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Easing of Embargo Disappoints

Special to The Washington Post
 MIAMI, Aug. 25—Miami's Cuban exile community has reacted with disappointment and resignation to the State Department's easing of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba.

Some more militant Cuban exile leaders denounced the move as a betrayal of not only their cause but the cause of freedom in general. They vowed to continue to work toward the overthrow of Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro.

There was no visible reaction, however, from most of Dade County's Cubans and Cuban-Americans who number more than 400,000 of the 1.5 million residents. Many have long since become resigned to the inevitability of normal relations between the United States and Cuba. Some, perhaps a small minority, would welcome such relations as an opportunity to visit their homeland.

The State Department action announced Thursday, re-

moves the ban on trade with Cuba by overseas subsidiaries of American companies. It also abolishes penalties aimed at inhibiting ships and planes of other countries from taking cargo to or from Cuba. Direct U.S.-Cuban trade is still prohibited.

Leadership in the Cuban community is diffused and beset by rivalries, so no one speaks authoritatively for the great majority.

Miami police said there were no demonstrations to protest the easing of the embargo.

Even in the statements of some strongly anti-Castro exiles, there was an element of resignation and helplessness about the course of U.S. policy, and a determination to continue opposition to the Castro government without U.S. help.

"The United States has just committed a new aggression against democracy, collaborating with a tyrannical regime that enslaves its people," said

a statement issued by Alpha 66, a group that has sponsored small commando raids against Cuba in recent years.

"The Cuban combatants never expected anything from the United States, and we can expect nothing in the future," the statement added, "We denounce these maneuvers so that our compatriots do not continue believing that another country, least of all the U.S.A., will identify itself with our cause."

Juan Perez-Franco, president of the Bay of Pigs Veterans Association, called the easing of the embargo "a betrayal of Cuba, of our dead, of our prisoners, and of freedom and democracy in the whole world."

The association, which represents more than 1,000 exiles who took part in the unsuccessful invasion of Cuba in 1961, recently sued the U.S. government for return of the battle flag it entrusted to the late President John F. Kennedy. The suit claimed that

the United States reneged on Kennedy's promise to return the flag "in a free Cuba." The case is pending.

"We will continue struggling," Perez-Franco said. "We will never accept negotiations or coexistence of any kind with the regime of Fidel Castro." He acknowledged, however, that a total lifting of the trade embargo and the establishment of U.S.-Cuban relations "appear to be inevitable."

Cuban exile leaders found little comfort in the growth of Dade County's Cubans as a political force. Perez-Franco said he did not believe that Cuban votes could deter an "inevitable" U.S. rapprochement with Cuba, although he said it was possible that major moves in that direction would be delayed beyond the 1976 presidential election if enough influence were brought to bear on the Ford administration.

Manolo Rebozo, a Cuban-

Earlier clippings on relations with Cuba filed Nix Ad, prior to 9 Aug 74; following that date, filed Ford Ad.

Cuban Exiles

born U.S. citizen, a Democrat and member of the Miami City Commission, said that Cuban-American voters could become "a big influence" at the county, state and national levels in time for the election if a registration drive succeeds. But that, he said, would not induce President Ford to change course on Cuba.

"The thing he is going to lose is a few votes," Rebozo said. "But nationwide, that doesn't mean too much."

Rebozo said that the number of Cuban-Americans registered to vote in Dade County is close to 70,000 and the goal for 1976 is 100,000. Recent studies indicated that 9 per cent of the county's voters have Latin American surnames, and most are believed to be Cubans. TWENTY-TWO PER CENT OF Cubans here have become citizens, the study showed.

If exiles who favor detente with Cuba are reticent about speaking out, it may be from fear.

According to Sheriff's Lt. Marshall Frank, 24 terrorist bombs have exploded in the county and 15 others have been disarmed since October. Most were in the Cuban community, and at least some were attributed to political motives.

Two prominent exile activists were murdered in the last 16 months, one of them just two days after he publicly advocated coexistence with Castro. An exile professor refuses to be quoted any more by the press because of telephoned threats.

Despite the intimidation, a group of Cuban Protestant ministers and laymen, claiming to have fewer than 100 members, called in April for an end to the trade embargo and restoration of U.S. relations with Havana.

"It is the best alternative to the frustrations and disorientation that corrode the Cuban exile community today," the group said.