

## **U.S. TO RESUME HAITIAN DEPORTATIONS**

San Jose Mercury News (California)

November 17, 1994 Thursday STOCK FINAL EDITION

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**Section:** FRONT; Pg. 19A

**Length:** 313 words

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**Dateline:** Miami

### **Body**

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After a year's moratorium, **U.S.** immigration authorities have quietly decided to **resume deporting** Haitians who entered the country illegally, saying the restoration of democracy to Haiti now makes it safe for them to go home.

In Florida, 1,358 Haitians face **deportation**.

The decision could have far broader impact if it signals a belief by **U.S.** officials that political violence in Haiti has decreased to the point where the country is generally safe.

That view could make it harder for 14,800 Haitians who have applied for asylum in Florida to demonstrate a "well-founded fear of persecution," the legal standard for obtaining refuge in the **United States**.

Some immigration judges and INS trial attorneys already are taking a tougher stance when reviewing asylum claims, asserted Cheryl Little, an attorney for Florida Rural Legal Services in Miami. She cited several recent cases in which judges turned down asylum claims by noting the return of democratically elected **Haitian** President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service suspended the **deportation** of **Haitian** aliens in October of last year, citing turmoil in their homeland. During the past year, the moratorium was extended when the international embargo halted all flights to Haiti.

INS officials decided to lift the moratorium after the **U.S.** military occupation that restored President Aristide and the subsequent **resumption** of flights, said agency spokesman Lemar Wooley.

The agency made no public announcement of the change. Word got out after a **Haitian** immigrant was detained at the Krome Detention Center near Miami this week for **deportation** after he visited INS offices in Miami for a routine inquiry.

The INS said the decision affects those who have final **deportation** orders from an immigration judge -- which means they have exhausted all legal appeals to stay.

### **Classification**

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**Language:** ENGLISH

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION (93%); POLITICAL ASYLUM (90%); JUDGES (88%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); US FEDERAL

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GOVERNMENT (78%); DEMOCRACIES (78%); POLITICAL DETAINEES (78%); TYPES OF GOVERNMENT (78%); APPEALS (77%); LAWYERS (74%); EMBARGOES & SANCTIONS (73%); POLITICAL VIOLENCE (56%)

**Organization:** FLORIDA RURAL LEGAL SERVICES INC (56%); FLORIDA RURAL LEGAL SERVICES INC (56%)

**Industry:** LAWYERS (74%)

**Geographic:** MIAMI, FL, USA (93%); FLORIDA, USA (93%); HAITI (98%); **UNITED STATES** (93%)

**Load-Date:** October 25, 2002

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