Florida Congressional Delegation

2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RECEIVED
OCT 22 1991
Congressman William Lehman
Washington, DC 20515

Charles E. Bennett
Dean
Third District
(202) 225-2501

Senator Bob Graham
Senator Connie Mack

Congressman Dante B. Fascell
19th District
Congressman Sam M. Gibbons
7th District
Congressman C. W. Bill Young
8th District
Congressman William Lehman
17th District
Congressman Andy Ireland
10th District
Congressman Earl Hutto
1st District
Congressman Bill McCollum
5th District
Congressman E. Clay Shaw, Jr.
15th District
Congressman Michael Bilirakis
9th District
Congressman Tom Lewis
12th District
Congressman Lawrence Smith
16th District
Congressman Porter J. Goss
13th District
Congressman Craig T. James
4th District
Congressman Harry A. Johnston
14th District
Congressman Clifford B. Stearns
6th District
Congressman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
18th District
Congressman Jim Bacchus
11th District
Congressman Pete Peterson
2nd District

October 21, 1991

The Honorable William Lehman
U.S. House of Representatives
2347 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bill:

Following our meeting last week with State Representative Willie Logan concerning Haiti immigration, I wrote to the Department of State, as shown by the enclosed. I will let you know when I receive a reply.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Charles E. Bennett

CEB:gkl
Enclosure

CHARLES E. BENNETT
MEMBER
3D DISTRICT, FLORIDA

VICE CHAIRMAN OF
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN OF SEAPOWER SUBCOMMITTEE
MEMBER OF RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES
COMMITTEE

DEAN OF FLORIDA CONGRESSIONAL
DELEGATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

JAMES S. PEARTHREE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
M. ADAM HOLLINGSWORTH
LAURIE M. CODY
LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANTS

SHARON H. SIEGEL
BARBARA L. FETHEROLF
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ETHEL M. SCHISSELL
A. LYNN MILLER
PATRICIA McDONOUGH
GLENDA K. LAWING
COURTENAY McCORMICK
WASHINGTON OFFICE STAFF

J.H. (JAY) MOONEY
CHIEF DISTRICT AIDE
BRENDA C. DONALDSON
DONNA M. WELDON
JACKSONVILLE OFFICE STAFF

October 18, 1991

Chief, Congressional Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Sir:

I have received the enclosed memorandum from Mr. Willie Logan of the Florida House of Representatives. He and others came to visit the Florida Congressional delegation and presented the enclosed October 16 paper. Although no specific votes were taken on the issues when the Delegation met, I believe the Florida Delegation is of the firm opinion that these matters require immediate attention and should be acted upon as promptly as possible to the extent they can be properly addressed. I have no particular committee assignment or personal knowledge that permits me to approve or disapprove the details that need to be addressed.

As Dean of the Florida Delegation, I have been instructed by the Delegation to tale these matters up with you for your recommendations. Some members, I presume, would agree with everything in the October 16 memorandum. This may not be true of all the members of the Delegation, however, as there was a feeling on the part of some members that the United States is not in the position to encourage the flight of people from Haiti with the offer of permanent asylum in this country especially since particularly it could be a forerunner for an equally serious problem which may occur in the future with regard to Cuba. Maybe something can be worked out where temporary residency can be offered?

One particularly difficult aspect to this mass influx is that so much of the financial burden inevitably falls on the State of Florida and local communities in Florida when these problems primarily are a national matter rather than a local matter.

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE 202-225-2501

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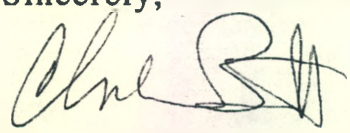
JACKSONVILLE OFFICE:
314 PALMETTO STREET
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32202
TELEPHONE 904-791-2587

Chief, Congressional Affairs
Department of State
October 18, 1991

Could the State Department address this paper of October 16 by furnishing a draft of legislation for introduction and hearings before the House Foreign Affairs Committee? Do you have any other suggestions?

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,



Charles E. Bennett, Dean
Florida Delegation

CEB;ss
Enclosure

cc: Honorable Dante Fascell, Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee

CHARLES E. BENNETT
MEMBER
3D DISTRICT, FLORIDA

VICE CHAIRMAN OF
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN OF SEAPOWER SUBCOMMITTEE
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J.H. (JAY) MOONEY
CHIEF DISTRICT AIDE
BRENDA C. DONALDSON
DONNA M. WELDON
JACKSONVILLE OFFICE STAFF

October 18, 1991

Honorable Willie Logan
Representative, 108th District
14251 N.W. 41st Avenue
P. O. Box 1036
Opa-Locka, Florida 33054

Dear Mr. Logan:

Thank you for your communication just received and for your visiting with the Florida Delegation about the Haiti matter. On behalf of the Florida Delegation, I have immediately contacted the State Department and will contact other agencies as the need may seem to require. I will be back in touch with you.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Charles E. Bennett

CEB;ss

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Florida House of Representatives

Willie Logan
Representative, 108th District

Committees

Corrections, Chairman
Finance & Taxation
Reapportionment
Regulatory Reform
Rules & Calendar

To: Honorable Charles E. Bennett, Dean of Delegation
Florida Congressional Delegation

From: State Rep. Willie Logan

Re: Recommendation

Dear Congressman Bennett, as requested attached is a copy of the recommendation we would like you and the delegation to pursue. I await your reply.

