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Record Group 220: Cuban-Haitian Task Force: A Guide to Its Records at the Jimmy Carter Library

Collection Summary

Creator: RG 220: Department of Health and Human Services. Cuban-Haitian Task Force

Title: Cuban-Haitian Task Force

Dates: 7/15/80-6/1/81

Quantity: 27 linear feet, 7 linear inches, 63 containers

Identification:

Accession Number: 80-1

National Archives Identifier: 547

Scope and Content:

This collection consists of correspondence, memos, briefing books, press clippings, reports, telephone logs, and report summaries. The material relates to the Task Force that was created to manage and coordinate the processing and resettlement of Cuban-Haitians entrants in the United States. Topics covered in this collection include immigration and refugees.

Creator Information: Department of Health and Human Services. Cuban-Haitian Task Force.

The Cuban-Haitian Task Force was formally established on July 15, 1980, at the direction of the White House and disbanded on June 1, 1981. On April 20, 1980, Fidel Castro suddenly announced that the port of Mariel, Cuba would be open for all Cubans wishing to leave the country. This came after one month of orderly emigrations from Cuba to Costa Rica. The opening of Mariel shortly resulted in a full-fledged boatlift by Cuban-Americans bringing individuals and groups of immigrants to the Florida. By May 4th, more than 1,000 boats had undertaken the voyage and some 13,000 Cuban immigrants were already in the U.S. Thousands of Cubans continued to arrive each day, placing a major burden on Florida and other states and on the Federal agencies involved in the processing, care and resettlement of the new arrivals. Coupled with the influx of Cubans, several thousand Haitians also arrived in the U.S. during that time.

This burden caused the Administration to declare the situation an emergency on May 6, 1980, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began to coordinate the federal effort to respond to the crisis. By July, more than 120,000 Cubans and Haitians

had arrived in the U.S. and it was apparent that a comprehensive assistance program was needed to meet their immediate and long-term needs. On July 15, 1980, the Administration established the Cuban-Haitian Task Force to manage the processing and resettlement of Cuban and Haitian arrivals. The Director of the Task Force reported directly to the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs (Ambassador Victor H. Palmieri) and the Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs (Eugene Eidenberg). The Task Force was transferred to the Office of the Under Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Resources on November 15, 1980.

The Task Force provided overall policy management direction to the effort to receive, process, and resettle entrants. It worked closely with Federal agencies to coordinate federal activities related to serving the entrants. The general management structure of the Task Force delegated many day-to-day operational responsibilities to its field operation centers. Oversight by headquarters assured consistency of policy and overall supervision. The Washington office was staffed to provide quick reaction teams to any camp in case of emergencies. There was also a major regional office in Miami, as well four resettlement centers and other processing and holding centers in southern Florida. The Task Force also devoted substantial financial and personnel resources to working with the national volunteer agencies to effect rapid resettlement of the entrants throughout the U.S. and working with organizations to minimize the negative impact of the Cuban-Haitian boatlift.

Restrictions:

Restrictions on Access: These papers contain documents restricted in accordance with applicable executive order(s), which governs National Security policies, applicable statutes/agency restrictions, and material which has been closed in accordance with the donor's deed of gift.

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Related Material:

Related materials in this repository: Domestic Policy Staff; Records of the Office of the Assistant to the President for Hispanic Affairs

Index Terms:

Limited to major topics under each category

Persons: Ambassador Victor H. Palmieri, Eugene Eidenberg

Organizations: Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Subjects: Immigration, Refugees

Places: Cuba, Haiti, Miami, Florida; Fort Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania; Fort McCoy, Wisconsin; Camp Santiago, Puerto Rico; Fort Chaffee, Arkansas

Types of Material: Memoranda, correspondence briefing books, clippings, reports, phone logs, summaries

Administrative Information:

Preferred citation: [Type of Document], [Names of Sender and Recipient or Title of Document], [Date], [Collection Title], [Series Title], [Folder Title], [Box Number], Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Acquisition information: These historical materials were received under provisions of the instrument of gift that Jimmy Carter signed January 31, 1981.

Processing information: The first series of the collection was opened in 1987. Subsequent series in the collection were opened on March 3, 1998. The open dates are indicated in the series descriptions.

System of Arrangement:

The records of the Department of Health and Human Services - Cuban-Haitian Task Force are divided into eight series:

Series Title	National Archives Identifier
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files	136805
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files	136909
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files	137026
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files	137211
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Files	137227
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files	137338
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files	137360
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files	137492

Detailed Description of the Collection

[Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 1-10. This series was opened on April 13, 1987. This series consists of memoranda, correspondence, reports, phone logs, executive summaries and transcripts of Congressional hearings. The series includes material on the Fort Chaffee refugee program and the Miami operations. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

[Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 10-19. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memoranda, correspondence, minutes of task force meetings, briefing books, informational materials, and executive summaries. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files

Scope and Content: Containers 19-28. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memoranda, reports, press releases, newspaper clippings, staff profiles, executive summaries, and correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files

Scope and Content: Containers 29-30. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memoranda, reports, and executive summaries. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Camp Files

Scope and Content: Containers 31-41. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memoranda, reports, correspondence, wire copies, news clippings, and photographs. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files

Scope and Content: Containers 42-45. This series was opened in on March 3, 1998. This series consists of related press clippings from various newspapers. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files

Scope and Content: Containers 46-60. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of external and internal chronological letters, cleared letters, Congressional mail in name order, copies of outgoing mail, public inquiries, sponsorship information, and State Department correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files

Scope and Content: Containers 60-63. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of reports for and about the Cuban-Haitian Task Force, various instructions for administrative purposes, and weekly activity reports of voluntary agencies. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

[Return to series list](#)

Container List

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files

Container 1

Ada Merritt School
Agriculture, Department of
Bohen Papers
Budget
Camp Consolidation [1]
Camp Consolidation [2]
Camp Consolidation [3]
Camps - Eglin
Camps - Indiantown Gap
Contingency
Cuban Refugee Task Force - Phone Call Log
Cuban Situation - Daily Reports, Miami
Cuban Situation - Reports to the White House

Container 2

Data Processing
Department of Defense [1]
Department of Defense [2]
Department of Education
Executive Summary, 7/8/80-7/19/80
Executive Summary, 7/20/80-7/31/80
Executive Summary, 8/1/80-8/15/80
Executive Summary, 8/16/80-8/27/80
Executive Summary, 9/80

Container 3

Executive Summary, 10/80
Executive Summary, 11/80
Executive Summary, 12/80
Executive Summary, 1/81
Executive Summary, 2/81
Executive Summary, 3/81
Executive Summary, 4/81
Executive Summary, 5/81
Fact - Statement Sheet
Fascell - Stone

Container 4

Fort Chaffee [1]
Fort Chaffee [2]
Fort Chaffee #2

Fort McCoy [1]
Fort McCoy [2]
Haitians
Health
Health and Human Services, Department of
Hearing Transcript and Briefing Books [1]

Container 5

Hearing Transcript and Briefing Books [2]
International Affairs
Justice, Department of [1]
Justice, Department of [2]
Krome North Florida
Krome South [1]
Krome South [2]
Law Enforcement
Legal Admissions
Legal Status
Legislation - Current [1]
Legislation - Current [2]
Legislation - Pending

Container 6

Merger
Miami Operations [1]
Miami Operations [2]
New Entrant Processing Center - New Sites
North Hudson County, New Jersey
Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
Options Paper
Planning
Policy Papers
Post Arrivals
Presidential Determinations

Container 7

Presidential Interagency Task Force (IATF) [1]
Presidential Interagency Task Force (IATF) [2]
Processing
Program Eligibility
Public Affairs
Public Health Service
Red Cross
Reference Notebook [1]
Reference Notebook [2]
Reference Notebook [3]

