

Cuban Restrictions Fog

by Al Burt

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HAVANA, Oct. 26—The Cuban exodus has taken on the aura of a plebiscite in the minds of the people here, but there will be no clear answers.

Any positive result has been

fogged by restrictions the Cuban government has placed on the outflow of refugees and by restrictions the United States Government has placed on the inflow.

When Prime Minister Castro first announced that Cubans could leave the country

through the port of Camarioca if their relatives claimed them, it appeared simply a move to rid the country of unproductive and dissident elements. Officials here have called it a "confirmation" of previous policy.

On the morning after the

speech of Sept. 28, cable offices were swamped with Cubans trying to contact relatives in the United States. There have been lines outside the offices every day since, and cable representatives have said they are maintaining maximum traffic. It is estimated hundreds of thousands of messages have been sent.

Long Lines Form

Telephone calls to the United States must be scheduled weeks ahead.

Each morning, long lines curl around the Ministry of Justice, where Cubans apply for birth certificates and other documents necessary for passports. At the end of the day, some are still waiting.

Observers here estimate anywhere from 100,000 to 1.5 million would leave if the doors were truly thrown wide open, but they admit these are merely guesses. Partisans of the government say these figures are too high.

The doors are not wide open. Those being allowed to leave are predominantly the very old, the very young and those without technical skills or special knowledge.

The exclusion of young men

'Plebiscite' Results

of draft age keeps some families here who will not leave without their sons.

In a recent speech, Castro said he feared the young Cubans might be sent back to Cuba among what he called "mercenary bands" and then they would have to be shot. Rather than permit that, he said, they should remain here for their obligatory military service.

Many here feel the move toward exodus is gaining momentum, rather than losing it, but they point out a number of factors may change this.

One is the reception the refugees receive in Florida and what the people here are able to learn of it. There already are a number of stories circulating that the treatment being given at Camarioca is more friendly than that received by those arriving in the United States.

Other reports dampening enthusiasm are that the United States may try to spread the refugees throughout Latin America. There also are rumors about the hardship in finding work and adjusting to life in the United States.

Crew Foils Cuban, 20, in Try To Hijack Plane for Family

KEY WEST, Oct. 26 (UPI) — A young Cuban, desperate to get to his family in Cuba but unable to find a boat, tried to hijack a National Airlines passenger plane in flight today but was overpowered by a copilot wielding a fire ax.

Authorities said Luis Medina Perez, 20, of Union City, N.J., pulled a luger-shaped pellet pistol on a stewardess and demanded to see the pilot during the Miami-to-Key West flight.

When Capt. K. I. Carlile came out of the cockpit, according to the FBI, Perez told him:

"Take this plane to Havana because I want to be with my family. I have nothing to live for."

Carlile then convinced Perez to come into the cabin, where he and copilot D. S. McDaniel, armed with a fire ax, disarmed the Cuban.

Perez was taken into custody at plane-side when the airliner, carrying 27 persons, landed at Key West.

It wasn't clear immediately whether Perez wanted to rejoin his family in Cuba, or to attempt to bring them to this country.

Meanwhile, new arrivals from Cuba today pushed the total number of refugees in the current surge to more than 1500. Two hundred more boatloads reportedly are waiting to sail from the island.

[In Washington, Antonio Mi-

cocci, staff adviser of the Cuban Refugee Program of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, said the influx of refugees into the United States is not limiting job opportunities for Americans.

[He said the government had helped about 2600 of the first 93,000 Cuban refugees to settle in Washington, Virginia and Maryland. Most of the refugees are highly skilled people, Micocci said. "They're not competing; there is work for them.]