

# Cubans in New Orleans Shifted From Hilton Inn to Air Station

NY Times By PAUL L. MONTGOMERY OCT 29 1971  
Special to The New York Times

NEW ORLEANS, Oct. 28 — The Government shifted the happy-go-lucky Cuban sugar delegates this evening from their motel to the bachelor officers' quarters at a naval air station at Belle Chasse, La.

The delegates, who landed here Tuesday without visas to attend an international sugar conference, were taken in six Immigration Service cars at speeds of up to 75 miles an hour from their motel near the New Orleans International Airport, through the city and on to Alvin Callender Field on the west bank of the Mississippi.

The Government gave no reason for the sudden and secretive transfer. Reporters were halted at the gates of the air station.

Earlier today, the Cubans enjoyed the Southern sun from their motel balcony but experienced little apparent progress in their case.

A State Department spokesman in Washington said that the United States, through the Swiss Embassy in Havana, had twice asked the Cuban Government to order the delegation

**Continued on Page 32, Column 1**

## 22 CUBANS LOSE ROOMS AT HILTON

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

and its aircraft to return home.

"We still have no reply," the spokesman said. "We don't know why they're not responding."

The Cubans are 19 sugar technicians from a state-run association and three crew members of a Russian-built turbo prop plane. In September, Cuba requested visas for the two-week meeting of the International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists here, but the State Department rejected the request. To the surprise of State Department and Immigration officials, the delegation came anyway.

The 22 men were at first held in 11 rooms of the Hilton Inn across the highway from the New Orleans International Airport. An immigration spokesman said that technically the delegation had not been admitted to the United States and thus must be kept in custody.

When they were on the balcony of the Hilton, the Cubans joked and snapped pictures of newsmen gathered below. Rafael Francia Mestre, president of the group, paced back and forth smoking an H. Upmann cigar.

The Cubans responded to reporters' shouted questions with quips. In an attempt to learn if the delegation had got a send-off from Fidel Castro, a reporter asked one Cuban what

the last words were that he had heard upon leaving Havana.

"Fasten your seat belts," the man replied.

Another Cuban asked what was happening at the sugar meeting, whose headquarters are at the Jung Hotel in downtown New Orleans. When told that the convention delegates were out looking at cane plantations, the Cuban said, "That's where we should be."

There were two tiny demonstrations at the motel. A Cuban émigré drove by with a hand-lettered sign in Spanish saying: "Traitors to Cuba, to Your Mother, to Your Family, to the Free World," and a group of seven local radicals, accompanied by two babies, paraded briefly in support of the Cubans.

"They let all kinds of Fascists from South America in the country," said Miss Wynn Murrell of Youth Against War and Fascism. "These people just want to share ideas. It's a violation of everybody's rights to keep them locked up."

Late tonight, the Cubans' plane was still in a hangar at the New Orleans International Airport.