

## **FOREIGN-BORN INMATES BURDEN STATE PRISONS**

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### **Body**

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A growing number of inmates in the state prison system are foreign-born, and a majority of them could be deported to save the state the cost of incarceration, the chairman of the New York State Senate Crime and Correction Committee said yesterday.

The chairman, Senator Christopher J. Mega, Republican of Brooklyn, released a report by the State Department of Correctional Services showing that the number of foreign-born persons entering the state's prisons increased from 350 in 1978 to 838 in 1982, a rise of nearly 140 percent.

By October 1984, the report said, 2,505, or 8 percent, of the state's 32,700 prisoners were born in a foreign country.

Sen Christopher J. Mega, chairman of New York State Senate Crime and Correction Committee, says growing number of inmates in state prison system are foreign-born, and majority of them could be deported to save state cost of incarceration(M)

The committee's counsel, Jeremiah B. McKenna, said that about 1,500 of the foreign-born prisoners were either illegal aliens or subject to deportation because they had committed a felony within five years of immigrating.

However, Verne Jervis, a spokesman for the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service in Washington, said that "deportation involves due process, just like a criminal process does.

"It's not just that we throw them on a plane and fly them out of the country," he said.

In most cases, he said, there are administrative hearings, court challenges and appeals.

'Dramatic Rise'

The sharp increase in foreign-born inmates, the committee report said, "is almost wholly attributable to a dramatic rise in commitments from Caribbean, South and Central American countries."

The number of people imprisoned from those countries increased from 239 in 1978 to 692 in 1982, the report stated.

Mr. Mega emphasized the sharp rise in the number of Cubans, which the report said increased during the four-year period from 36 to 159. Most of the Cubans, he said, came to this country as part of the boat lift of 125,000 Cubans let go by the government of Premier Fidel Castro in 1980 from the port of Mariel.

Estimates of the number of criminals among those refugees have varied from 2,500 to 40,000, and officials of the administration of President Jimmy Carter have acknowledged the influx of refugees was badly mishandled.

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## Accord on Repatriation

In December, negotiators for the United **States** and Cuba reached an agreement to repatriate to Cuba 2,746 Mariel refugees classified as criminals or mental patients.

The **State** Legislature is considering a bill to permit the early parole of prisoners for the purpose of deportation. Mr. Mega said that he believes the deportation of 1,500 **inmates** or their transfer to Federal custody would open enough cells for the equivalent of three **prisons** and would save \$25 million annually.

Last year, the Federal Government paid New York \$900,000 for the upkeep of prisoners who came here from Mariel. But Mr. Mega said he was not interested in reimbursement.

Mr. Mega's committee is to conduct a hearing tomorrow on "the impact of crimes committed by aliens" that will focus particularly on crime caused by the so-called Marielitos.

Among those testifying will be two Yonkers women who were raped and shot last year by two Mariel refugees. One of the women was blinded. in the attack.

Mr. McKenna pointed out that the man convicted of the rapes, Almondo Morano, had been arrested in 1982 and had pleaded guilty to possession of cocaine and three handguns. He was sentenced to the time already served.

Before Mr. Morano was released, Mr. McKenna said, the New York office of the I.N.S. was notified about the possibility of deporting him. The New York office, Mr. McKenna said, said it did not have jurisdiction because Mr. Morano's was a Florida case.

Mr. Jervis said he was not familiar with the Morano case.

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