at the State Department.

INTERVIEWER: Why are you glad?

MR. BONACHEA: Because I believe that the investigation that the inspector general of USIA was conducting became politicized, was out of control.

And, when you have an office of an inspector general out of control, that can be very threatening to

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the civil rights of many different employees, considering that the inspector general operates in an autonomous and an independent manner from the director of the agency.

INTERVIEWER: You think it was politically motivated?

MR. BONACHEA: I believe that, in fact, that the investigation, in large measure, had become politicized, and that's why I was delighted when I heard that the Office of Inspector General had been closed down and that everyone had been mandated to transfer immediately to the Office of the IG of the State Department.

I have been --

INTERVIEWER: So you were happy that they closed them down?

MR. BONACHEA: That's right. I was very pleased to hear about (inaudible) --

INTERVIEWER: Did away with the office?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes. I was very pleased to hear that the Congress had decided and that the President had approved to close down that particular

operation and place it under the jurisdiction of the IG of the State Department.

I want to say (inaudible) that I have found very professional the people of the -- the employees, the colleagues that work in the Office of Inspector General at the State Department. They seem to be top professionals, very objective, and certainly I believe people who are (inaudible) by (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: Let's change tapes.

(Interruption to the proceedings, for a tape change.)

INTERVIEWER: You said that you were glad to see the Inspector General's Office eliminated. We spoke yesterday with David (inaudible). You know David Burgess (phonetic)?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: He said that the whole purpose of Radio Marti is to try and counteract freedom of speech, the lack of freedom of speech in Cuba and, yet, there is almost no freedom of speech at Radio Marti.

Here you have a situation where an inspector general conducts an investigation and the Inspector

General's Office that's conducting it is eliminated in the budget. Some people say that's just another example of the political clout and the lengths that the exile community and Radio Marti will go to --

MR. BONACHEA: Please, let's be fair. You know, in Radio Marti and Television Marti, any employee can express whatever opinions they would like to express. And the fact of the matter is that, by judging by the proliferation of opinions that the employees express to the media continuously, it's an indication that we support whatever opinions they want to express.

Obviously, the opinions that they express, in the case of three or four employees, will have to be substantiated. And, like I have said on different occasions, depending on what the allegations are, if the allegations happen to be true, I, for one, will (inaudible). Well, if this allegation be true, then let's see what we have to do to correct it. But so far, I have to see allegations that are true.

And, as far as them expressing personal opinions, of course, they can express whatever opinions

they want. And, as far as what you have said about the (inaudible) in the Cuban-American community and lack of freedom of expression, I think that that's an unfair characterization of the Cuban-American community.

We have come to this country, since 1959, because we are firm supporters of freedom of expression and democracy, which is what Castro took away from all Cubans in the island in 1959.

And I believe that the large majorities of Cuban-Americans have those principles very much engraved in their hearts, because (inaudible) they continue to do is precisely for freedom of expression, and certainly, those of us who work in Radio and Television Marti have had foremost in our mind, and we try to be an example, by (inaudible) behaviors that we have daily in our own operation.

INTERVIEWER: You say that everyone has the -- that everyone is free to speak their mind. But four of your research (inaudible) claim that their positions were done away with after they criticized the content and objectivity of some of the Radio Marti broadcasts.

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MR. BONACHEA: And that's a false allegation again. This -- and this is very difficult, very difficult, because when President Clinton was elected in November of 1992, it was very clear to many of us that the federal government was going to do a considerable effort at downsizing.

By 1994, it was very clear that Vice President Gore and President Clinton were mandating all of the United States government to do whatever we could to downsize the operation.

Let me indicate to you that, in terms of downsizing, between November of 1992 and September of 1995, Radio and Television Marti reduced their budgets by 33 percent. Since September, '95, we have reduced it by an additional 9 percent, for a total of 44 percent in reductions in our budget.

When it comes to this particular group of analysts, it's unfortunate that the appointee of President Clinton, Richard Loeb (phonetic), when he assessed the entire operation, and when he began to develop his plan for downsizing, he concluded that the analytical section was not essential to the operation

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of Radio and Television Marti.

And let me say that I, as his deputy, agreed with Director Loeb at the time, and continue to agree, that is not essential. In fact, I believe that we are wasting half of a million dollars per year of taxpayers' monies, as long as we do not proceed with our downsizing of Radio and Television Marti.

INTERVIEWER: After reading -- excuse me -- after reading the inspector general's report and reading some of these studies that have been done, it seems like the people that always get eliminated in bureaucratic economies, or downsized, are people who tend to be critical of Television and Radio Marti and of Jorge Mas Canosa.

MR. BONACHEA: That's a false allegation, absolutely. Let me say that Mr. Mas Canosa received the same treatment in Radio and Television Marti as any other person that is generating news in Radio and Television Marti.

The administration of Radio and Television Marti acts as a firewall concerning our job duties and (inaudible), so that they can do their job, apply their

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own journalistic criteria, using the most high standards of journalism, and provide coverage to whoever is generating news. That can be Mr. Mas Canosa, it can be Carlo Alberto Montaner (phonetic), Gutierrez Minoyu (phonetic).

The entire spectrum, from left to right, as long as they are generating news, they are going to receive coverage from our journalists.

INTERVIEWER: Where does this perception come from, that TV Marti and Radio Marti are very vindictive when people come out and express opinions that are contrary to some of the people running it? Where does that perception come from?

MR. BONACHEA: You know, some of these people are ideological enemies of Mr. Mas Canosa, (inaudible) ideological enemies of Gutierrez Minoyu. So that when (inaudible) are talking on the vast spectrum of ethnic positions and political factions, one group or another, outside or inside of Radio Marti and Television Marti, may use one particular argument or another against a particular individual that has problems.

I think that I have said that (inaudible) of

what I have to deal with as the director of Radio Marti. But, to me, the important thing is that the journalists are protected, that they continue to do the work, to service the people of Cuba, following the highest standards of Voice of America.

INTERVIEWER: You talked about a half a million dollars that you would like to cut from the budget. You talked about all the economies that have been made. How much is it going to cost to move Radio and Television Marti to Miami?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes. Let me say first that the "reinventing" plan that Director Loeb, the appointee of President Clinton, the plan that he developed involved the downsizing of about \$4 million, involved about 20 different employees. It was the beginning of the downsizing because, as he anticipated, these first 20 were going to be followed by even more reductions and more cuts in personnel.

And, out of those \$4 million, about half of a million dollars had to do with the analytical (inaudible) that I mentioned.

Now, when it comes to the relocation of Radio

and Television Marti to southern Florida, we estimate, or the GSA, who did the study, the General Services Administration, estimated that there will be expenditures of about \$7-1/2 million for relocating and that they also projected that there would be savings around \$4-1/2 million per year, annually.

So we do believe that the relocation of the operation to southern Florida will result again in substantial savings to the American taxpayers, and I think that that, in our judgment, would be a good thing, as we continue to downsize and try to tighten our belt as much as possible.

INTERVIEWER: So you're saying the move is -- you're saying the move is being made because of budgetary consideration? It's cheaper to operate out of Miami than out of Washington?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes, (inaudible) that it will be cheaper operating from southern Florida than from Washington.

And I think the budget consideration, yes, certainly was a factor, because whenever we can move in the direction of saving, like in this case we project

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around \$4-1/2 million annually on taxpayers' contributions, I do believe that we have the obligation to do everything that we can to make true those budget reductions.

But I also believe that there will be programmatic benefits to being -- to having the entire operation located in southern Florida. Southern Florida, without doubt, contains probably the largest (inaudible) of human resources concerning Cuba anywhere in the United States, and we hope to be able to utilize that type of (inaudible).

We have many universities in this area that specialize in the Cuban situation, and we might be calling upon some of those, especially every now and then, to participate in our programming.

And, in addition to that, and maybe most important, as far as benefitting the programming of Radio and Television Marti, there is a constant flow of (inaudible) from (inaudible) that travel to Cuba, that come through Miami, that provide those new insights and new vision, new information to our journalists, as well as the daily access to recent arrivals from Cuba.

I think that all of that will be important to Radio and Television Marti since, as you know, we are (inaudible) broadcasting. We are supposed to be immersed in what is going on in Cuba, so that we can provide the people of Cuba not only information about the outside, but also information about inside Cuba that is denied to them by the Castro government.

