

Post 9/17/67

Flow of Cuban Refugees Held Worth Cost to U.S.

MIAMI, Fla. (AP)—Eight years after Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba, refugees from his regime still pour into the United States where the taxpayer foots the bill of \$1 million a week. It's worth the money, says a spokesman for the Cuban Refugee Center. "They readily find jobs and

fill a real need in this country. It is amazing how well they succeed," he added.

With nearly 400,000 refugees already in the United States, others arrive daily by airlift, in small boats, and via Mexico and Spain, which have Havana airline service.

The refugee center, operated by the Health, Education and Welfare Department, reported it has a \$1 million budget this year. This sum goes to airlift Cubans here, fly most of them to cities throughout the United States, and aid those unable to work.

Two airlift planes arrive each weekday at a cost of \$850 each. They bring in from 850 to 1000 refugees a week.

Nearly 80,000 "airliftees" have arrived since the shuttle started Dec. 1, 1965. About three-fourths of the newcomers are flown to other cities, the rest remain in Miami.

The center reported that 60 per cent of the arrivals by this route are of working age—between 16 and 64. Seven per cent are over 65 and 33 per cent under 18, it added.

A breakdown of occupations: professionals, 7 per cent; skilled workers, 8 per cent; semi-skilled, 4 per cent; clerical and sales, 12 per cent; farming or fishing, 2 per cent; service occupations, 2 per cent. The others are listed as children, students and housewives.

The center maintains schools to teach Cubans new skills and the English language. It reported 14,000 refugees, nearly all elderly or incapacitated, are on its welfare rolls.