Container 8

Refugee Program, State
Report of the Cuban-Haitian Task Force - Draft, 11/1/80
Reports to the Secretary of Health and Human Services
Research
Resettlement [1]
Resettlement [2]
Returnees
Security
State Department
State Plans [1]

Container 9

State Plans [2]
State Plans [3]
Talladega - Federal Correctional Institute
Tent City
Transition [1]
Transition [2]
Unaccompanied Minors [1]
Unaccompanied Minors [2]
Unaccompanied Minors [3]
Unaccompanied Minors [4]

Container 10

Unaccompanied Minors [5]
U.S. Catholic Conference
VOLAGS (Voluntary Agencies) [1]
VOLAGS [2]
Weekly Plan of Action
White House [1]
White House [2]

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files

Administration's Policy on Cubans and Haitians
Anniversary
Background
Benefits
Bohen, F.M. - Chronological File, 11/21/80-12/9/80
Boilerplate - Facts

Container 11

Briefing Materials, Senate Appropriations, 3/6/81 [1]
Briefing Materials, Senate Appropriations, 3/6/81 [2]
Budget - Legislation
Camp Consolidation - Press
Camp Consolidation - Scott L. Hardman
Camps - Scott L. Hardman
Congressional
Consolidation [File No. 1]
Consolidation [File No. 2]
Consolidation - Interagency
Cuban Community
Cuban/Haitian (C/H) Background
Cuban/Haitian Task Force (CHTF), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Interagency Meeting Reports
CHTF - Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG) - After Action Report

Container 12

CHTF - Cuban and Haitian Influxes
CHTF - Material
CHTF - Notebook [1]
CHTF - Notebook [2]
CHTF - Office of Public Affairs Data
Direct Sponsorship Numbers
Education
Education in Centers
Executive Summary, 7/80

Container 13

Executive Summary, 8/80
Executive Summary, 9/2/80-9/30/80
Executive Summary, 10/1/80-10/30/80
Executive Summary, 11/3/80-12/31/80
Executive Summary, 1/2/81-1/30/81
Executive Summary, 2/2/81-3/31/81
Executive Summary, 4/1/81-5/29/81

Container 14

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
FEMA - Mission Assignments
Forbush, Wilford J. - Chronological File, 12/29/80-3/26/81
Fort Allen
Fort Chaffee
Fort McCoy
Funding - Budget, Federal Assistance
Haiti
Haitians [File No. 1]

Haitians [File No. 2]
Haitians [File No. 3]
Health
Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Department of, Refugee Plan
Indiantown Gap
Immigration and Naturalization Service Procedures
Interagency Task Force

Container 15

Kramer Report
Legislation
Legislation - Cuban/Haitian Entrant Status
Legislation Background
List of Files
Local/State Problems
Management Tracking System [File No. 1]
Management Tracking System [File No. 2]
Mariel II
Memoranda for the Record, [8/16/80]
Memoranda to the President's Congressional Liaison Staff, 8/80
Memoranda to Scott Hardman - Special Assistant to Cuban/Haitian Task Force Director,
7/12/80-8/3/80
Mental Problems
Miami
Miami Coordinating Council
Miami Press
Minor Suit
Miscellaneous Informative Materials [1]
Miscellaneous Informative Materials [2]
Palmieri, Victor H.
Plan of Action, 8/18/80-8/25/80
Post - June 19, 1980 - Options Papers Congressional Liaison Staff

Container 16

Press Clippings, 5/29/80-8/18/80
Press Clippings, 1/19/81-3/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/31/81-4/13/1981
Prisoners
Reading File
Reading File - M. Hogan - Correspondence
Reading Material

Container 17

[Reading Material Notebook] [1]
[Reading Material Notebook] [2]
[Reading Material Notebook] [3]

[Reading Material Notebook] [4]
[Reading Material Notebook] [5]
Reading [Materials]
Refugee Education Assistance Act
Refugee Services
Report of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/1/80
Report to Congress, 4/15/80

Container 18

Reports, 10/80-11/80
Reports of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force
Resettlement
Resettlement and Placement Grants
September 1980 Action Plan
Sites [File No. 1]
Sites [File No. 2]
South Florida
Staffing Briefing, 7/18/80
Task Force Issues Notebook [1]
Task Force Issues Notebook [2]

Container 19

Third Country Resettlement
Transition Briefing Book
Transition - Transfer to Health and Human Services)
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 1]
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 2]
Unaccompanied Minors - Issues
Weekly Reports
White House
White Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files

Accessibility and Press Policy
Addresses
Attitudes of Americans
Background - Briefing Materials
Background Information - Cities for Awareness Tour
Benefits
Biographical Information
Briefs, Questions and Answers, etc.
Calling Cards
Camp Allen - Puerto Rico

Container 20

Carter, President Jimmy
Carter, President Jimmy - Statement, 5/14/80
Character Profile
Census Information
Chronology, 5/13/79-9/28/79
Consolidation [File No. 1]
Consolidation [File No. 2]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [1]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [2]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [3]
Criminals and Mental Health Problems
Cuban Entrant Data Report
Cuban/Haitian Fact Sheet, 6/20/80
Cuban/Haitian Task Force
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Miscellaneous
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Miami
Cumulative Statistics, 8/8/80-12/8/80
Data Report
Disturbances [Empty]

Container 21

Education
Efforts to Return Cuban Entrants to Cuba
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida
Eidenberg, Eugene - White House
Entrants vs. Refugees
Events
Executive Summary, 9/17/80-9/29/80
Executive Summary, 10/1/80-10/31/80
Executive Summary, 11/3/80-11/28/80
Executive Summary, 12/30/80-1/30/81
Fascell - Stone - Amendment
Federal Aid to State and Local Governments
Federal Aid and Other Aid Available to Cuban and Haitian Entrants
Fort Allen [File No. 1]
Fort Allen [File No. 2]
Fort Allen [File No. 3]
Fort Chaffee
Fort Chaffee, Arkansas
Fort McCoy
Fort McCoy, Wisconsin
Forthcoming Tours Working Sheets
Geographical Dispersal
Graphics

HR 1092 - An Act (Cuban/Haitian)
Haitians
Health Programs
Health Services Fact Sheet
Heritage Publication
Holmes, Christian R. - Director
Holmes, Christian R. - Questions and Answers

Container 22

Homosexuals [File No. 1]
Homosexuals [File No. 2]
Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)
Immigration Law
Index Categories for Questions and Answers [1]
Index Categories for Questions and Answers [2]
Index Categories for Questions and Answers [3]
Indiantown Gap
Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania [Empty]
International Law [Empty]
Interoffice Memos, 1/5/81-1/30/81
Job Corps
Katz, Jane Letters
Krome - North Florida
Krome - North Florida and Krome South Florida
Krome - South Florida
Lane, Paul - Chronological File, 9/17/80-9/19/80
Law [File No. 1]
Law [File No. 2]
Law Enforcement Empty
Legislation
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service - Church World Services and Miscellaneous
Media - Florida
Memos to and from Arthur Brill, 9/19/80-2/17/81
Memos, International - Public Affairs Office, Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/25/80-1/30/81
Mental Health [File No. 1]
Mental Health [File No. 2]
Miami File [No.1]
Miami File [No.2]
Miami File [No.3]

Container 23

Miami Herald, 9/14/80-10/9/80
Miami Herald, 10/10/80-12/30/80
Military Service [Empty]
Miller, Margo [Empty]
Morbidity and Mortality Report, 6/6/80

News from Miami - Larry Mahoney
Newspaper
Newspaper Articles - Miscellaneous, 7/31/80-11/7/80
Notes of Public Affairs Staff Meetings and Public Affairs Memos, 1/81
Office Chronology - Federal Expenditures, 4/20/80-9/24/80
Office Memos, 9/18/80-11/20/80
Office Press Clips, 5/24/80-5/31/80
Office Press Clips, 6/1/80-6/10/80
Office Press Clips, 6/11/80-6/14/80
Office Press Clips, 6/16/80-6/24/80
Office Press Clips, 6/25/80-6/30/80
Office Press Clips, 7/1/80-7/19/80