AGREED TO BY: Representative Willie Logan
Representative Corrine Brown
Represenatative Daryl Jones
Mayor Xavier Suarez
Commissioner Larry Hawkins
Commissioner Alex Penelas
Reverend Victor Curry
Dr. Larry Capp
Johnnie McMillian
Rolande Dorancy
Cheryl Little

Reply to:
☐ 14251 N.W. 41st Avenue
P.O. Box 1036
Opa-Locka, FL 33054
(305) 681-0009

☐ 404 House Office Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-13
(904) 488-0766

DELEGATION RECOMMENDATION
OCTOBER 16, 1991

In response to the political upheaval in Haiti, a delegation of Dade County elected and community leaders travelled to Washington, D.C. today to urge the Bush Administration and members of the Florida Congressional delegation to take immediate action toward resolving the crisis. Our recommendations are as follows:

I. Reestablishing the Democratic Government in Haiti

* The U.S. must continue to call for the immediate reinstatement of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his Cabinet of Ministers as the only legitimate constitutional authority in Haiti.

* We commend the U.S. for freezing the assets of the illegal government in Haiti and urge that they now immediately freeze the assets of those individulas who supported the coup.

* We commend the U.S. for suspending economic and military aid to Haiti and urge that they impose a strict economic embargo, including stopping the contraband trade between Haiti and Miami. It is our feeling that the Haitian people look to the U.S. to fully enforce the embargo, even if it means they will suffer in the short run.

* We urge the U.S. to send only humanitarian aid, such as medical supplies, to Haiti. This aid should be channelled through the International Red Cross or other reputable human rights organizations.

* The U.S. should fully support the call for the immediate establishment of an OAS peacekeeping force in Haiti and a long-range planning commission to ensure political and economic stability.

II. Temporary Protected Status & Suspension of Interdiction

* The U.S. should immediately grant temporary protected status (TPS) to Haitians in the United States, a protection granted to numerous other foreign nationals including Salvadorans, Kuwaitis, Lebanese, Liberians, and Somalians. Under INA § 244A, the Attorney General is authorized to grant TPS when a country is experiencing civil strife or there are other extraordinary and temporary condiditons that prevent its nationals from returning in safety. Many Haitians in the U.S. face imminent deportation and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has not significantly changed its treatment of Haitian immigration cases since the military coup of September 30, 1991. Haitians continue to be ordered deported.

* The U.S. should suspend deportation and grant safe haven in the United States to Haitian asylum seekers who arrive in the United States after the effective date for TPS. This status should remain in effect until the political situation in Haiti stabilizes and it is safe for them to return.

* The U.S. should immediately cease the practice of interdicting and returning Haitians who leave their country by sea. Instead the U.S. should rescue them and bring them to safe haven in the United States. While we recognize that refugees coming to our shores place a burden on our limited resources, the Refugee Act of 1980 mandates the U.S. to protect individuals whose lives or freedom in their homeland is threatened. Legal and moral principles demand that the interdiction program be suspended now.

III. Reforms at Krome Detention Center

* We recommend that the appropriate Congressional committee hold open hearings on the issue of conditions at INS detention facilities, especially Krome. We further recommend that an independent oversight committee be established locally to review charges of inhumane treatment at Krome whenever they arise. We continue to have serious concerns about abusive conditions at Krome. Fifteen months after an FBI investigation, the Justice Department has indicated only that it could take another five years to reach any conclusion. In the meantime District Director Richard Smith has said he cannot change anything until the Justice Department investigation is formally completed.

* The United States should end the arbitrary and indefinite detention of refugees at Krome. The use of detention to deter legitimate asylum seekers is a violation of international law. While Haitians remain indefinitely detained for months and sometimes years, others are released within days after arrival. A more fair and humane parole policy should be established at Krome to permit the regular release of refugees (other than those who pose genuine security risks or threats of abscounding) to family or volunteer agencies.

* There is much support for these recommendations. Amnesty International has pressed for TPS and suspension of interdiction. The OAS issued an emergency request to Secretary of State Baker urging the U.S. government for "humanitarian reasons" to "suspend its policies of interdiction of Haitian nationals who are attempting to seek asylum in the United States and are being sent back to Haiti, because of the danger to their lives, until the situation in Haiti has been normalized." Numerous groups in South Florida have joined the call for Aristide's immediate return to Haiti and for TPS and suspension of interdiction. So too have Cuban human rights organizations from the United States, Cuba, South America, and Europe.

* The Florida Congressional delegation should take immediate action to introduce resolutions and legislation to address the issues listed above.