

# 120,000 Cubans Await Airlift to U.S.

Post-4/10/67

By Fenton Wheeler

VARADERO, Cuba (AP)—

The Varadero airlift has settled into a routine operation for everyone except the 3700 Cubans who leave monthly on the 35-minute flight to Miami.

Twice daily, Monday through Friday, U.S. airliners touch down on the runway at this beach resort 80 miles east of

Havana to pick up Cubans who have chosen to quit their homeland.

Since the operation began Dec. 1, 1965, nearly 60,000 have flown to the United States this way. Havana sources estimate more than 120,000 are on the waiting list.

With no friends or relatives present, there is little visible

emotion as the departing Cubans sit here docilely through the last moments. Some say they have tried for five years to leave.

The airlift agreement was worked out by the Swiss Embassy, which represents U.S. interests in Cuba.

Only Cubans with relatives in the United States are eligi-

ble. Males 15 to 26, the age for military service, and technicians cannot leave. The Cuban government approves a list of applicants which must be verified in Washington and returned to Havana for rechecking.

Air transportation is paid for by the United States.