Container 24

Office Press Clips, 7/20/80-7/30/80
Office Press Clips, 8/1/80-8/15/80
Office Press Clips, 8/16/80-8/31/80
Office Press Clips, 9/3/80-9/15/80
Office Press Clips, 9/16/80-9/29/80
Palmieri, Ambassador Victor H.
Palmieri, Victor H. - Statement, 6/20/80
Peruvian Embassy - Cuba
Phone Lists
Population Statistics [Empty]
Post June 19, 1980 - Arrivals
Potential Contact Stations
Press Guidance
Press Clippings, 8/3/80-8/9/80

Container 25

Press Clippings, 8/15/80-8/31/80
Press Clippings, 9/2/80-9/10/80
Press Clippings, 9/11/80-9/26/80
Press Clippings, 9/27/80-10/14/80
Press Clippings, 10/15/80-11/3/80
Press Clippings, 11/4/80-11/18/80

Container 26

Press Clippings, 11/19/80-11/28/80
Press Clippings, 12/1/80-12/5/80
Press Clippings, 1/2/81-1/23/81
Press Clippings, 1/26/81-2/12/81
Press Clippings, 2/13/81-2/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/2/81-5/1/81

Container 27

Press Clippings, 5/4/81-5/20/81
Press Releases, 6/30/80-12/10/80
Press Releases, 9/17/80-11/13/80
Press Releases Deleted Material
Public Affairs Fact Sheet, 11/3/80
Public Affairs - State Department
Queries Handled
Questions and Answers - Uncleared
Questions and Answers - Mariel Closure
Questions and Answers for President Carter
Radio Talk Shows
Recent Additional Questions and Answers, 10/10/80
Reception Centers [File No. 1]
Reception Centers [File No. 2]
Refugee Act of 1980 [File No. 1]
Refugee Act of 1980 [File No. 2]
Refugee Act of 1980 - PL 96 - 212, 3/17/80
Refugee Assistance Act
Refugee Related Articles from Regional Offices
Refugees by Country 1946-1976 and 1977-1978, 1946 - 1976
Registration and Resettlements by Years, 1961-1980
Repatriates [Empty]
Repatriation and Deportation
Resettlement by VOLAGS (Voluntary Agencies)
Revised Cuban Arrivals and Resettlements
Security
Social Security Folders

Container 28

Source Materials - Public Affairs Office (PAO)
Sponsorship [File No. 1]
Sponsorship [File No. 2]
Sponsorship Breakdowns
Sponsorship Campaign Itineraries
Sponsorship Photographs
State Breakdown
Task Force Chronology, 5/13/79-9/28/80
Telecopier Log - Outgoing [Empty]
Telefax - Sent [Empty]
Television
Tent City
Tent City - Miami
Third Country Position
Time Sheets - Arthur P. Brill
Total Federal Expenditures by Department, 4/20/80-9/24/80
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 1]

Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 2]
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 3]
Unaccompanied Minors, Males [1]
Unaccompanied Minors, Males [2]
United States Government Policy
Video - Phone Stations
Visuals
VOLAGS
Weekly Plan of Action, 9/22/80-9/26/80
White Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files

Container 29

Executive Summaries, 10/27/80-11/25/80
Executive Summaries, 11/25/80-1/5/81
Executive Summaries, 1/7/81-2/18/81
Executive Summaries, 2/18/81-3/13/81
Executive Summaries, 3/16/81-4/22/81
Executive Summaries, 4/23/81-5/12/81
Executive Summaries, 5/12/81-5/27/81

Container 30

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Executive Summaries, 6/21/80-7/14/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 7/15/80-8/13/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 8/14/80-9/30/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 10/1/80-10/29/80
Memoranda, 7/17/80-4/10/81
Monthly Entrant Reports, 11/6/80-4/16/80
Monthly Entrant Reports, 5/17/81-7/81
Report of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/1/80 Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Camp Files

Container 31

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 6/3/80-6/16/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 6/17/80-6/30/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 7/1/80-7/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 7/17/80-7/30/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/2/80-8/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/16/80-8/17/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/18/80-8/23/80

Container 32

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/24/80-8/31/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/2/80-9/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/16/80-9/24/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/25/80-9/30/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 10/1/80-10/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 10/27/80
After Action Report, 6/14/80
After Action Report, 5/11/80-10/15/80 Volume 1
After Action Report - Logistics and Special Activities Coordinator
After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 5/16/75-1/6/76 [1]

Container 33

After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 5/16/75-1/6/76 [2]
After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 7/24/75-12/15/75
After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [1]
After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [2]
After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [3]
After Action Report - Today
After Action Reports, 6/10/80-10/31/80 [1]
After Action Reports, 6/10/80-10/31/80 [2]
[Asylum Applications]

Container 34

Briefing Book - Senate Appropriations Subcommittee [1]
Briefing Book - Senate Appropriations Subcommittee [2]
Budget
Budget Tables - Cuban/Haitian Task Force Activities
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - General
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Legislative Action
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Legislative Action
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Staff Meeting Minutes
Civil Affairs Participation in Operation New Arrivals
Consolidation [File No. 1]
Consolidation [File No. 2] [1]

Container 35

Consolidation File [No. 2] [2]
Consolidation Plans Public Health Services (PHS) and Human and Health Services (HHS)
Cuba as Told by Cuban Refugees
Cuban Refugees
FEMA Mission Statements [1]
FEMA Mission Statements [2]
Fascell - Stone
Finance - Scott L. Hardman

Financial Management
Fort Chaffee Consolidation
Fort Chaffee Photographs
Fort Indiantown Gap Photographs
Fort McCoy Photographs
Funding

Container 36

General Service Administration (GSA) [1]
GSA [2]
HHS Briefing Memo, 10/11/80
Haitians - 2nd File [1]
Haitians - 2nd File [2]
Haitians - 2nd File [3]
Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM)
Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) [1]
INS [2]
INS Policy
La Libertad - Fort Indiantown Gap, 6/11/80-10/10/80

Container 37

La Vida Nueva - Fort Chaffee, 8/20/80-9/27/80
Legal Issues
Legislation - Appropriation/Authorization
Letters to Washington Task Force
Ligsukia, Sylvester - Reading File (Chron), 7/28/80-3/6/81
Mayors - Certificates
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 3/8/80-6/2/80
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 8/4/80-8/25/80 [1]
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 8/4/80-8/25/80 [2]
Mental Health [1]

Container 38

Mental Health [2]
Mission Descriptions
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume I
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/76-12/20/75 Volume II
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume III
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume IV
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume V
News Clippings, 5/31/80-6/11/80
News Clippings, 6/11/80-6/26/80

Container 39

News Clippings, 6/27/80-7/19/80
News Clippings, 7/20/80-7/31/80

News Clippings, 8/1/80-8/8/80
News Clippings, 8/8/80-8/19/80
News Clippings, 8/20/80-9/1/80
News Clippings, 9/1/80-9/7/80
News Clippings, 9/8/80-9/18/80
News Clippings, 9/20/80-10/17/80

Container 40

Operation New Arrivals, 5/20/75-11/25/75 [1]
Operation New Arrivals, 5/20/75-11/25/75 [2]
Policy Folder
Press Releases, 5/17/80-10/15/80
Puerto Rico
Puerto Rico and Fort Chaffee Maps and Photographs
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [1]
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [2]
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [3]

Container 41

Reference Documents
Riot Pictures
Special Projects
Tampa Projects - Scott L. Hindman
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [1]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [2]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [3]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [4]
Undersecretary Briefing Material
[Unidentified Photographs]
Vision Quest Proposal
Voluntary Agencies (VOLAGS)