INTERVIEWER: You know, the perception is that -- the perception is that it's being done to -- the perception is it's being done as a political favor to the Cuban exile community, and that Radio Marti, David Burke (phonetic) told us the other day that -- David Burke told us the other day that this is a case where you've got local, very powerful, being the Cuban exile community, which has sort of hijacked a public, government institution for its own purposes.

How do you respond to that?

MR. BONACHEA: That is totally false. Radio and Television Marti abides by the highest standards of Voice of America.

And, like I always say, have you listen to Radio Marti lately? Have you tuned Radio Marti, so

then you can make your own independent judgment about the high standards of journalism that our journalists produce about the diversity of opinion, about the great amount of objective, balanced, and comprehensive information that we provide to the people of Cuba.

If you tune Radio Marti, I am sure that you will come out impressed by the quality of our broadcasts and by the dedication and the professional integrity of all of our writers and all of our journalists.

Has Radio Marti been hijacked by the Cuban group? That's absolutely nonsense. All of us who work for Radio and Television Marti work for the United States government, and we feel greatly honored to be able to work for the federal government.

As federal employees, whether it's a writer, a journalist, or the director of the operation, we have the obligation to see that the regulations are implemented and that all of the journalistic standards of Voice of America are followed to the letter. And, as I sit here today, I am completely satisfied that that is the case.

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Has the decision to relocate Radio and Television Marti to southern Florida, has that decision been done for political consideration? I personally do not believe that.

The considerations for relocating Radio and Television Marti to southern Florida began five-and-a-half years ago under the administration of President Bush. At that time, there was discussion into it. We began to generate studies to determine whether it would be good, whether it could be feasible to relocate Television and Radio Marti to southern Florida.

Already, under the Administration of Bush, I think that the consensus was that, yes, it was going to be beneficial to both the operation over here and, over the past three-and-a-half years, I think that that consensus has increased substantially, which is the reason why I think that, finally, the Congress and the President approved the move of this operation to southern Florida.

INTERVIEWER: There have been people -- I mean, there are leaders in the exile community who

think it's a bad decision, who say that -- and some of them, former political prisoners -- who say, "Look, you're going to destroy the credibility of Radio Marti if you move it to Miami and it is perceived in Havana and the rest of the island as being a mouthpiece for the exile community (inaudible)."

MR. BONACHEA: Let me say that keep in mind that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty broadcast for many, many years from Munich, Germany. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty also became the subject of similar accusations: "If you locate the operation there, the ethnic European groups are going to come and take over the radio station. You should not do it."

(Inaudible) Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, as it was expected, had to abide by the regulations, by the editorial guidelines that (inaudible).

The same applies to Radio and Television Marti. Whether we're in Washington, D.C. or Union City, New Jersey, or Miami, Florida, we will continue to abide, as we always have, by high journalistic standards established by Voice of America and by the

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Office of (inaudible) Broadcasting, and I have no doubt that the journalists of Radio and Television Marti will continue to do their work here with the same journalistic integrity as they always have done (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: But why would these former political prisoners say that it's going to destroy the credibility of Radio Marti if you move it to Miami? They're certainly not pro-Castro. They spent decades in his jails.

MR. BONACHEA: Absolutely. And certainly, in the democratic process, we all have our own differing opinions. We have our own vision. I myself have discussed the pros and the cons of the relocation with many of these.

I do not know whether we have spoken to the same people. But I have spoken to some, not many, but some who, in fact, have raised some honest, legitimate questions concerning the relocation.

But I think that those concerns have been substantially deminished, as I have explained to them, and they participate over here continuously in Radio

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and Television Marti, the fact that, regardless of whether Radio and Television Marti would continue to implement the editorial guidelines, like we always have.

INTERVIEWER: Well, some people would say that you haven't always. And there are -- and I'm sure you are aware of some of the statements that have come out, some of the sworn statements that have been made.

MR. BONACHEA: I still have to see one of those allegations that I can agree that they are true because, as far as I'm concerned, all of those type of allegations about broadcasts that may not have followed high journalistic standards, the ones I have seen, I have had to provide information that would show that those allegations are completely false.

Mind you, this is not to say that we who broadcast 24 hours a day, Monday through Sunday, do not make mistakes every now and then. 60 Minutes makes mistakes. So do we.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, we never make mistakes.

MR. BONACHEA: Well, I would like to say sometimes that, but I have to admit that we make

mistakes and, when we do, we try then to correct them.

INTERVIEWER: I want to ask you about Jorge Mas Canosa. How much influence does Jorge Mas Canosa have with Radio Marti and TV Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: I would prefer that you would not ask me about Mr. Mas Canosa but, since you have asked me, let me say that the influence that Mas Canosa exercises in Radio and Television Marti is zero -- none -- in terms of our daily operations, in terms of our editorial lines, in terms of what we put on the news or what we don't put on the news.

I have always told the administrators and the journalistic in the Department of News and Programs that what we expect from them is to apply, across-the-board, to everybody, the editorial guidelines, the criteria as to who is generating news, who is not generating news.

If you are, regardless or whether a Mas Canosa, Montaner (phonetic), Ricardo Ofin (phonetic), who is another prominent Cuban American, you will receive coverage. Other than that, I can assure you that Mr. Mas Canosa is treated by our people in Radio

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and Television Marti like they treat everybody else.

To that, let me also add that, whatever you could say that would come under the (inaudible) of recommendations, that has to come through the Presidential Advisory Board and, of course, the Presidential Advisory Board that Mr. Mas Canosa chairs, they meet several times a year. They record their deliberations and they put in writing whatever recommendations they make to Radio and TV Marti.

Once we receive the recommendations, we channel them to Voice of America and to the United States Information Agency and, after discussion of those recommendations, if we decide that they are good, they are implemented and, if we decide that they are not appropriate, then they are not implemented.

And let me add, in that regard, that the service that the members of the Presidential Advisory Board for (inaudible) Broadcasting, the service that they have given Radio and Television Marti has been important and it is well appreciated by all of us who work in Radio and TV Marti.

INTERVIEWER: So you're saying he has zero

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influence?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: That's not what Bruce Sherman (phonetic) said, your former deputy director.

MR. BONACHEA: Mr. Sherman is possibly an ideological enemy of Mr. Mas Canosa --

INTERVIEWER: He says that Jorge Mas Canosa used to call and complain about the programs, want to put more conservative commentators on.

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: Exercised veto power over --

MR. BONACHEA: False allegation.

INTERVIEWER: -- certain employees being hired.

MR. BONACHEA: Absolutely false allegations. And let me say that I have provided whatever appropriate information I needed to provide to the appropriate persons in the federal government. That is completely untrue.

INTERVIEWER: I want to tell you -- I want to just run Mr. Sherman's sworn testimony by you on the hiring of a news director.

He says, a few years back, you rejected a couple of qualified candidates and said that you -- you said that you had to run all of the candidates past Miami --

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: -- the people in Miami.

MR. BONACHEA: Totally false. That's a lie.

INTERVIEWER: You never said that?

MR. BONACHEA: Absolutely not. Whatever we do in terms of hiring at Radio and Television Marti is handled by the Office of Personnel and following federal regulations. That is absolutely untrue.

INTERVIEWER: He said that Miami threw out a couple of the best candidates.

MR. BONACHEA: That is absolutely false.

INTERVIEWER: He said the exile community in Miami threw out a couple of the best candidates and recommended that, instead, someone be hired who didn't even speak English.

MR. BONACHEA: Well, first, I do not know who are the candidates that he is talking about (inaudible) I do believe that several people applied for the

position when it was appropriately advertised and (inaudible) announced. But, at the end, you let the chips fall where they may.

Regardless of who the candidates are, they are measured against the qualifications, the criteria for hiring, and that's the way that we have operated at all times in Radio and Television Marti.

INTERVIEWER: Why did you --

MR. BONACHEA: Now, when it comes to the director of (inaudible) that doesn't speak English, who allegedly doesn't speak English, let me say that that was one of the conclusions of the inspector general of USIA though, on the other hand, no one ever came to talk to that person to determine whether he spoke English or didn't speak English, or how fluent he was in the language.

That indicates, to me at least, the accuracy by which those type of investigations were being conducted. To reach a conclusion that you do not speak Spanish but, on the other hand, I never come to ask you whether you speak Spanish is not a very fair type of approach.

