

14 Detained In Bid to Bar Cuban Exodus

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Body

In a demonstration that it is serious about discouraging unauthorized immigration from Cuba, the Federal Government has **detained 14** men it suspects of smuggling aliens or hijacking boats from Cuba.

The **detentions** came as 371 Cubans landed in Florida over the weekend, the largest three-day total since the Mariel boatlift in 1980, said a Coast Guard spokesman, Chief Warrant Officer Dan Waldschmidt. During the 1980 **exodus**, about 125,000 Cubans came here in a five-month period.

The men, nine of whom were being held in the Monroe County Jail, near Key West, and five at the Krome Avenue Federal immigration center in Dade County, have not been charged with any crimes. But a Justice Department spokeswoman in Washington, Ana Cobian, said that officials were reviewing four separate incidents involving the men and that charges could be forthcoming.

"In keeping with our emergency immigration plan, we're being proactive in discouraging people from a mass **exodus**," Ms. Cobian said.

Last week, Attorney General Janet Reno said the United States would not tolerate a replay of the Mariel **exodus** and would intensify efforts to intercept and prosecute people engaged in the smuggling of **Cuban** nationals.

Departure Blocked

Despite this warning, efforts to leave Cuba have intensified. In Mariel, hundreds of Cubans boarded a Maltese-registered oil tanker on Sunday in hopes of sailing to the United States. But the **Cuban** authorities blocked the ship, and news reports quoting state television in Havana said the 500 or so would-be emigrants left the vessel peacefully today.

Tension between the United States and Cuba has been heightened by the hijacking of four **Cuban** government vessels in two weeks. On Aug. 5, President Fidel Castro of Cuba said the United States was encouraging piracy, and he warned that his government might stop blocking Cubans who tried to leave the island.

That caused concern in Florida that another Mariel boatlift, which state officials said had strained Florida's social services and cost millions of dollars, was in the offing.

Mr. Castro told reporters in Havana on Thursday that a **Cuban** naval officer was killed last week by a 19-year-old military mechanic who had commandeered a government vessel. The mechanic, Leonel Macias Gonzalez, is

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among the nine men being held in the Monroe County jail. Mr. Castro demanded his prosecution by the United States or his return to Cuba.

The others facing Federal charges include three men, two of them United States residents, who, the authorities say, brought 20 Cubans to the Florida Keys last week; five men accused by the crew of a fishing boat of seizing the vessel in Cuba at gunpoint last weekend and taking it to Florida, and five men who came to Florida aboard a commuter ferry hijacked in Havana on Aug. 3.

The Coast Guard says that since January 5,786 Cubans have arrived in Florida, compared with 3,656 during all last year, and that thus far this month 1,055 have landed.

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