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files

Container 42

Miami Newspapers, 8/1/80-8/25/80
New York Times, 8/3/80-8/29/80
Other Newspapers, 8/1/80-8/13/80
Other Newspapers, 8/14/80-8/28/80
Press Clippings, 8/6/80-8/26/80
Press Clippings, 8/27/80-9/4/80
Press Clippings, 9/6/80-9/18/80
Press Clippings, 10/1/80-10/16/80

Container 43

Press Clippings, 10/16/80-10/28/80
Press Clippings, 10/28/80-11/18/80
Press Clippings, 11/12/80-11/23/80
Press Clippings, 11/25/80-12/11/80
Press Clippings, 12/11/80-1/19/81
Press Clippings, 1/21/81-2/17/81

Container 44

Press Clippings, 2/18/81-2/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/2/81-3/19/81
Press Clippings, 3/23/81-4/3/81
Press Clippings, 4/6/81-4/28/81
Press Clippings, 4/29/81-5/19/81
Washington Post, 7/25/80-7/31/80
Washington Post, 8/8/80-8/17/80

Container 45

Oversize material from container 40

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files

Container 46

Chron, External, Early April, May, June, July 1980
Chron, External, 6/80
Chron, External, 7/80
Chron, External, 8/1-19/80
Chron, External, 8/20-31/80
Chron, External, 9/1-15/ 80
Chron, External, 9/16-22/80
Chron, External, 9/23-30/80
Chron, External, 10/1-8/80

Container 47

Chron - External, 10/9-20/80
Chron - External, 10/21-31/80
Chron - External, 11/1-11/80
Chron - External, 12/12-13/80
Chron - External, 11/14-30/80
Chron - External, 12 /80
Chron - External, 1/81
Chron - External, 2/81

Container 48

Chron - External, 3/1-17/81

Chron - External, 3 18-31/81
Chron - External, 4/81
Chron - External, 5/81
Chron - External, 6/81
Chron - Internal, 6/80
Chron - Internal, 7/80
Chron - Internal, 8/1-10/80
Chron - Internal, 8/11-21/80
Chron - Internal, 8/22-31/80

Container 49

Chron - Internal, 9/ 1-9/80
Chron - Internal, 9/10-15/80
Chron - Internal, 10/80
Chron - Internal, 11/80
Chron - Internal, 12/80
Chron - Internal, 1/81
Chron - Internal, 2/81
Chron - Internal, 3/81
Chron - Internal, 4/81
Chron - Internal, 5/81
Chron - Internal, 6/81

Container 50

Cleared Letters, 7/80
Cleared Letters, 8/1-13/80
Cleared Letters, 8/14-31/80
Cleared Letters, 9/1-14/80
Cleared Letters, 9/15-19/80
Cleared Letters, 9/20-30/80
Cleared Letters, 10/1-5/80
Cleared Letters, 10/6-8/80

Container 51

Cleared Letters, 10/9-16/80
Cleared Letters, 10/17-21/80
Cleared Letters, 10/22-26/80
Cleared Letters, 10/27-29/80
Cleared Letters, 10/30-31/80
Cleared Letters, 11/1-6/80
Cleared Letters, 11/7-15/80

Container 52

Cleared Letters, 11/15-30/80
Cleared Letters, 12/1-7/80
Cleared Letters, 12/8-16/80
Cleared Letters, 12/17-31/80

Cleared Letters, 1/1-8/80
Cleared Letters, 1/ 9-18/80
Cleared Letters, 1/19-31/80

Container 53

Cleared Letters, 2/1-10/81
Cleared Letters, 2/11-28/81
Cleared Letters, 3/1-23/81
Cleared Letters, 3/24-31/81
Cleared Letters, 4/4-21/81
Cleared Letters, 4/22-30/81
Cleared Letters, 5/81

Container 54

Cleared Letters, 6/1-12/81
Cleared Letters, 6/13-30/81
Congressional - Cleared, 7/11/80 - 8/27/80
Congressional - Correspondence, 6/80 - 9/80
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, A
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Bafalis-Bevill
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Biaggi-Brodhead
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Broomfield-Byrd

Container 55

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Camacho-Chiles
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Chisholm-Culver
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, E
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Farrar-Fish
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Fisher-Fuqua
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, G
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Hammerschmidt

Container 56

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Hayakawa-Hutton
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, I
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, J
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, K
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, L
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, M
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, N
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, O
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Patman - Pollan
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Proxmire - Pursell
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Q
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, R
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Sabines - Spiro

Container 57

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Stanton - Stone
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Stratton - Swift
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, T
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, U
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, V
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, W
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, X (Empty)
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Y
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Z
Freedom of Information Act, 1/80-6/81
Gonzalez, Sylvia - Chron, 6/80 - 8/80
No Reply Necessary, 4/16/80 - 8/10/80
No Reply Necessary, 8/11/80 - 2/23/81

Container 58

Outgoing, 9/1-11/80
Outgoing, 9/12-30/80
Outgoing, 10/1-22/80
Outgoing, 10/23-31/80
Outgoing, 11/80
Outgoing, 12/80
Outgoing, 1/81
Outgoing, 2/81
Outgoing, 3/81

Container 59

Outgoing, 4/81
Outgoing, 5/81
Public Inquiry, 7/30/80 - 8/10/1980
Public Inquiry, 8/11/80 - 8/18/80
Public Inquiry, 8/19/80 - 8/28/80
Public Inquiry, 8/29/80 - 1/30/81
Sponsorship
State Department Correspondence - Information Only, 4/15/80 - 7/16/80
State Department Correspondence - Information Only, 7/17/80 - 8/4/80

Container 60

State Department Correspondence - Information Only, 8/5/80 - 8/29/80
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 8/80
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 9/80
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 10/80

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files

A Report to the Cuban-Haitian Task Force, 11/01/80
After Action Report of Legal Advisor
After Action Report of Resettlement Activities
Congressional Drafting Instructions
Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program - Operating Manual
Defense Department Joint Security Plan
Executive Secretary Miscellaneous Instructions, Summer 1980

Container 61

Format (Memo on new format for Memos)
Handled by Phone, 6/6/80 - 5/1/81
Information on Cuban Refugees from the Peruvian Embassy
Proposals, 8/19/80-10/7/80
Proposals, 10/8/80-10/14/80
Proposals, 10/15/80-3/23/81
Public Affairs Releases, 7/28/80-9/5/80
Public Affairs Releases, 9/6/80-1/29/81

Container 62

Secretary Handbook
State Department, Public Affairs
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/80 [1]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/80 [2]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/80 [3]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/80 [4]
Voluntary Agencies (VOLAG)
VOLAG Report - Church World Service (CWS)
VOLAG Report - International Rescue Committee (IRC)
VOLAG Report - Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)
VOLAG Report - U.S. Catholic Conference (USCCI)
VOLAG Report - World Relief Refugee Services (WRRS)
Weekly Activities Report, 12/3/80
Weekly Activities Report, 12/5/80

Container 63

Weekly Activities Report, 12/18/80
Weekly Activities Report, 1/2/80
Weekly Activities Report, 2/5/80
Weekly Activities Report, 2/13/80
Weekly Activities Report, 5/7/80
Weekly Activities Report, 5/14/81
Weekly Activities Report, 5/15/81
Weekly Activities Report, 5/21/81

[Return to series list](#)

[Return to collection summary](#)

Last modified: March 25, 2014

Record Group 220: Cuban-Haitian Task Force: A Guide to Its Records at the Jimmy Carter Library

Collection Summary

Creator: RG 220: Department of Health and Human Services. Cuban-Haitian Task Force

Title: Cuban-Haitian Task Force

Dates: 7/15/80-6/1/81

Quantity: 27 linear feet, 7 linear inches, 63 containers

Identification:

Accession Number: 80-1.b

National Archives Identifier: 547

Scope and Content:

This collection consists of correspondence, memos, briefing books, press clippings, reports, telephone logs, and report summaries. The material relates to the Task Force that was created to manage and coordinate the processing and resettlement of Cuban-Haitians entrants in the United States. Topics covered in this collection include immigration and refugees.