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INTERVIEWER: I believe there was testimony about somebody having to help this gentleman fill out his application and answer questions, because he didn't speak English, during the interviewing process.

MR. BONACHEA: Well, I don't know. I don't recollect that.

INTERVIEWER: And the job says -- I mean, I think it stipulates in the description for the job that the person has to speak English.

MR. BONACHEA: Well, there was a -- there is also this under scrutiny right now because, according to the person, the director of news, the application that he was given required only Spanish fluency.

Obviously, when you have an operation, as we do, in which everything is 100 percent Spanish, I, too, believe that what we're looking for is someone that is totally and completely fluent in the Spanish language. So, if you were to ask this gentleman, he would tell you, well, at no time he was told that English was required for the position.

And, in fact, let me also say, to be very fair to this gentleman, who is a very distinguished Cuban-

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American journalist who has had many years of service in the journalistic profession in Cuba and in the United States, when he came to Radio Marti to be interviewed by different people, he never hid the fact that he was not completely fluent in the English language. That was never hidden from anybody, including the director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, the Office of Personnel, or no one else.

But the truth remains that, at the time when the decision was made, he was the best qualified candidate for the job, and that was what drove that particular decision.

INTERVIEWER: Even though he couldn't speak English?

MR. BONACHEA: Absolutely. In terms of the actual broadcast, you know, we need someone who is 100 percent fluent in the Spanish language.

Now, like I did discuss on one occasion with the director of Voice of America, I did indicate to him, "I want you to be aware that this man is not completely fluent in the English language so that, if you are expecting him to participate in executive

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conversations on a daily basis," I said, "he will have a difficult time right now."

At the end, the director, along with the other administrators, decided that he was the best qualified and the best candidate that Radio Marti could have for that position.

So, when there is some type of attempt at trying to say that someone was blindsided, that's absolutely false. Everyone knew about the credentials of this man and, at the time, he was best qualified candidate for the position.

INTERVIEWER: How often do you see Mr. Mas Canosa?

MR. BONACHEA: I see him about, I would say, maybe six, seven times a year.

INTERVIEWER: That's all?

MR. BONACHEA: Whenever we have Presidential Advisory Board meetings, I meet him here. Maybe on occasion, when I happen to have come to work here, I have visited with him. And, since you have not asked, but I tell you, I speak to him on the phone maybe at the (inaudible) about once every two months.

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INTERVIEWER: Once every two months, that's all?

MR. BONACHEA: He is very difficult to get hold of, because he is a very busy man. But then there are times at which I feel that the chairman of the Presidential Advisory Board needs to have some information. So, he is difficult to get hold of. That's a problem, you know.

INTERVIEWER: You don't clear your decisions with him, personnel decisions?

MR. BONACHEA: Never, absolutely never.

INTERVIEWER: Does he call to give you advice, call to complain about the programs?

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible) in a way, but, you know, maybe a couple of disagreements over the last seven years.

But, certainly, the statements that he has made in the news, that my editor felt that some of his statements were a little bit too strong, that needed to be edited out of the program before it was broadcast, as usual, no one likes to be edited.

I would say on both of these occasions, I felt

that the journalists in the newsroom were right. They were supported. Mr. Mas Canosa was edited.

But, to be fair to Mr. Mas Canosa, we have to edit, as you can imagine, many, many other prominent Cuban-American (inaudible) and others who, at times, make statements that, in our opinion, do not comply by the editorial guidelines.

And, when that happens, I have never hesitated in informing the position in the News Department. In fact, I can assure you that there has not been even one occasion in which --

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

(End of Tape 1, Side A.)

MR. BONACHEA: -- about the influence of one person or another concerning news, I categorically say that, not even in one instance, has the position of the News Department been overruled. They always have done their job to the best of their abilities, and the support of the administration of Radio and Television Marti.

INTERVIEWER: There have been -- there are employees in your own Research Department which have

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said there have been errors and mistakes and violations, that say that there have been violations of the rules of broadcast, that misinformation has been broadcast, things have been broadcast that are in direct contradiction of U.S. policy. Has that ever happened?

MR. BONACHEA: Those are false. That particular group of employees, three or four of them, are very politicized employees. I still have to see one of those allegations that I can accept that it is true. They are completely false.

And the truth of the matter is that, when the Office of Cuba Broadcasting has looked into the allegations, and I have looked into those allegations, I have concluded that they were false. When the Bureau of Broadcasting and Voice of America have looked into the same allegations, they have concluded that they were false.

And, most recently, when the United States Government General Accounting Office completed their own investigation, they have also concluded that they were false and that these allegations simply keep

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coming back again and again and again but that, in fact, they lack substance.

INTERVIEWER: There was some question -- my understanding is that, when certain people went back into the files to look for the broadcasts in question, to see if they violated U.S. policy, that were told that the tapes in question had been damaged -- accurate? -- that they were some broadcasts that there were not tape recordings available. Does that ring a bell?

MR. BONACHEA: Like in the case of all of these, some of these allegations, the people who put the allegation there always gives it a spin, to try to damage the credibility of Radio Marti.

The truth of the matter is that there was one instance in which there was a request for a particular three-minute broadcast that Radio Marti had given, concerning migration quotas, and the first report that came to my attention and the attention of Director Loeb, who was President Clinton's appointee, was that those three minutes, two-and-a-half minutes which seemed to be missing from the (inaudible) the

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computers.

Well, we immediately ordered for some of our key administrators to look into it. I personally gave orders that I wanted to know exactly what had happened.

I wanted to make sure that we were in control of the tapes because, to me, it has always been very important that we keep intact all of the computer tapes and all of the archives so that, whenever someone has a question, that they can come and get the information and (inaudible) that I can be able to respond to what always turns out to be false allegations.

As it developed, the tapes were sent to the corporation that manufactures these tapes and, with the help of them, we were able to extract exactly all of that information in those two-and-a-half minutes, so that we then had the complete record.

Well, it turned out that, in that two-and-a-half minutes, again, it was a false allegation, because nothing had been broadcast that these people were (inaudible) there had been in those two-and-a-half minutes.

So we were pleased to, first of all, to be

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able to refuse the false allegation. But then, secondly, the question became, well, how did that happen?

And the report that I received was that the Department of Technical Operations and (inaudible), in an effort at reducing costs, had begun to buy a cheaper quality of tapes for those computers, and that (inaudible) that missing gap. Since there was a possibility that that would occur again, we then have come back to the tapes that we had always utilized.

But the point that I want to emphasize here is that the critics say, "Well, in those two-and-a-half minutes, they have broadcast the following." Well, the following was not broadcast, it was again another false allegation.

INTERVIEWER: Did TV Marti ever air a report in which Jorge Mas Canosa made the statement urging the people of Cuba to prevent Fidel Castro from returning to the island from an international conference?

MR. BONACHEA: I do not recollect, you know, I do not recollect right now whether such a statement was made.

INTERVIEWER: Would that be a violation of U.S. policy?

MR. BONACHEA: I would have said that, in terms of a (inaudible) judgment, I would have ruled against it. Probably, I would have ruled against any statement (inaudible) --

INTERVIEWER: Against using it?

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: So you think it was a violation of policy?

MR. BONACHEA: It may have been, if that was the case, but one would have to determine what was the context, how that statement, if it was said, how it was said.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any knowledge or any recollection that maybe Mr. Mas Canosa might have broadcast such a statement on Radio Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: No, I do not recollect.

INTERVIEWER: But, if he did, that would be a violation of U.S. policy?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, it would have been something that I would have discussed, yes.

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A PARTICIPANT: TV Marti.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I'm sorry, TV Marti.

MR. BONACHEA: TV Marti.

A PARTICIPANT: Sir, there's one little wisp of hair falling on your forehead (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: You've got it. You've got it. Thank you.

A PARTICIPANT: Re-ask, please.

INTERVIEWER: Re-ask what?

A PARTICIPANT: Whether he broadcast that on TV Marti. You said Radio Marti.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Do you have any -- do you have any recollection as to whether Mr. Mas Canosa made such a broadcast on Television Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: I do not recollect now whether that statement was made.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

A PARTICIPANT: Fine.

INTERVIEWER: That's just about it, but hold on one second. I want to re-ask one question.

