

# Cuba boat checks tightened

## Screening against suspected criminals begun

United Press International  
KEY WEST, Fla. — Federal authorities toughened the screening of Cuban refugees Thursday to block the arrival of suspected criminals among those reaching Key West in the seafair from Cuba.

Some of the latest arrivals spent four hours sitting on a dock while immigration and Naturalization Service inspectors quizzed members of the group of 500. Women and children were separated and quickly processed, but the men were delayed.

Male refugees were marched four abreast to Key West's old Coast Guard station, where the questioning was done.

A high ranking U.S. immigration official disclosed Wednesday at least 41 suspected criminals, some of whom may be murderers, have been found among the more than 5,000 refugees arriving aboard the seafair off the Florida Straits.

"We're stiffening up the screening procedure since we began to notice this problem (of criminals among the

refugees)," said INS inspector Keith Wilson.

Wilson, who was brought to Key West from Miami, where he has been handling flights from Havana at Miami International Airport, said, "Castro's been dumping people on us for some time."

Federal authorities said several suspicious persons were found among the 500, but declined to say whether they were being detained. A U.S. Border Patrol prisoner van was parked outside the screening area.

Immigration officers said they began interviewing "suspicious" arrivals this week when other refugees reported some of the people reaching Key West aboard the seafair had come from Cuban prisons rather than Havana's Peruvian Embassy.

"We found the whole gamut of crimes among them: murder, some narcotics violations, you name it," D.E. Powell, Immigration and Naturalization Service Southern regional commissioner, said Wednesday.

Powell said 25 people believed to have been convicted of crimes in Cuba were among the 1,600 refugees who arrived at the old navy station docks Wednesday aboard 69 boats.

Officials said 179 boats had arrived at Key West by midnight Wednesday, carrying about 6,200 refugees. A scattering of other boats have docked in Miami and other Keys ports but many of the boats returned without any refugees.

Shortly before midnight, a 140-foot luxury charter fishing boat, the Viking Starship, arrived at Truman Annex carrying about 500 refugees. That was the largest single arrival since the exodus from Cuba began April 14.

"Based on initial questioning, we have reason to believe they are excludable from the United States," Powell said of the suspected criminals.

People convicted of crimes in their home countries can be kept from staying in the United States, he said.

The 25 were being sent to the Federal Correctional Institution at

Homestead, south of Miami — where 16 other suspected Cuban criminals were detained Monday, Powell said. There are some more on the way," he said.

Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y., chairman of the House subcommittee on Refugees, Migration and International Law, toured the Key West docks Wednesday and said she spoke to several refugees who admitted having criminal records.

"There does seem to be some criminal element here," she said. She said in Miami that a refugee told her he was among 700 criminals taken to a center in Cuba and "told they could go back to prison or go to the United States."

In other developments Wednesday:

— President Carter ordered the Navy to send ships to the Florida Straits to back up the Coast Guard in the "steadily growing problem" of the hundreds of amateur skippers ferrying refugees from Cuba.

# Bergland: Farm ills short-lived

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland told Congress Thursday that farmers' problems of high costs and sagging prices will be short-lived.

"If inflation can be contained and world order maintained, the 1980s will be a very good decade for American farmers as the rest of the world continues to upgrade its diet," Bergland told the House Agriculture Committee.

Chairman Thomas Foley, D-Wash., called for an early decision to substitute a set-aside program to cut back grain production in 1981. Bergland said it is likely that grain stocks will increase, the administration would announce a set-aside early.

Foley pressed for higher price support loans for grain put into the farmer-owned reserve, and Bergland repeated his general approval of this approach. The proposal has been approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee.

"Our problem is cost," Bergland said. "How do you shoehorn a \$400 million outlay into a balanced budget?"

Finally, Foley called for higher prices at which reserve grain is sold back into the market; Bergland said he was willing to discuss a change.

Bergland appeared on the third of three days of hearings on a financial crisis facing agriculture. The problem was highlighted by April's farm price report released Wednesday, which showed that farm prices fell 5 percent in April.

On the average, prices of raw farm products are 9 percent below last year and farmers' expenses are 11 percent above last year.

"The problems that we now face — rising production costs, tight credit, transportation difficulties, sagging prices — are severe," Bergland said.

"For those who have a low equity base and rely upon purchased inputs and commercial financing, the financial strain is particularly tough. But these problems will be short-lived."