Creator Information: Department of Health and Human Services. Cuban-Haitian Task Force.

The Cuban-Haitian Task Force was formally established on July 15, 1980, at the direction of the White House and disbanded on June 1, 1981. On April 20, 1980, Fidel Castro suddenly announced that the port of Mariel, Cuba would be open for all Cubans wishing to leave the country. This came after one month of orderly emigrations from Cuba to Costa Rica. The opening of Mariel shortly resulted in a full-fledged boatlift by Cuban-Americans bringing individuals and groups of immigrants to the Florida. By May 4th, more than 1,000 boats had undertaken the voyage and some 13,000 Cuban immigrants were already in the U.S. Thousands of Cubans continued to arrive each day, placing a major burden on Florida and other states and on the Federal agencies involved in the processing, care and resettlement of the new arrivals. Coupled with the influx of Cubans, several thousand Haitians also arrived in the U.S. during that time.

This burden caused the Administration to declare the situation an emergency on May 6, 1980, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began to coordinate the federal effort to respond to the crisis. By July, more than 120,000 Cubans and Haitians had arrived in the U.S. and it was apparent that a comprehensive assistance program was needed to meet their immediate and long-term needs. On July 15, 1980, the Administration established the Cuban-Haitian Task Force to manage the processing and resettlement of Cuban and Haitian arrivals. The Director of the Task Force reported

directly to the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs (Ambassador Victor H. Palmieri) and the Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs (Eugene Eidenberg). The Task Force was transferred to the Office of the Under Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Resources on November 15, 1980.

The Task Force provided overall policy management direction to the effort to receive, process, and resettle entrants. It worked closely with Federal agencies to coordinate federal activities related to serving the entrants. The general management structure of the Task Force delegated many day-to-day operational responsibilities to its field operation centers. Oversight by headquarters assured consistency of policy and overall supervision. The Washington office was staffed to provide quick reaction teams to any camp in case of emergencies. There was also a major regional office in Miami, as well four resettlement centers and other processing and holding centers in southern Florida. The Task Force also devoted substantial financial and personnel resources to working with the national volunteer agencies to effect rapid resettlement of the entrants throughout the U.S. and working with organizations to minimize the negative impact of the Cuban-Haitian boatlift.

Restrictions:

Restrictions on Access: These papers contain documents restricted in accordance with applicable executive order(s), which governs National Security policies, applicable statutes/agency restrictions, and material which has been closed in accordance with the donor's deed of gift.

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Related Material:

Related materials in this repository: Domestic Policy Staff; Records of the Office of the Assistant to the President for Hispanic Affairs

Index Terms:

Limited to major topics under each category

Persons: Ambassador Victor H. Palmieri, Eugene Eidenberg

Organizations: Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Subjects: Immigration, Refugees

Places: Cuba, Haiti, Miami, Florida; Fort Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania; Fort McCoy, Wisconsin; Camp Santiago, Puerto Rico; Fort Chaffee, Arkansas

Types of Material: Memos, briefing books, clippings, reports, phone logs, correspondence, summaries

Administrative Information:

Preferred citation: [Type of Document], [Names of Sender and Recipient or Title of Document], [Date], [Collection Title], [Series Title], [Folder Title], [Box Number], Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Acquisition information: These historical materials were received under provisions of the instrument of gift that Jimmy Carter signed January 31, 1981.

Processing information: The first series of the collection was opened in 1987. Subsequent series in the collection were opened on March 3, 1998. The open dates are indicated in the series descriptions.

System of Arrangement:

The records of the Department of Health and Human Services - Cuban-Haitian Task Force are divided into eight series:

Series Title	National Archives Identifier
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files	136805
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files	136909
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files	137026
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files	137211
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Files	137227
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files	137338
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files	137360
Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files	137492

Detailed Description of the Collection

[Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 1-10. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memos, correspondence, reports, phone logs, executive summaries and transcripts of Congressional hearings. The series includes material on the Fort Chaffee refugee program, and the Miami operations. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

[Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 10-19. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memos, correspondence, minutes of task force meetings, briefing books, informational materials and executive summaries. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files

Scope and Content: Containers 19-28. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memos, reports, press releases, newspaper clippings, staff profiles, executive summaries and correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files

Scope and Content: Containers 29-30. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memos, reports and executive summaries. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Camp Files

Scope and Content: Containers 31-41. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of memos, reports, correspondence, wire copies, news clippings and photographs. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files

Scope and Content: Containers 42-44. This series was opened in on March 3, 1998. This series consists of related press clippings from various newspapers. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files

Scope and Content: Containers 46-60. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of external and internal chronological letters, cleared letters, Congressional mail in name order, copies of outgoing mail, public inquiries, sponsorship information, and State Department correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files

Scope and Content: Containers 60-63. This series was opened on March 3, 1998. This series consists of reports for and about the Cuban-Haitian Task Force, various instructions for administrative purposes, and weekly activity reports of voluntary agencies. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

[Return to series list](#)

Container List

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Subject Files

Container 1

Ada Merritt School
Agriculture, Department of
Bohen Papers
Budget
Camp Consolidation [1]
Camp Consolidation [2]
Camp Consolidation [3]
Camps - Eglin
Camps - Indiantown Gap
Contingency
Cuban Refugee Task Force, Phone Call Log
Cuban Situation - Daily Reports, Miami
Cuban Situation - Reports to the White House

Container 2

Data Processing
Defense, Department of [1]
Defense, Department of [2]
Education, Department of
Executive Summary, 7/8/80-7/19/80
Executive Summary, 7/20/80-7/31/80
Executive Summary, 8/1/80-8/15/80
Executive Summary, 8/16/80-8/27/80
Executive Summary, 9/80

Container 3

Executive Summary, 10/80
Executive Summary, 11/80
Executive Summary, 12/80
Executive Summary, 1/81
Executive Summary, 2/81
Executive Summary, 3/81
Executive Summary, 4/81
Executive Summary, 5/81
Fact - Statement Sheet
Fascell - Stone

Container 4

Fort Chaffee [1]
Fort Chaffee [2]
Fort Chaffee #2

Fort McCoy [1]
Fort McCoy [2]
Haitians
Health
Health and Human Services, Department of
Hearing Transcript and Briefing Books [1]

Container 5

Hearing Transcript and Briefing Books [2]
International Affairs
Justice, Department of [1]
Justice, Department of [2]
Krome North
Krome South [1]
Krome South [2]
Law Enforcement
Legal Admissions
Legal Status
Legislation - Current [1]
Legislation - Current [2]
Legislation - Pending

Container 6

Merger
Miami Operations [1]
Miami Operations [2]
New Entrant Processing Center (New Sites)
North Hudson County, New Jersey
Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
Options Paper
Planning
Policy Papers
Post Arrivals
Presidential Determinations

Container 7

Presidential Interagency Task Force (IATF) [1]
Presidential Interagency Task Force (IATF) [2]
Processing
Program Eligibility
Public Affairs
Public Health Service
Red Cross
Reference Notebook [1]
Reference Notebook [2]
Reference Notebook [3]

Container 8

Refugee Program, State
Report of the Cuban-Haitian Task Force (Draft), 11/1/80
Reports to the Secretary of Health and Human Services
Research
Resettlement [1]
Resettlement [2]
Returnees
Security
State Department
State Plans [1]

Container 9

State Plans [2]
State Plans [3]
Talladega [Federal Correctional Institute]
Tent City
Transition [1]
Transition [2]
Unaccompanied Minors [1]
Unaccompanied Minors [2]
Unaccompanied Minors [3]
Unaccompanied Minors [4]