In a sworn affidavit, Bruce Sherman said that, after turning down a couple of very qualified

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candidates for news directors in Miami, you told him that they had been rejected by the people in Miami, who didn't like them.

MR. BONACHEA: That is absolutely false. I do not know who are the people that Bruce Sherman is talking about. Certainly, at the time that those positions were announced, like always, there were many different people who applied to the position.

I may or I may not have interviewed the people that he's talking about. I did interview several people. I was trying to develop as large of a pool of applicants as we possibly could for the position.

What I can assure you is, at the end, when it comes to hiring, we follow the rules of the Personnel Department, and the position goes always -- and I want to emphasize that -- the position goes always to the best-qualified candidate that we have available for us.

We do not allow anyone -- from the outside or the inside or the Congress or the Administration -- to influence decisions as to who come to work in Radio and Television Marti. We simply follow the regulations of the Office of Personnel and the best-qualified

candidate is the person that (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: There's certainly a big stack of affidavits and sworn statements and reports filled out by people who think otherwise, who have worked here.

MR. BONACHEA: Yes. And I think I can tell you that I have seen a stack of allegations this thick that I have reviewed, that the Office of -- the General Accounting Office or the Congress have reviewed, and that they have found absolutely no substance to those allegations.

I have seen stacks of allegations against Radio Marti that have been sent to the director of Voice of America, to the director of the Bureau of Broadcasting of USIA, and they have concluded that there is no substance to the allegations.

I have no doubt that, as some of these inquiries come to an end that, once again, the truth will prevail and that those allegations will be seen for what they are -- totally and completely false allegations.

INTERVIEWER: Congressman Skaggs of Colorado -- you're familiar with him?

MR. BONACHEA: I have heard of them.

INTERVIEWER: -- has managed to get \$11 million cut from the appropriations bill for Television Marti. You've heard about that?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What is your reaction to it?

MR. BONACHEA: Well, first, that this is, as you know, the first step of a long process of debate within the United States Congress. We all take part in that debate. And I can appreciate that, among honest people, there has to be always room for difference, for differing opinions.

So, in that sense, the debate will continue over the next several months, until the United States Congress makes a decision, again, in their wisdom, as to whether they believe that Television Marti should be supported or not be supported.

I believe that, at the end, it becomes a matter of which -- Congressman Skaggs obviously has his own vision. The Congress, in its totality, the Administration, obviously have their own vision of what constitutes a worthwhile project for the United States

government.

And I still sincerely believe that, even though we are having an expenditure of \$11 million a year for a television broadcast that we continuously struggle to take to the people of Cuba, I believe, like the Congress has believed and like different Administrations have believed, that it is a worthwhile project, that it is information that is being denied to the people of Cuba.

And, as we persevere and try to deliver that information that Radio and Television Marti tries to take to the people of Cuba, I am convinced, I know that someday the people of Cuba will tell the people of the United States, "Thank you, thank you for the support that you gave Radio and Television Marti in spite of the critics, in spite of the false allegations. Thank you for the support that you gave them because, by giving the support that you gave, Radio and Television Marti was the window to the world that the people of Cuba have had for the last 11 years, now."

INTERVIEWER: You think that there are going to be people -- you honestly think that, when -- if and

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when Mr. Castro finally falls -- that there are going to be people who say, "It was all because of TV Marti"?

MR. BONACHEA: No, I think that they will say, "We are very grateful to the American people for having supported Radio and Television Marti because it was through them that we knew about the (inaudible) human rights activities against Cuba (inaudible) Cuba; it was through Radio and Television Marti that we knew the independent journalists were being incarcerated" -- and that are being incarcerated right now as you and I speak and as Radio Marti broadcasts the violation of human rights of those people.

They are also going to say to the American people, "Thank you for letting us know about the humanitarian missions of the United States government in Bosnia Herzegovena, about the mission to Haiti, and about the many missions of multilateral diplomacy that you undertook throughout all of those years," because, obviously, what they hear from Cuban radio, the radio controlled by Castro, is a totally complete version than what is the truth of what America is all about and what America is trying to do to help other peoples

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around the world.

INTERVIEWER: Where do you get your figures? I mean, you say that 75 percent of the -- Radio Marti reaches 75 percent of the Cuban population, that 3 percent of the population sees TV Marti. Where do you get those figures?

MR. BONACHEA: About 70 percent for Radio Marti, maybe 3 to 4 in TV Marti.

And what we do -- and we acknowledge that this is not the -- it has its own limitations -- is that we continuously have been interviewing Cubans who arrive continuously from the island, so we interview them about their listening patterns of radio broadcast: "Have you tuned Radio Marti" or "Who was your favorite radio station" or, "If you have turned Radio Marti, what are the programs that you were tuning the most," and "How many times a day" or "How many times a week do you tune us in?"

So, as a result of this consistent type of audience research, we conclude that we have fairly large audience for Radio Marti and a very, very small audience for Television Marti.

But, as I have said, we always would like for the Castro government to let us in to, as the Cuban Democracy Act of Radio Marti and Television Marti, to have a news bureau inside Cuba, right in Havana, providing information to the people of Cuba. As you know, Castro is completely opposed to allowing us to come to the island.

But, at the same time, I think it would be very, very good if Castro will allow reputable and respectable polling organizations to come into Cuba and, of course, to provide to them the guarantees that they can conduct an unfettered and completely free type of audience research.

I believe that, if they are allowed to do that, the conclusion will be that Radio Marti is the number one radio station inside Cuba. The people of Cuba are well served by our broadcasts.

INTERVIEWER: You say that 3 to 4 percent watch TV Marti?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Three to 4 percent of the population?

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MR. BONACHEA: I would say yes, as a whole, and sporadically because, like I have said, sometimes we go through a certain part of the coast and we know that they are seeing the signal fairly clear but, as soon as the helicopters are mobilized, then the jamming comes back (inaudible).

INTERVIEWER: What hours does it broadcast?

MR. BONACHEA: It broadcasts between 3:00 to 8:30 in the morning, and we continuously assess what other hours we might be able to expand our broadcasts.

INTERVIEWER: So you're reaching 3 to 4 percent of the Cuban audience between 3:00 in the morning and 8 O'clock in the morning, in spite of the signals being jammed?

MR. BONACHEA: Yes, that's what I would predict.

And bear in mind, though, when it comes to Cuba society, a highly totalitarian society who has deprived its people of information for a period of 37 years, the people of Cuba, like the people of the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries hunger for information. They want

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information.

And the only source of objective, balanced, and comprehensive information that they have is Radio and Television Marti.

So you ask me, are they willing to get up at 3 O'clock in the morning? And my answer is categorically, yes, they get up at 3 O'clock in the morning and so would you and so would I.

INTERVIEWER: Sit there with their television set?

MR. BONACHEA: They will --

INTERVIEWER: -- watching the snow, waiting for the signal to be jammed?

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible) that we interview them consistently and, even three years after the initiation of the project of TV Marti, they still try to tune in to the image of Television Marti.

Mind you that the people of Cuba have never seen on television the landing of the Americans on the Moon. The Cuba people have never been allowed to see on television the collapse of the former Soviet Union, of the former Eastern European communist countries, the

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massacre in Tienanmen Square.

Castro knows that the moment that we are able to break through that jamming, the people of Cuba will be able to see what Radio Marti tells them through radio that has happened in the world.

And that is why I am saying that someday the people of Cuba will tell the people of the United States, "Thank you for the support that you gave us, because it was through that effort that we kept our hope, our beacon of hope that someday Cuba was going to be free and democratic and that, first and foremost, the American people, like they always have been, generous as they are, have been supportive of a project that is the only beacon of hope that the people of Cuba have."

INTERVIEWER: What is the most recent surveys that you have?

A PARTICIPANT: (Inaudible) we don't need that (inaudible).

A PARTICIPANT: We don't need that on tape.

INTERVIEWER: Right. I just want to ask, is there anything that we need -- we should ask you, do

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you believe, that we haven't asked you or, Joe, is there anything that you think that we need to bring out or anything you would like to say?

MR. BONACHEA: (Inaudible), anything?

A PARTICIPANT: Your call.

A PARTICIPANT: I think you covered the waterfront pretty well.

A PARTICIPANT: I think he covered it pretty well.

MR. BONACHEA: I think we covered it pretty good.

A PARTICIPANT: I think that's it.

A PARTICIPANT: Okay. I'm fine.

