

2 Cuban Exile Groups Welcome Halt of Airlift

By Irwin Goodwin

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While Cuba's notice that it is suspending the so-called "Freedom Flights" was denounced as "shocking" and "inhuman" by most exiles, surprisingly, two militant anti-Castro groups have welcomed the action.

One, calling itself the Committee Against Mass Expatriation, has been waging a correspondence campaign from San Juan for two years, urging U.S. congressmen and President Nixon to end the airlift. The other is Miami's tiny band of extremists, Alpha 66.

There is no connection between the two organizations other than their mutually held aim.

In explanation of the committee's commitment, which is

considered strange by most Cuban refugees, President Wilfredo Blanco Pi said in an interview: "The airlift has been a kind of utopian dream for us at home and in exile. So long as it continued, it was a safety valve for the pressure that continues to build up against Castro.

"You cannot liberate a nation by evacuating it. The prospect of leaving on a flight to Miami acts like a drug to tranquilize those Cubans who would otherwise rise and revolt."

Backed by only 200 of the estimated 4,000 Cuban exiles now living in Puerto Rico, Blanco Pi has written to Sen. Allen J. Ellender (D-La.) who was unsuccessfully proposed earlier this year that the United States end the airlift from Cuba on the grounds

that it costs \$5 million yearly and that many of the emigrants go on welfare.

In Miami, Alpha 66's director, Diego Medina, issued a statement less expressing "extreme disappointment that the Cuban dictator has once more embarrassed the United

States government by anti-the airlift was started in 1965, patting this country's moves says that "Cubans have no and initiating action himself." special claim on American For his part, Blanco Pi, who taxpayers to save them. They arrived in Puerto Rico eight must help themselves, even if years ago on his own, before it means revolution."

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