Bergland said attention given the embargo of grain to the Soviet Union, last year's bumper crops and record grain and soybean supplies have overshadowed a favorable long-term outlook from "fast growing foreign markets for more grains, oilseeds and fibers and expanding domestic demand for U.S. agricultural products."

Foreign demand has taken 20 percent of American farm production this year compared to less than 12 percent a decade ago, he said.

Bergland said "assertions in recent weeks that the agricultural economy is on the verge of collapse" have overlooked strong performance of American agriculture, he said.

Even rapidly rising costs of energy that are cutting into farm income have a silver lining in the long-term, Bergland said.

"But the fundamental changes in technology and operating practices that must occur will benefit both the farm sector and the entire economy long into our future," he said.

Growth in world demand and lack of cropland reserves indicate promising crop prices in this decade, he said.

He predicted that competition for land will cause a shift from forage to row crops, especially in the eastern half of the nation, limiting growth in

the cattle herd, he said.

"With beef supplies at present low per-capita levels, and with slow growth in supply, we should enter a period of sustained strong cattle prices, once consumer demand re-

covers from the impending recession," Bergland said.

He also predicted increased use of grain for alcohol fuels will have a "bullish" impact on commodity prices.



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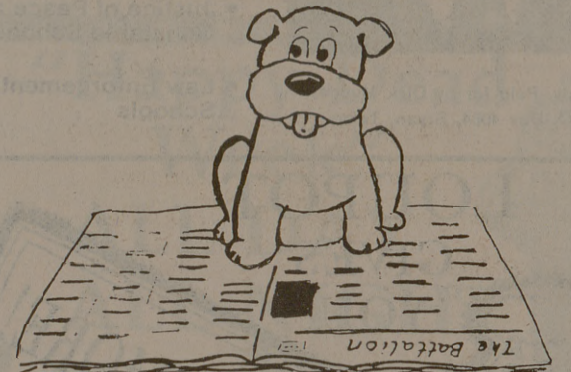
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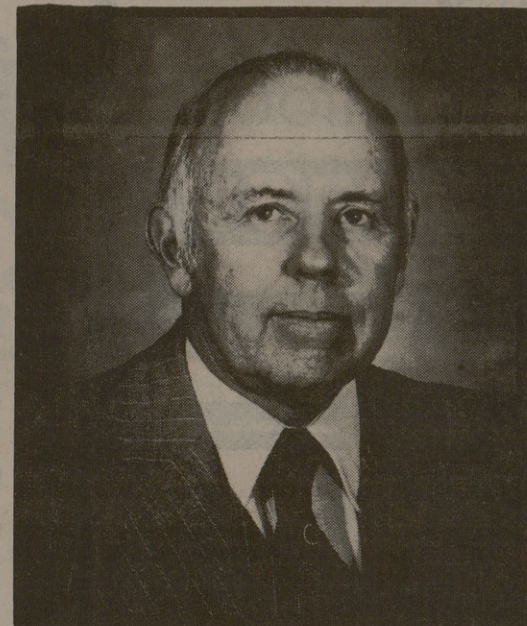
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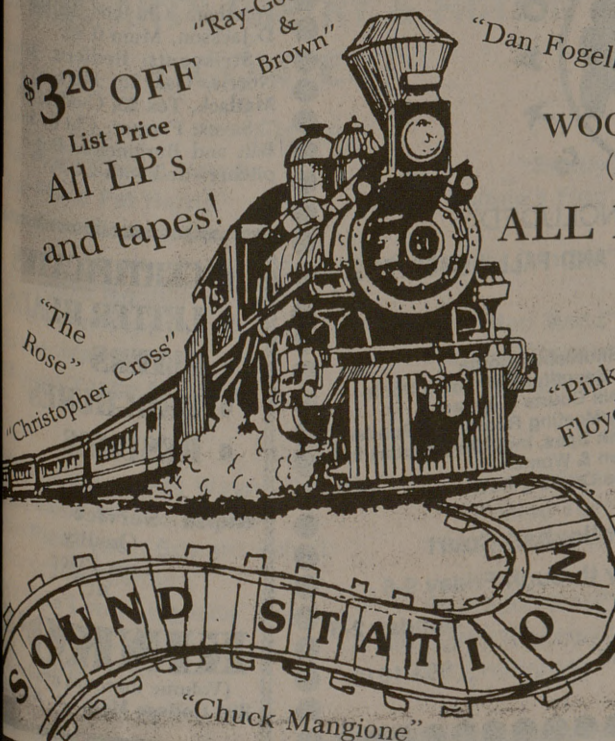
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