(Simultaneous conversation.)

A PARTICIPANT: Just two shots.

(Simultaneous conversation.)

A PARTICIPANT: You talking, Steve, Dr. Bonachea listening. I want a push and a pull (inaudible).

(Simultaneous conversation.)

(The interview was concluded.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## **STATEMENT**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Today, the President of the United States has gotten all of us Cuban Americans closer to our ideal of a free Cuba. By endorsing the move of Radio & TV Marti closer to its targeted audience by establishing its headquarters in Miami, President Clinton has made an important contribution to assist the Cuban people in recovering the right to free information which has been denied to them by the Castro dictatorship on the island.

Also, by committing himself to the full enforcement of Title III of the *Cuban Liberty & Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 (Helms-Burton)*, the President, together with the Cuban American community, has provided the Cuban people with its most effective tool to further the cause of a free and democratic Cuba.

In an act of solidarity and compassion with the Cuban people, President Clinton has also announced to us that Cubans stranded in third countries, suffering from family separation, lacking resources and unable to educate and feed their children, will reunite themselves with their families in this free country of ours.

These decisions will contribute to the struggle of the Cuban people to make the liberation of our native homeland a reality. For these decisions, we are grateful. I would like to express my deep gratitude on behalf of the Cuban American National Foundation and, I am certain, on behalf of my fellow countrymen as well.

Four years ago, I stood on the tarmac of Tampa International Airport and, before the world press, I said to the Cuban American community that they should not fear the election of Bill Clinton as President of the United States. Four years later, I am glad to say that I was not wrong. Yes, we have had differences. But overall, we must say that President Clinton has supported the *Cuban Democracy Act*, has maintained the embargo against Castro's tyranny, and has finally signed "Helms-Burton" into law which, together with his commitment today, will allow us to repeat, once more, that we Cuban Americans should fear nothing if Bill Clinton is reelected President of the United States.

He has stood firm and denounced before the United Nations Human Rights Commission the violations of human rights in Cuba, from the sinking of the "*13 de marzo*" tugboat, to the murder of our four compatriots in Brothers to the Rescue planes, to calling on our allies in Europe, Canada and Mexico to join with the U.S. in promoting for Cuba a democratic system that will respect the dignity of all Cubans on the island.

For all this, Mr. President, and on behalf of all Cubans -- those in the exile community as well as those on the island who cannot express themselves freely -- from the bottom of our hearts, we say thank you and welcome to the home of all free Cubans.



MWW/STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: CRAIG SMITH  
FROM: JONATHAN SLADE  
DATE: OCTOBER 1, 1996  
RE: CUBAN AMERICAN FOUNDATION

---

Enclosed you will find information regarding an issue of great important to the Cuban American Foundation. The Foundation is very committed to reuniting Cuban political refugees in third countries with their families and created the Cuban Exodus Relief Fund to carry out this mission. It is important to note that this initiative is carried out at no cost to the taxpayer and is financed solely through private donations.

In the past, the Foundation has worked closely with INS and the State Department in successfully re-negotiating the terms of the program, however, this years negotiations remain unresolved. The Clinton administration should consider resolving the impasse in negotiations with INS and the State Department and use the upcoming October 22nd event with the Cuban American community to announce the revival of the program.

We believe that this is a great opportunity for the President to garner support with the Cuban American community in South Florida and the Foundation looks forward to your assistance with this issue.

I will contact you to discuss this program in further detail.



## CUBAN AMERICAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION CUBAN EXODUS RELIEF FUND

The Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) began the Cuban Exodus Relief Fund (CERF) in an effort to provide assistance to Cuban political refugees stranded in third countries after their escape from Castro's dictatorship in Cuba. The Cubans had been languishing for years in third countries throughout the world without legal status and with no capability of soliciting entry into the United States. For several years, the Exodus program raised over \$4 million in private donations to provide humanitarian assistance to these refugees in the form of food, shelter, education and medical assistance until a solution could be provided to allow them entry into the United States to be reunited with their families. This aid included the following:

- Monthly checks to refugee families in third countries, support for the special needs of the elderly, the disabled, children and unwed mothers;
- School tuition and books for the children where government did not allow refugees to attend public facilities;
- Shelter, clothing, medical attention, and Christmas care packages. The assistance was administered by CANF delegations throughout various countries and visits by CANF officials and staff from Miami;

On June 13, 1988, the CANF, the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of State signed a historic agreement at a White House ceremony which paved the way for these Cubans to be brought to America at no cost to U.S. taxpayers. This private refugee resettlement program allowed up to 1,500 Cubans stranded abroad to immediately emigrate to the U.S., with an additional 1,500 every year thereafter. The agreement was based on a 1986 Administration decision to establish a program whereby the private sector could sponsor as many as 4,000 refugees annually. Under this unique program, called the Private Sector Initiative (PSI), individual sponsors, in coordination with the Foundation, would guarantee shelter, employment and medical insurance, as well as other basic necessities, to ensure that local, state and federal government funds were not used for resettlement.

By September, 1988, the first group of Exodus Cubans arrived from Panama and Costa Rica. Since the program's inception, nearly 10,000 Cubans have been successfully reunited with their families in the U.S. The program has also served as a model for other private sector efforts. It is estimated the Exodus program has provided a savings of well over \$40 million to the U.S. taxpayers in refugee resettlement.

Although each year the CANF and the Exodus have worked with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of State in order to successfully re-negotiate the terms of the program and help address the new realities and circumstances of third country Cubans, this year's negotiations remain unresolved. This has become a great concern for the Cuban American community and for the families of these individuals whose only hope of reunification is through the Exodus program. Many of these third country Cubans include former Cuban political prisoners who remain in precarious circumstances abroad and who are the victims of reprisals by Castro sympathizers in these third countries.

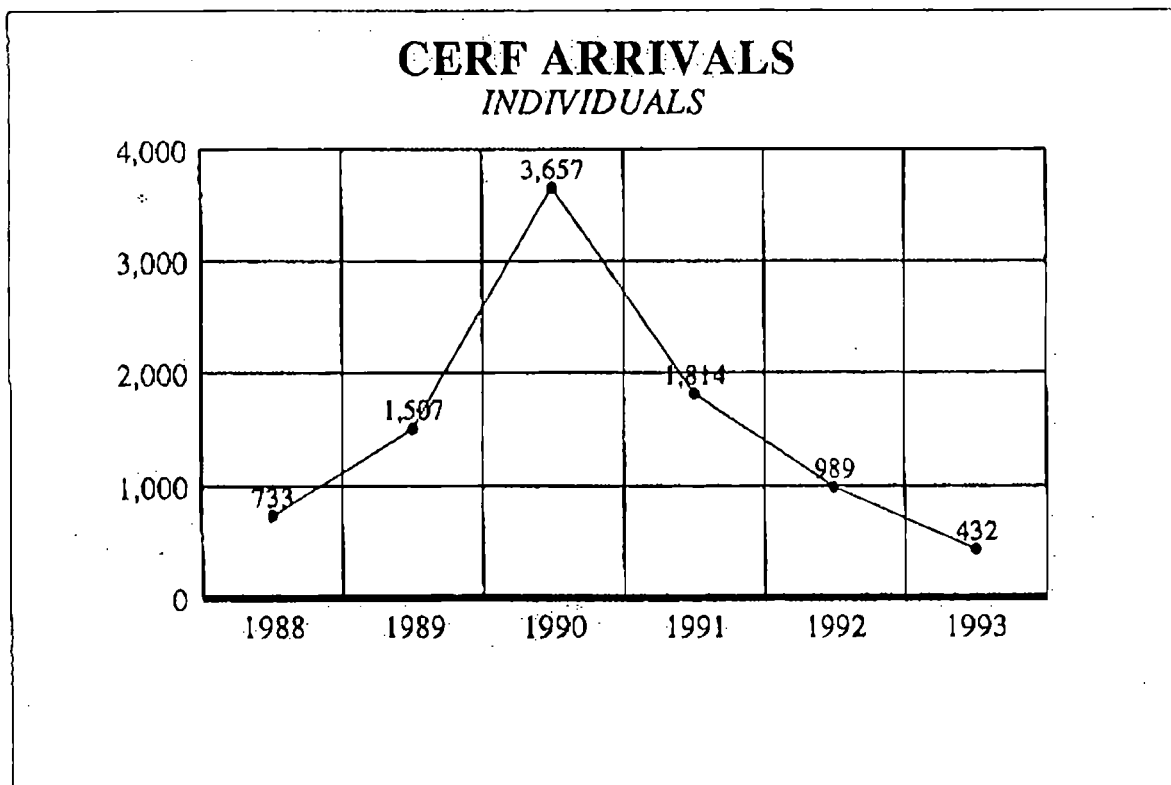
The CANF and the Exodus program believe that an orderly resolution to this crisis situation can be provided and remains prepared to work with the Department of State, the Immigration Naturalization Service and the Administration in order to find a satisfactory answer to this dilemma. The Exodus has proposed that a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be signed which would allow Cubans arrived to a third country through the date of signing of the new agreement to be eligible for the program. This is the primary issue which needs to be resolved with Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of State in order for the Exodus to fulfill its goals and objectives in providing the Administration and the Cuban American community a responsible and successful solution to this important issue for our community.