Container 10

Unaccompanied Minors [5]
U.S. Catholic Conference
VOLAGS (Voluntary Agencies) [1]
VOLAGS [2]
Weekly Plan of Action
White House [1]
White House [2]

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Director's Files

[Administration's Policy on Cubans and Haitians]
Anniversary
[Background]
Benefits
Bohen, F.M. - Chronological File, 11/21/80-12/9/80
Boilerplate - Facts

Container 11

Briefing Materials, Senate Appropriations, 3/6/81 [1]
Briefing Materials, Senate Appropriations, 3/6/81 [2]
Budget - Legislation
Camp Consolidation - Press
Camp Consolidation - SLH [Scott L. Hardman]
Camps - SLH [Scott L. Hardman]
Congressional
Consolidation [File No. 1]
Consolidation [File No. 2]
Consolidation - Interagency
Cuban Community
Cuban/Haitian (C/H) Background
Cuban/Haitian Task Force (CHTF), FEMA Interagency Meeting Reports
CHTF - Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG) - After Action Report

Container 12

CHTF - Cuban and Haitian Influxes
CHTF - Material
CHTF - Notebook [1]
CHTF - Notebook [2]
CHTF - Office of Public Affairs Data
Direct Sponsorship Numbers
Education
Education in Centers
Executive Summary, 7/80

Container 13

Executive Summary, 8/80
Executive Summary, 9/2/80-9/30/80
Executive Summary, 10/1/80-10/30/80
Executive Summary, 11/3/80-12/31/80
Executive Summary, 1/2/81-1/30/81
Executive Summary, 2/2/81-3/31/81
Executive Summary, 4/1/81-5/29/81

Container 14

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
FEMA - Mission Assignments
Forbush, Wilford J. - Chronological File, 12/29/80-3/26/81
Fort Allen
Fort Chaffee
Fort McCoy
Funding - Budget, Federal Assistance
Haiti
Haitians [File No. 1]

Haitians [File No. 2]
Haitians [File No. 3]
Health
Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) - Department of Refugee Plan
Indiantown Gap
Immigration and Naturalization Service Procedures
Interagency Task Force

Container 15

Kramer Report
Legislation
Legislation - Cuban/Haitian Entrant Status
Legislation Background
List of Files
Local/State Problems
Management Tracking System [File No. 1]
Management Tracking System [File No. 2]
Mariel II
Memoranda for the Record, 8/16/80
Memoranda to the President, 8/80
Memos to Scott Hardman - Special Assistant to Cuban/Haitian Task Force Director, 7/12/80-8/3/80
Mental Problems
Miami
Miami Coordinating Council
Miami Press
Minor Suit
Miscellaneous Informative Materials [1]
Miscellaneous Informative Materials [2]
Palmieri, Victor H.
Plan of Action, 8/18/80-8/25/80
Post - June 19, [1980] Options Papers

Container 16

Press Clippings, 5/29/80-8/18/80
Press Clippings, 1/19/81-3/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/31/81-4/13/1981
Prisoners
Reading File
Reading File - M. Hogan - (Correspondence)
Reading Material

Container 17

[Reading Material Notebook] [1]
[Reading Material Notebook] [2]
[Reading Material Notebook] [3]

[Reading Material Notebook] [4]
[Reading Material Notebook] [5]
Reading [Materials]
Refugee Education Assistance Act
Refugee Services
Report of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/1/80
Report to Congress, 4/15/80

Container 18

Reports, 10/80-11/80
Reports of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force
Resettlement
Resettlement and Placement Grants
September 1980 Action Plan
Sites [File No. 1]
Sites [File No. 2]
South Florida
Staffing Briefing, 7/18/80
Task Force Issues Notebook [1]
Task Force Issues Notebook [2]

Container 19

Third Country Resettlement
Transition Briefing Book
Transition (Transfer to Health and Human Services)
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 1]
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 2]
Unaccompanied Minors - Issues
Weekly Reports
White House
White Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Public Affairs Files

Accessibility and Press Policy
Addresses
Attitudes of Americans
Background - Briefing Materials
Background Information - Cities for Awareness Tour
Benefits
Biographical Information
Briefs Question, Answers, etc.
Calling Cards
Camp Allen - Puerto Rico

Container 20

Carter, President Jimmy
Carter, President Jimmy - Statement, 5/14/80
Character Profile
Census Information
Chronology, 5/13/79-9/28/79
Consolidation [File No. 1]
Consolidation [File No. 2]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [1]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [2]
Correspondence Selected for Standard Language Response [3]
Criminals and Mental Health Problems
Cuban Entrant Data Report
Cuban/Haitian Fact Sheet, 6/20/80
Cuban/Haitian Task Force
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Miscellaneous
Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Miami
Cumulative Statistics, 8/8/80-12/8/80
Data Report
Disturbances [Empty]

Container 21

Education
Efforts to Return Cuban Entrants to Cuba
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida
Eidenberg, Eugene - White House
Entrants vs. Refugees
Events
Executive Summary, 9/17/80-9/29/80
Executive Summary, 10/1/80-10/31/80
Executive Summary, 11/3/80-11/28/80
Executive Summary, 12/30/80-1/30/81
Fascell - Stone - Amendment
Federal Aid to State and Local Governments
Federal Aid and Other Aid Available to Cuban and Haitian Entrants
Fort Allen [File No. 1]
Fort Allen [File No. 2]
Fort Allen [File No. 3]
Fort Chaffee
Fort Chaffee, Arkansas
Fort McCoy
Fort McCoy, Wisconsin
Forthcoming Tours Working Sheets
Geographical Dispersal
Graphics

HR 1092 - An Act (Cuban/Haitian)
Haitians
Health Programs
Health Services Fact Sheet
Heritage Publication
Holmes, Christian R. - Director
Holmes, Christian R. - Questions and Answers

Container 22

Homosexuals [File No. 1]
Homosexuals [File No. 2]
Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)
Immigration Law
Index Categories for Questions and Answers (Q's and A's) [1]
Index Categories for (Q's and A's) [2]
Index Categories for (Q's and A's) [3]
Indiantown Gap
Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania [Empty]
International Law [Empty]
Interoffice Memos [1/5/81-1/30/81]
Job Corps
Katz, Jane Letters
Krome North
Krome North and Krome South
Krome South
Krome South [Empty]
Lane, Paul - Chronological File, 9/17/80-9/19/80
Law [File No. 1]
Law [File No. 2]
Law Enforcement Empty
Legislation
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service - Church World Services and Miscellaneous
Media - Florida
Memos to and from Arthur Brill, 9/19/80-2/17/81
Memos, International - Public Affairs Office, Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/25/80-1/30/81
Mental Health [File No. 1]
Mental Health [File No. 2]
Miami File [No.1]
Miami File [No.2]
Miami File [No.3]

Container 23

Miami Herald, 9/14/80-10/9/80
Miami Herald, 10/10/80-12/30/80
Military Service [Empty]
Miller, Margo [Empty]

Morbidity and Mortality Report, 6/6/80
News from Miami - Larry Mahoney
Newspaper
Newspaper Articles, 7/31/80-11/7/80
Notes of Public Affairs Staff Meetings and Public Affairs Memos, 1/81
Office Chronology - Federal Expenditures, 4/20/80-9/24/80
Office Memos, 9/18/80-11/20/80
Office Press Clips, 5/24/80-5/31/80
Office Press Clips, 6/1/80-6/10/80
Office Press Clips, 6/11/80-6/14/80
Office Press Clips, 6/16/80-6/24/80
Office Press Clips, 6/25/80-6/30/80
Office Press Clips, 7/1/80-7/19/80

