

Cuban Exiles in Spain Look Eagerly to U.S.

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Special to The New York Times

MADRID, Feb. 5—Napoleón Navarro, a 29-year-old Cuban who does not like Premier Fidel Castro, will leave here shortly for Miami with his wife, Martina, and his 10-year-old daughter Teresa.

The Navarros are among the luckier members of a Cuban community estimated at between 25,000 and 30,000 who fled Cuba and assembled here for what they hoped would be a short stopover on the way to the United States' mainland or Puerto Rico.

The stopover has, in most cases, become a precarious stay of several years and, in some, a dead end offering no hope of reaching American shores.

During the first part of the 1960's, the Cuban Government followed a fairly liberal emigration policy, allowing people to leave the island on so-called "freedom flights" directly to Miami or, when these were curtailed, to come to Spain on regular airline flights.

The Cubans arrived here much faster than they could be processed for admission into the United States. The exodus has slowed considerably and is now sporadic. The hard-pressed consular section of the United States embassy is starting to lose the feeling of being submerged.

Tearful Scenes at Consulate

There have been tearful scenes at the consulate as officials have explained to eager Cuban families the various restrictions and delays in the way of immigration. There is a numerical restriction, for example, that limits United States immigrants from the Western Hemisphere to 120,000 a year, on a first-come-first-served basis.

Persons who have communicable diseases, job skills not in demand in the United States or no skills at all, or who have no relatives to support them stand no chance of being admitted.

Many of those now coming out of Cuba are aged or unskilled. The former, if they have children or other relatives in the United States, will be admitted. So will children or spouses of persons already in the United States.

Spain was one of the few



The New York Times/Ingeborg Lippman

At the Cuban Community Center in Madrid, Dr. Enrique Huertas, president of the Cuban medical association in exile, of Miami, giving an address on the 100th anniversary of José Martí, 19th-century Cuban patriot. The banner on the wall says, "Cuba or nothing."

countries willing to accept the Cubans even on a temporary basis. The Government has given help in the first year of stay with free meals and medical aid. But with an employment problem of its own, it is eager to see as many as possible go on to the United States.

Cold Madrid Winters

The Navarros arrived here early in 1971 from the town of Perico in Cuba's western province of Matanzas. Mrs. Navarro had watched her father, two brothers and a sister leave for Miami, but she and her husband had to wait because the Cuban Government held back those aged between 15 and 27. They left as soon as he turned 27 because, she explained, "he could not go on living in Perico."

"There was almost no food or clothing, only work—work without hope," she said.

They settled here in a sparsely furnished unheated flat. Mrs. Navarro, accustomed to tropical

warmth, will remember the cold Madrid winters perhaps more than any other hardship. Mr. Navarro has been able to earn some money selling cars and, like many others here, the family gets help from its American-based relatives.

For thousands of Cubans, life is lived here in a kind of limbo.

"When you get here you go to the Embassy and you learn it may be years before you can

leave," Mr. Navarro explained.

"You try to get a job but when a Spanish employer hears that you are only in Madrid waiting, he won't take you."

Existence for many is hand-to-mouth. Some knock on fellow-Cubans' doors, selling hot tamales or notions. Others accept low pay to be able to work. Roberto Rodríguez, a friend of the Navarros, said he worked 12 hours a day as a

restaurant cook for just under \$120 a month. Of that, \$80 goes for rent. He, too, must get family help from the United States, where the prospect of relatively high wages is a powerful attraction to the Cubans here.

For the few hundred Cubans who frequent it, the Cuban Community Center, organized by refugees, offers a home away from home. The center has a library, dominos, frozen daiquiris, music, and a restaurant serving pork, rice and black beans.

Take Lessons in English

Many of the members are relatively well off and have settled in Madrid permanently. Mrs. Navarro and Teresa, with others planning to leave, are able to get English lessons there.

It is Teresita, as she is known in the family, who has become the instrument by which the family has been able to qualify for immigration. She has received a scholarship from a Roman Catholic school in Miami and will thus qualify for immigrant status as a nonworker.

In April, she will leave first and her parents will be admitted a few days later. Although United States officials are encouraging people to go elsewhere, the Navarros will go to Miami, where it is warm and where "it is close to Cuba just in case we can get back there some day," Mr. Navarro said, with a grin.