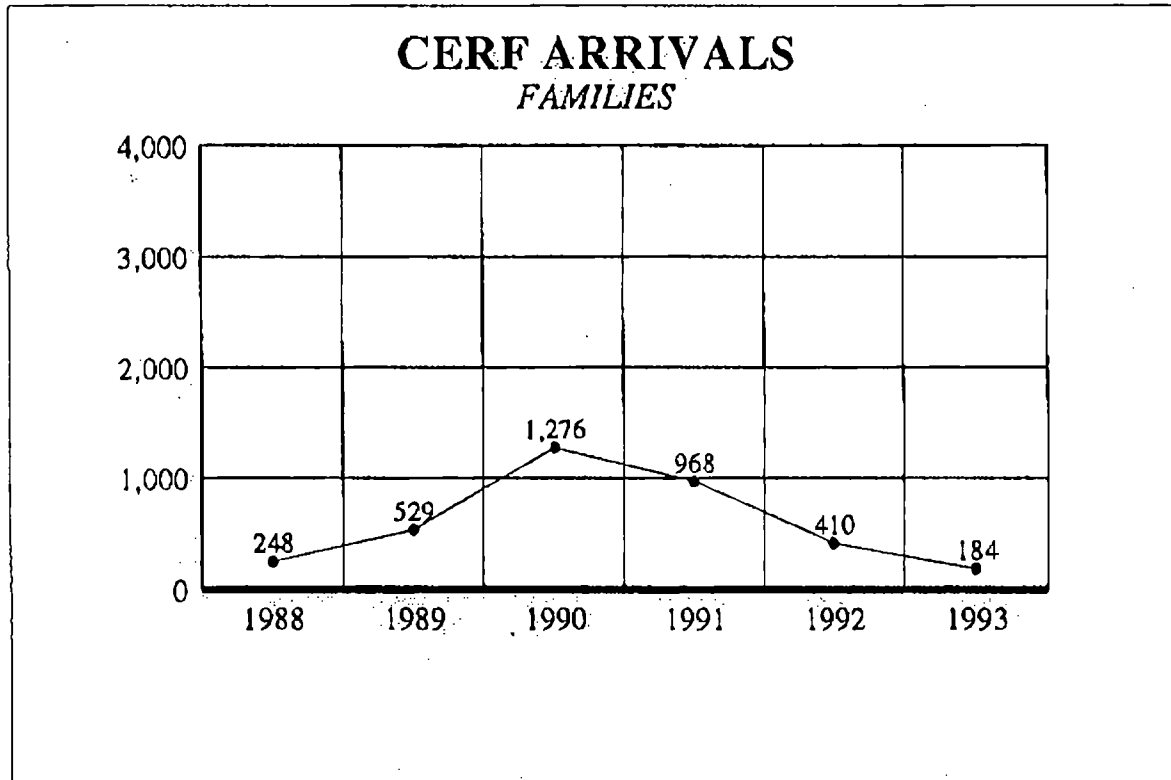


## STATISTICS OF CUBAN REFUGEES STRANDED IN 3RD COUNTRIES (as of September 12th 1995)

[illegible]

**Total of Refugees: 3395**





**EXODUS PROJECT ARRIVALS**  
**(09/27/93)<sup>1</sup>**

| Country                  | Fiscal '88 | Fiscal '89 | Fiscal '90 | Fiscal '91 | Fiscal '92 | Fiscal '93 | Total |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| Argentina                | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 1          | 0          | 1     |
| Bahamas                  | 0          | 0          | 14         | 6          | 0          | 0          | 20    |
| Bolivia                  | 0          | 0          | 14         | 0          | 0          | 0          | 14    |
| Costa Rica               | 468        | 99         | 7          | 10         | 51         | 0          | 635   |
| Cuba                     | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 139        | 150        | 289   |
| Dominican Rep.           | 0          | 0          | 33         | 283        | 36         | 0          | 352   |
| Ecuador                  | 0          | 0          | 0          | 75         | 2          | 0          | 77    |
| El Salvador              | 0          | 2          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 2     |
| France                   | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 1          | 1     |
| Gran Cayman              | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 15         | 15    |
| Guatemala                | 0          | 18         | 2          | 4          | 1          | 0          | 25    |
| Haiti                    | 0          | 0          | 0          | 4          | 0          | 0          | 4     |
| México                   | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 8          | 8     |
| Panama                   | 265        | 333        | 893        | 1,404      | 4          | 82         | 2,981 |
| Peru                     | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 161        | 0          | 161   |
| Portugal                 | 0          | 6          | 5          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 11    |
| Russia                   | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 1          | 102        | 103   |
| Spain                    | 0          | 1,049      | 59         | 0          | 333        | 60         | 1,501 |
| Venezuela                | 0          | 0          | 2,630      | 28         | 260        | 11         | 2,929 |
| <b>Total Individuals</b> | 733        | 1,507      | 3,657      | 1,814      | 989        | 432        | 9,132 |
| <b>Total Families</b>    | 248        | 529        | 1,276      | 968        | 410        | 184        | 3,615 |

<sup>1</sup> Date of last arrival

Fiscal Year begins October 1st previous calendar year.



# THE CUBAN AMERICAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION

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OSVALDO VENTO

September 23, 1993

The Honorable Webster Hubbell  
Associate Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
Tenth Street & Constitution Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Judge Hubbell:

The Cuban American National Foundation is greatly alarmed with the current emergency situation created by increased political repression in Cuba over the last few months. This persecution has resulted in a marked increase in defections and arrivals of Cuban refugees to third countries around the world, and has forced Cubans to seek evermore desperate means of entry into the United States.

We are particularly concerned that in their efforts to reach liberty in the U.S., these refugees may fall prey to illegal schemes, visa fraud, and other false promises. Such violations of U.S. laws cannot be condoned by the Cuban American community and will only lead to greater suffering of the refugees and their families.

We would like to request an opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss this issue and make a proposal in order to make possible the continued processing of third country Cuban refugees in an orderly and responsible manner through our Cuban Exodus Relief Fund (CERF) over the next few years. For over thirty-three years, the Cuban American community has worked with the U.S. government to bring Cuban political refugees in a programmed fashion and we would like to work with you in order to address this new crisis situation.

The Cuban Exodus Relief Fund, our private refugee resettlement program, has to date successfully reunified nearly 10,000 Cuban political refugees with their families in the United States. This humanitarian program was established

Judge Webster Hubbell  
Page - 2 -

in 1984 to address the needs of thousands of Cuban refugees stranded in third countries throughout Latin American and Europe. Initially, the program provided scholarships, provisions and economic assistance to the refugees. In 1988, however, the focus was changed in an effort to find a solution to the continuing problem of third country Cuban refugees.

On June 12, 1988, the Cuban American National Foundation, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the U.S. Department of State signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) providing a means for these Cuban refugees in third countries to enter the U.S. through private sponsorship at no cost to the U.S. taxpayers. Since its inception, the Foundation and its Exodus program, through this private sector initiative (PSI) has travelled to over seventeen countries and reunited thousands of Cuban families separated by the Castro dictatorship in Cuba.

The Exodus program is prepared to again be of assistance in whatever manner possible to address this new reality and provide a controlled framework for Cuban political refugees to come to the U.S. from third countries.

I greatly look forward to meeting with you and to continued cooperation with the U.S. government in this humanitarian endeavor.