Container 24

Office Press Clips, 7/20/80-7/30/80
Office Press Clips, 8/1/80-8/15/80
Office Press Clips, 8/16/80-8/31/80
Office Press Clips, 9/3/80-9/15/80
Office Press Clips, 9/16/80-9/29/80
Palmieri, Ambassador Victor H.
Palmieri, Victor H. - Statement, 6/20/80
Peruvian Embassy - Cuba
Phone Lists
Population Statistics Empty
Post June 19, 1980 - Arrivals
Potential Contact Stations
Press Guidance
Press Clippings, 8/3/80-8/9/80

Container 25

Press Clippings, 8/15/80-8/31/80
Press Clippings, 9/2/80-9/10/80
Press Clippings, 9/11/80-9/26/80
Press Clippings, 9/27/80-10/14/80
Press Clippings, 10/15/80-11/3/80
Press Clippings, 11/4/80-11/18/80

Container 26

Press Clippings, 11/19/80-11/28/80
Press Clippings, 12/1/80-12/5/80
Press Clippings, 1/2/81-1/23/81
Press Clippings, 1/26/81-2/12/81
Press Clippings, 2/13/81-2/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/2/81-5/1/81

Container 27

Press Clippings, 5/4/81-5/20/81
Press Releases, 6/30/80-12/10/80
Press Releases, 9/17/80-11/13/80
Press Releases Deleted Material
Public Affairs Fact Sheet, 11/3/80
Public Affairs - State Department
Queries Handled
Questions and Answers - Uncleared
Questions and Answers - Mariel Closure
Questions and Answers for President Carter
Radio Talk Shows
Recent Additional Questions and Answers, 10/10/80
Reception Centers [File No. 1]
Reception Centers [File No. 2]
Refugee Act of 1980 [File No. 1]
Refugee Act of 1980 [File No. 2]
Refugee Act of 1980 (PL 96 - 212, 3/17/80)
Refugee Assistance Act
Refugee Related Articles from Regional Offices
Refugees by Country 1946-1976 and 1977-1978, 1946 - 1976
Registration and Resettlements by Years, 1961-1980
Repatriates [Empty]
Repatriation and Deportation
Resettlement by VOLAGS (Voluntary Agencies)
Revised Cuban Arrivals and Resettlements
Security
Social Security Folders

Container 28

Source Materials - Public Affairs Office (PAO)
Sponsorship [File No. 1]
Sponsorship [File No. 2]
Sponsorship Breakdowns
Sponsorship Campaign Itineraries
Sponsorship Photographs
State Breakdown
Task Force Chronology, 5/13/79-9/28/80
Telecopier Log - Outgoing [Empty]
Telefax - Sent [Empty]
Television
Tent City
Tent City - Miami
Third Country Position
Time Sheets - Arthur P. Brill
Total Federal Expenditures by Department, 4/20/80-9/24/80

Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 1]
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 2]
Unaccompanied Minors [File No. 3]
Unaccompanied Minors, Males [1]
Unaccompanied Minors, Males [2]
United States Government Policy
Video - Phone Stations
Visuals
VOLAGS
Weekly Plan of Action, 9/22/80-9/26/80
White Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Data Summaries Files

Container 29

Executive Summaries, 10/27/80-11/25/80
Executive Summaries, 11/25/80-1/5/81
Executive Summaries, 1/7/81-2/18/81
Executive Summaries, 2/18/81-3/13/81
Executive Summaries, 3/16/81-4/22/81
Executive Summaries, 4/23/81-5/12/81
Executive Summaries, 5/12/81-5/27/81

Container 30

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Executive Summaries, 6/21/80-7/14/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 7/15/80-8/13/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 8/14/80-9/30/80
FEMA Executive Summaries, 10/1/80-10/29/80
Memos, 7/17/80-4/10/81
Monthly Entrant Reports, 11/6/80-4/16/80
Monthly Entrant Reports, 5/17/81-7/81
Report of the Cuban/Haitian Task Force, 11/1/80 Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Fort Indiantown Gap Camp Files

Container 31

Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI) Wire Copies, 6/3/80-6/16/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 6/17/80-6/30/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 7/1/80-7/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 7/17/80-7/30/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/2/80-8/15/80
AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/16/80-8/17/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/18/80-8/23/80

Container 32

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 8/24/80-8/31/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/2/80-9/15/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/16/80-9/24/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 9/25/80-9/30/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 10/1/80-10/15/80

AP and UPI Wire Copies, 10/27/80

After Action Report, 6/14/80

After Action Report, 5/11/80-10/15/80 Volume 1

After Action Report - Logistics and Special Activities Coordinator

After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 5/16/75-1/6/76 [1]

Container 33

After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 5/16/75-1/6/76 [2]

After Action Report - Operation New Arrivals, 7/24/75-12/15/75

After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [1]

After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [2]

After Action Report - Public Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, 7/25/80-10/15/80 [3]

After Action Report - Today

After Action Reports, 6/10/80-10/31/80 [1]

After Action Reports, 6/10/80-10/31/80 [2]

[Asylum Applications]

Container 34

Briefing Book - Senate Appropriations Subcommittee [1]

Briefing Book - Senate Appropriations Subcommittee [2]

Budget

Budget Tables - Cuban/Haitian Task Force Activities

Cuban/Haitian Task Force - General

Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Legislative Action

Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Legislative Action

Cuban/Haitian Task Force - Staff Meeting Minutes

Civil Affairs Participation in Operation New Arrivals

Consolidation [File No. 1]

Consolidation [File No. 2] [1]

Container 35

Consolidation File [No. 2] [2]

Consolidation Plans Public Health Services (PHS) and Human and Health Services (HHS)

Cuba as Told by Cuban Refugees

Cuban Refugees

FEMA Mission Statements [1]

FEMA Mission Statements [2]

Fascell - Stone

Finance - Scott L. Hardman (SLH)
Financial Management
Fort Chaffee Consolidation
Fort Chaffee Photographs
Fort Indiantown Gap Photographs
Fort McCoy Photographs
Funding

Container 36

General Services Administration (GSA) [1]
GSA [2]
HHS Briefing Memo, 10/11/80
Haitians - 2nd File [1]
Haitians - 2nd File [2]
Haitians - 2nd File [3]
Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM)
INS [1]
INS [2]
INS Policy
La Libertad - Fort Indiantown Gap, 6/11/80-10/10/80

Container 37

La Vida Nueva - Fort Chaffee, 8/20/80-9/27/80
Legal Issues
Legislation - Appropriation/Authorization
Letters to Washington Task Force
Ligsukia, Sylvester - Reading File (Chron), 7/28/80-3/6/81
Mayors - Certificates
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 3/8/80-6/2/80
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 8/4/80-8/25/80 [1]
Memoranda - Congressional and Public Affairs Material, 8/4/80-8/25/80 [2]
Mental Health [1]

Container 38

Mental Health [2]
Mission Descriptions
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume I
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/76-12/20/75 Volume II
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume III
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume IV
New Arrivals after Action Report - Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, 4/28/75-12/20/75 Volume V
News Clippings, 5/31/80-6/11/80
News Clippings, 6/11/80-6/26/80

Container 39

News Clippings, 6/27/80-7/19/80

News Clippings, 7/20/80-7/31/80
News Clippings, 8/1/80-8/8/80
News Clippings, 8/8/80-8/19/80
News Clippings, 8/20/80-9/1/80
News Clippings, 9/1/80-9/7/80
News Clippings, 9/8/80-9/18/80
News Clippings, 9/20/80-10/17/80

Container 40

Operation New Arrivals, 5/20/75-11/25/75 [1]
Operation New Arrivals, 5/20/75-11/25/75 [2]
Policy Folder
Press Releases, 5/17/80-10/15/80
Puerto Rico
Puerto Rico and Fort Chaffee Maps and Photographs
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [1]
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [2]
Red Cross, American - Final Report, 10/17/80 [3]