Sincerely,

Francisco J. Hernandez  
President

cc: Ms. Lula Rodriguez

## BACKGROUND

The Cuban Exodus Relief Fund (CERF) was founded in 1984 by the Cuban American National Foundation in an effort to assist Cuban refugees stranded in third countries. Most of these refugees had arrived in cities throughout Latin America and Europe as a result of events in Cuba following the Peruvian Embassy incident and the Mariel boatlift in 1980.

Although the refugees were finally free from persecution, their livelihood in third countries was precarious at best. Without work permits, many survived on the edge of the law. Their children were usually not allowed to attend public schools, and families were forced to live on whatever their relatives and friends in the U.S. could send. These difficult conditions, combined with little or no opportunity for reunification with loved ones, forced many to take desperate actions to enter the U.S.

Initially, the CERF was created with the limited objective of providing humanitarian assistance to Cuban refugees in third countries. Throughout the years, the program provided more than 1,000,000 hot meals, hundreds of scholarships, financial assistance to the needy, medical care and Christmas gifts to refugee families. Over seven million dollars were contributed in these efforts as a result of private donations from the exile community. Although effective in relieving some of the great need, this did not solve the true problem of family reunification. Something else had to be done.

In 1986 a program called the Private Sector Initiative 4000 (PSI-4000) was created by the federal government in an effort to promote private sector immigration and resettlement. It provided additional refugee numbers for entry into the United States as long as the sponsor organization assured the Government that minimal public funds would be used during the arrival and initial resettlement in the U.S. of the refugee.

In 1987 the Cuban American National Foundation approached the U.S. Government in an effort to find a solution to the Cuban third country problem. On July 13, 1988, in a White House signing ceremony, the Department of State, the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Cuban American National Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which provided for the processing in third countries of Cubans under the first ever Private Sector Initiative program. On September 11, 1987, the first group of nearly 700 refugees arrived from Panama and Costa Rica.

This marked the beginning of over 9,000 PSI refugees from 16 different countries at minimal cost to the U.S. taxpayer and resulted in tremendous savings to the U.S. Government of between \$54,000,000 and \$72,000,000. The program's greatest success, however, was the opening of an orderly legal channel for family reunification, which almost brought to a halt the illegal immigration of Cubans.

#### PROBLEM

Due to an increase in political persecution against the Cuban population in the last year, a sharp increase in the number of arrivals of Cuban refugees to third countries has taken place. As a result of the rapidly increasing numbers, many refugees are falling victim to illegal schemes, visa fraud and other false promises in their desperate search for liberty. This situation is complicated by the fact that many of the new arrivals do not fall within the original scope of the Cuban Exodus Relief Fund's Memorandum of Understanding.

#### OBJECTIVE

In order to meet this new reality, the Cuban Exodus Relief Fund, Inc., is proposing to change the PSI program to address the current situation. First, CERF should be allowed to pre-screen for interviews all Cuban refugees living in third countries which may qualify for entry into the United States. Second, the government should create the proper procedure for orderly family reunification and controlled entry of Cuban refugees based on the general guidelines of CERF's MOU. Finally, it must allow CERF to secure private resettlement services, such as refugee screening, health insurance, housing and employment for these new refugee arrivals.

#### PROPOSAL

The new proposal must be part of a Private Sector Initiative that will consist of the orderly processing and resettlement of all Cuban refugees which qualify for entry under private sponsorship which are currently in third countries. The essential criteria for all previous MOUs will also apply here.

#### PARAMETERS

The program will work within the existing structure of the CERF PSI program, in cooperation with the Department of Justice and the Department of State. The Government will set up a date which will be publicized as an official cut-off date both in Cuba and in exile community. The cut-off date will be determined by the date of signing of the MOU.

The program will last two fiscal years: 1994-95 and 1995-96. CERF will provide a complete list of all refugees found in third countries within 45 days after the signing of the new MOU. The listing will include name, sex, date of birth, date of arrival, and address of the refugee family and their relation to the head of household.

All countries where qualified Cuban refugees are presently found will be accepted for processing, including Mexico, Canada, Western and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, CERF will reserve the right to present any additional refugees which may appear before interviews in a given country, as long as they arrived before the cut-off date. This cut-off date will serve as a formal notice of the end of the CERF PSI program.



## Cuban Exodus Relief Fund, Inc.

**S**ince 1959, more than 925,000 Cuban refugees have been admitted to the United States, including the 125,000 Cubans who arrived during the Mariel boatlift in 1980. In 1984, the Cuban American National Foundation began providing humanitarian aid in the form of food, shelter, education and medical assistance to Cuban refugees stranded in third countries without legal status and awaiting approval for entry into the United States. Through its Cuban Exodus Relief Fund project, CANF distributed to these exiles over \$4 million raised through direct mailings and various radio and telethons held across the country.

On June 13, 1988, CANF signed an historic agreement with the U.S. Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service that allowed up to 1,500 Cubans stranded in third countries to immediately emigrate to the U.S., with an additional 1,500 every year thereafter. The agreement was based on a 1986 Administration decision to permit the private sector to sponsor as many as 4,000 refugees annually -- the Private Sector Initiative (PSI). The PSI Program was unique in that individual sponsors, in coordination with the Foundation, guarantee shelter, employment and medical insurance, as well as other basic necessities in order to ensure that local, state and federal government funds are not used for resettlement.

As of the end of 1991, the Cuban American National Foundation had privately resettled more than 8,600 Cuban refugees at no cost to the Federal Government. These refugees were stranded in third countries such as Panama, Costa Rica and Spain, among many others, after fleeing the totalitarian government of Fidel Castro. In just under three years,

CANF's model Private Sector Initiative Program has provided an impressive net savings of over \$35 million to U.S. taxpayers.

In March 1991, the Cuban Exodus Relief Fund was incorporated as an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to processing and assisting in the private resettlement and family reunification of Cuban refugees directly from Cuba and from third countries into the United States. The Cuban Exodus Relief Fund's development of a nationwide placement and resettlement services program has its basis in the years of outreach work done by the CANF organization and its individual Directors throughout the United States. Individual Directors of the Foundation have had a long-standing humanitarian tradition of assisting Cuban refugees in many Cuban-American communities in the United States. The success of the CANF Private Sector Initiative Program has also been due in large part to the goodwill generated and cash in-kind services support provided by these Cuban-American communities. An indicative measure of support has been the active participation by these communities in annual fundraising radio and telethons in Miami, Orlando, Tampa, Newark, New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston and Houston, among other cities.





## PRESS RELEASE NOTA DE PRENSA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 6, 1994

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT  
Fernando Rojas (305) 592-7768  
(305) 276-4552

### CANF JOINS CONGRESSWOMAN MEEK IN EFFORT TO REUNITE HAITIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN WITH FAMILIES IN U.S./FLIGHT TO ARRIVE THURSDAY

The Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) has joined efforts with Congresswoman Carrie Meek (D-FL) to resettle 30 Haitian political refugee children, as young as age 4, with their families in the United States.

The children, who have been granted humanitarian parole through efforts by Congresswoman Meek, had been stranded in Haiti for a number of years after being separated from their families in the U.S. They are expected to depart Port-au-Prince at 8:25 p.m. this evening and land at Point a Pitre Airport in the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe at 10:15 p.m. They will be greeted there by CANF representative, Ms. Lourdes Quirch, and Ms. Pamela Ventura of Congresswoman Meek's office.

The group will be immediately flown to San Juan, Puerto Rico aboard a Foundation chartered flight. They are expected to arrive to San Juan at approximately 1:30 a.m. and taken by charter bus to rest for the remainder of the evening at a hotel before they proceed to Miami Thursday afternoon. They will be cared for by the Foundation's Puerto Rico Chapter, headed by Mr. Domingo Sadurni. Security will be provided to assure the children's safety, and a medical doctor will also be on hand in case of emergencies. The children will awaken at approximately 10:00 a.m. and, after breakfast, proceed to San Juan International Airport for departure to Miami. The CANF will pay for the all costs involved.

They are expected to arrive at Miami International Airport (MIA) at approximately 5:45 p.m. A ceremony will take place upon arrival. Details regarding location at MIA will be released by Congresswoman Meek's office on Thursday.