Container 41

Reference Documents
Riot Pictures
Special Projects
Tampa Projects - Scott L. Hindman
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [1]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [2]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [3]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees Report [5]
Undersecretary Briefing Material
[Unidentified Photographs]
Vision Quest Proposal
VOLAGS [Voluntary Agencies]

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Clippings Files

Container 42

Miami Newspapers, 8/1/80-8/25/80
New York Times, 8/3/80-8/29/80
Other Newspapers, 8/1/80-8/13/80
Other Newspapers, 8/14/80-8/28/80
Press Clippings, 8/6/80-8/26/80
Press Clippings, 8/27/80-9/4/80
Press Clippings, 9/6/80-9/18/80
Press Clippings, 10/1/80-10/16/80

Container 43

Press Clippings, 10/16/80-10/28/80
Press Clippings, 10/28/80-11/18/80
Press Clippings, 11/12/80-11/23/80
Press Clippings, 11/25/80-12/11/80
Press Clippings, 12/11/80-1/19/81
Press Clippings, 1/21/81-2/17/81

Container 44

Press Clippings, 2/18/81-2/27/81
Press Clippings, 3/2/81-3/19/81
Press Clippings, 3/23/81-4/3/81
Press Clippings, 4/6/81-4/28/81
Press Clippings, 4/29/81-5/19/81
Washington Post, 7/25/80-7/31/80
Washington Post, 8/8/80-8/17/80

Container 45

Oversize material from container 40

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Correspondence Files**Container 46**

Chron, External, Early 4-7/80
Chron, External, 6/80
Chron, External, 7/80
Chron, External, 8/1-19/80
Chron, External 8/20-31/80
Chron, External, 9/1-15/80
Chron, External, 9/16-22/80
Chron, External, 9/23-30/80
Chron, External, 10/1-8/80

Container 47

Chron, External, 10/9-20/80
Chron, External, 10/21-31/80
Chron, External, 11/1-11/80
Chron, External, 11/12-13/80
Chron, External, 11/14-30/80
Chron, External, 12/80
Chron, External, 1/81
Chron, External, 2/81

Container 48

Chron, External, 3/1-17/81
Chron, External, 3/18-31/81
Chron, External, 4/81
Chron, External, 5/81
Chron, External, 6/81
Chron, Internal, 6/80
Chron, Internal, 7/80
Chron, Internal, 8/1-10/80
Chron, Internal, 8/11-21/80
Chron, Internal, 8/22-31/80

Container 49

Chron, Internal, 9/1-9/80
Chron, Internal, 9/10-15/80
Chron, Internal, 10/80
Chron, Internal, 11/80
Chron, Internal, 12/80
Chron, Internal, 1/81
Chron, Internal, 2/81
Chron, Internal, 3/81
Chron, Internal, 4/81
Chron, Internal, 5/81
Chron, Internal, 6/81

Container 50

Cleared Letters, 7/80
Cleared Letters, 8/1-13/80
Cleared Letters, 8/14-31/80
Cleared Letters, 9/1-14/80
Cleared Letters, 9/15-19/80
Cleared Letters, 9/20-30/80
Cleared Letters, 10/1-5/80
Cleared Letters, 10/6-8/80

Container 51

Cleared Letters, 10/9-16/80
Cleared Letters, 10/17-21/80
Cleared Letters, 10/22-26/80
Cleared Letters, 10/27-29/80
Cleared Letters, 10/30-31/80
Cleared Letters, 11/1-6/80
Cleared Letters, 11/7-15/80

Container 52

Cleared Letters, 11/15-30/80

Cleared Letters, 12/1-7/80
Cleared Letters, 12/8-16/80
Cleared Letters, 12/17-31/80
Cleared Letters, 1/1-8/80
Cleared Letters, 1/9-18/80
Cleared Letters, 1/19-31/80

Container 53

Cleared Letters, 2/1-10/81
Cleared Letters, 2/11-28/81
Cleared Letters, 3/1-23/81
Cleared Letters, 3/24-31/81
Cleared Letters, 4/4-21/81
Cleared Letters, 4/22-30/81
Cleared Letters, 5/81

Container 54

Cleared Letters, 6/1-12/81
Cleared Letters, 6/13-30/81
Congressional, Cleared, 7/11/1980 - 8/27/1980
Congressional Correspondence, 6/1980 - 9/1980
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, A
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Bafalis - Bevill
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Biaggi - Brodhead
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Broomfield - Byrd

Container 55

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Camacho - Chiles
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Chisholm - Culver
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, E
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Farrar - Fish
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Fisher - Fuqua
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, G
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Hammerschmidt

Container 56

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Hayakawa - Hutton
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, I
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, J
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, K
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, L
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, M
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, N
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, O
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Patman - Pollan
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Proxmire - Pursell

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Q
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, R
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Sabines - Spiro

Container 57

Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Stanton - Stone
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Stratton - Swift
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, T
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, U
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, V
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, W
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, X (Empty)
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Y
Congressional Mail in Alphabetical Order, Z
Freedom of Information Act, 1/1980 - 6/1981
Gonzalez, Sylvia - Chron, 6/1980 - 8/1980
No Reply Necessary, 4/16/1980 - 8/10/1980
No Reply Necessary, 8/11/1980 - 2/23/1981

Container 58

Outgoing, 9/1-11/80
Outgoing, 9/12-30/80
Outgoing, 10/1-22/80
Outgoing, 10/23-31/80
Outgoing, 11/80
Outgoing, 12/80
Outgoing, 1/81
Outgoing, 2/81
Outgoing, 3/81

Container 59

Outgoing, 4/81
Outgoing, 5/81
Public Inquiry, 7/30/1980 - 8/10/1980
Public Inquiry, 8/11/1980 - 8/18/1980
Public Inquiry, 8/19/1980 - 8/28/1980
Public Inquiry, 8/29/1980 - 1/30/1981
Sponsorship
State Department Correspondence - Info only, 4/15/1980 - 7/16/1980
State Department Correspondence - Info only, 7/17/1980 - 8/4/1980

Container 60

State Department Correspondence - Info Only, 8/5/1980 - 8/29/1980
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 8/80
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 9/80
State Department - White House Come Back Copies, 10/80 Paper

[Return to series list](#)

Cuban-Haitian Task Force Administrative Files

A Report to the Cuban-Haitian Task Force, 11/01/1980
After Action Report of Legal Advisor
After Action Report of Resettlement Activities
Congressional Drafting Instructions
Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program - Operating Manual
Defense Department Joint Security Plan
Executive Secretary Miscellaneous Instructions, Summer 1980

Container 61

Format (Memo on new format for Memos)
Handled by Phone, 6/6/1980 - 5/1/1981
(Information on Cuban Refugees from the Peruvian Embassy)
Proposals, 8/19/1980-10/7/1980
Proposals, 10/8/1980-10/14/1980
Proposals, 10/15/1980-3/23/1981
Public Affairs Releases, 7/28/1980-9/5/1980
Public Affairs Releases, 9/6/1980-1/29/1981

Container 62

Secretary Handbook
State Department, Public Affairs
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/1980 [1]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/1980 [2]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/1980 [3]
Teaching Oral English to Cuban Refugees, Report, 10/24/1980 [4]
Voluntary Agencies (VOLAG)
(VOLAG) Report - Church World Service (CWS)
(VOLAG) Report - International Rescue Committee (IRC)
(VOLAG) Report - Lutheran Immigration and Refugees Service (LIRS)
(VOLAG) Report - U.S. Catholic Conference (USCCI)
(VOLAG) Report - World Relief Refugee Services (WRRS)
Weekly Activities Report, 12/3/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 12/5/1980

Container 63

Weekly Activities Report, 12/18/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 1/2/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 2/5/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 2/13/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 5/7/1980
Weekly Activities Report, 5/14/1981

Weekly Activities Report, 5/15/1981
Weekly Activities Report, 5/21/1981

[Return to series list](#)

[Return to collection summary](#)

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