Jorge Mas Canosa, Chairman of the CANF, said today: "We are happy to work with Congresswoman Meek who has selflessly worked on behalf of all persons fleeing persecution, Cubans and Haitians alike, with the same dedication and commitment. The tragedy of these children and our joint efforts show that tyranny knows no borders. It is indifferent to nationality, race, creed or age. We are pleased to share our experience and resources to make this dream of family reunification a reality for these children and for the Haitian community."

Diario Las Américas Domingo 5 de Diciembre de 1993

## FNCA busca solución legal para 2,138 cubanos en terceros países

**Preparan envío de ayuda humanitaria a cubanos que se encuentran en Nassau, Bahamas**

Por FLORIDANO FERIA

Durante una conferencia de prensa en su sede del 7300 N.W. 35 Terrace el viernes 3, la Fundación Nacional Cubano-Americana (FNCA) expuso un programa de ayuda humanitaria para cubanos que se encuentren varados en terceros países. Francisco J. Hernández, presidente de la FNCA, señaló que enviarán a los 75 cubanos que se encuentran en Nassau, Bahamas, un contenedor con 10 toneladas de alimentos, medicinas y otras provisiones. A este envío seguirá otro de 10 toneladas también. Explicó, además, que la FNCA está haciendo gestiones para traer a los cubanos de una manera ordenada a Estados Unidos.

Alberto J. Mariño, director y miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la FNCA dijo que el cargamento será transportado en el barco Pioneer Sun, que atracará en el puerto de Nassau, en la noche del este domingo o en la madrugada del lunes 6. Afirmó Mariño que la firma naviera Pioneer Shipping "ha hecho una donación de la mitad del flete". Varias industrias y empresas de Miami, como la firma Goya, han hecho donaciones de todo tipo de productos.

Hernández dijo que el Fondo de Ayuda al Exodo Cubano está haciendo gestiones para traer a los cubanos de las Bahamas y otros países. También mostró



FRANCISCO HERNANDEZ

una lista de los 36 países en que se encuentran 2,138 cubanos. Los países que tienen más cubanos son República Dominicana, con 457; España 395; Venezuela, 337; Rusia, 181; Panamá 147; Gran Caimán 102; Costa Rica 98.

"En total —prosiguió Hernández— el Fondo de Ayuda al Exodo Cubano ha traído 9,151 personas a Estados Unidos. Queremos no solamente traerlos, sino buscar una solución definitiva a esta situación".

Hace una semana Hernández se reunió en Washington con el juez Hubbel y con Lula Rodríguez, Asistente de la Procuradora General, Janet Reno, para buscar una salida ordenada a los cubanos que están en terceros países.

El pasado jueves 2 fueron a las Bahamas Clara Marta del Valle, Directora de la FNCA, y Mario

Miranda, Jefe de Seguridad, para estudiar la situación de los cubanos, y averiguar si el gobierno de las Bahamas deportaría a los cubanos.

"Asimismo, estuvimos en contacto con el ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de las Bahamas que nos aseguró que los cubanos están alojados en un edificio viejo de una escuela, que el gobierno de las Bahamas cedió a la Cruz Roja. "Estamos enviándoles también colchonetas, porque están durmiendo en el suelo", dijo Hernández, para agregar que "la firma Bacardí y sus empleados en las Bahamas han accedido a trabajar con nosotros para mejorar la calidad de vida de los cubanos".

"Además, ayer hicimos una proposición al Departamento de Justicia de Washington para que el Servicio de Inmigración entrevistara a los cubanos en terceros países, incluyendo a los que están en las Bahamas, y para que puedan viajar a Estados Unidos bajo el programa del Fondo de Ayuda al Exodo Cubano".

Luego indicó Hernández que es muy positiva la posición del gobierno del presidente Bill Clinton, y que la FNCA espera pronto una solución favorable al caso de los cubanos. "Me siento optimista de tener una decisión al respecto en las próximas semanas", subrayó.

Seguidamente aclaró Hernández que "la fecha límite para procesar a los cubanos bajo el programa del Fondo de Ayuda al Exodo Cubano venció en enero primero de 1992 pero espero que entre nuevamente en vigencia".



### Llegan niños haitianos

El niño haitiano de cuatro años de edad, Giovanni, busca entre el público reunido en el Aeropuerto Internacional de Miami a su padre, Claude Nicolas, con quien se encuentra después de una penosa separación. El niño es sostenido en los brazos de Jorge Mas Canosa, Presidente de la Junta de Directores de la Fundación Nacio-

nal Cubano-Americana, organización que pagó el transporte aéreo para traer desde Haití a Miami a niños de ese país, que tenían sus papeles en regla pero que carecían de transporte para viajar. También en la foto aparece la representante estatal Carrie Meek, que lucha por otorgarles asilo a los haitianos. (Telefoto AFP).

## Rescate de niños hait por la Fundación Nac Cubano-Americana

Por NINOSKA PEREZ CASTELLON

La Fundación Nacional Cubano-Americana unió fuerzas con la congresista Carrie Meek para lograr la reunificación de 28 hijos de refugiados haitianos, varados en Haití.

"Nos complace poder trabajar con la congresista Carrie Meek, quien ha luchado tanto por todos los que huyen de la persecución, con la misma dedicación, ya sea haitianos o cubanos", declaró Jorge Mas Canosa. "La tragedia de estos niños demuestra una vez más que las tiranías no tienen límites y afectan a todos por igual independientemente de raza, credo o edad. Nos complace compartir nuestra experiencia para poder convertir en realidad el sueño de reunificación familiar entre la comunidad haitiana".

Los niños y jóvenes cuyas edades fluctúan entre los 4 años y los 21 forman parte de un grupo

de 98 haitianos que permisos de última Secretaría de Justicia no para unirse con en la Florida.

Víctimas de la burocracia, arribados tras un complicado que los llevó desde ce a la isla de Guay fueron recibidos Quirch, fideicom Fundación Nacional Americana y Pame la oficina de la congresista Meek. En un avión de la Fundación el grupo a San Juan, donde por el capítulo de de la FNCA, encabezado por el grupo de Sadurni.

Tras pasar la noche en San Juan, finalmente Miami donde les aguarda una ceremonia en la encabezada por la congresista Meek y el pre-

(Pasa a la Pág.

(Viene de la pág. 1-A)

junta directiva de la Fundación Nacional Cubano Americana, Jorge Mas Canosa.

Entre lágrimas, abrazos y la letra de una canción que daba la bienvenida a América, la congresista Meek, visiblemente emocionada presentó a Jorge Mas Canosa como el hombre que lo había hecho todo posible. "Es un buen amigo en quien busqué ayuda y la encontré".

La Fundación costó el viaje y la estancia de los niños y jóvenes, a petición de la congresista Carrie Meek, para quien la suerte de los niños haitianos se había convertido

en una cruzada personal.

En el Aeropuerto Internacional de Miami, rodeado de caras felices, Jorge Mas Canosa declaró: "Ambos somos víctimas de una dictadura. A diario, haitianos y cubanos mueren ahogados en busca de libertad. Sentimos una profunda compasión por la tragedia que atraviesa el pueblo haitiano. Por eso nos complace el poder contribuir en alguna medida a aliviar el sufrimiento de estos niños y sus familiares. Los cubanos conocemos bien el dolor de la separación familiar".

Mientras tanto Giovanni Nicolas quien

a los cuatro años presenció en una autopista en Haití como cinco hombres armados mataron a su madre y dejaron por muerto a su padre disfrutaba el calor del abrazo protector de su padre, con quien finalmente se reunía después de dos largos años de separación. Claude Nicolas, que sobrevivió el disparo y el asesinato de su esposa, no se resignaba a perder a su pequeño hijo. "Gracias, estoy muy, muy feliz no se puede perder la fe, porque siempre habrá una mano amiga", declaró Nicolas mientras colmaba de besos al pequeño Giovanni.

Give 3 pts. → but lose  
on the other end

- ① endorsement exodus program
- ② More of Radio Marti  
More is done
- ③ Title III

Get endorsement before Miami

- This is not an endorsement
- Just had a \$fr for Dok
- Avoid embarrassment
- Demands but no endorsement
- Chairmanship ↔ negotiate it  
↳ leak

Write a letter support

- Announce trip to Latin America  
discuss w/ heads of state  
"Free + Democratic Cuba"

① Historical → Victor's Cafe  
1992 Torricelli Bill / w/ announcement  
Latin America

② MIAMI DADE