



5190/7410

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR BOB GRAHAM

December 12, 1984

Honorable William French Smith
Attorney General
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

According to a report in the December 11 New York Times, the United States and Cuban governments have moved much closer to agreement on returning to Cuba those criminals who came to the United States in the Mariel boatlift.

Our most recent count indicates that 669 such Mariel criminals are currently in the custody of the Florida Department of Corrections. Another group, estimated at no less than 200, is lodged in local jails throughout Florida.

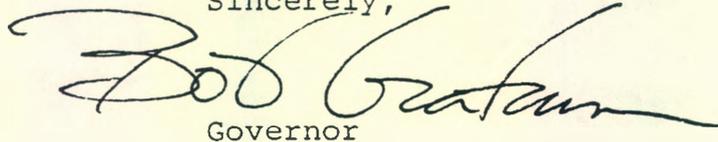
As I indicated in my telegram to President Reagan on July 18, 1984, it is of the highest concern to the State of Florida and Florida local governments that any arrangement with the Cuban government include these Florida prisoners.

If we are on the verge of returning Mariel criminals housed in Federal facilities, we must also return state and local prisoners. I hereby extend fully the cooperation of the State of Florida in returning these felons to their Cuban prison cells as promptly as possible. Due to their criminal background, these prisoners are not eligible for permanent resident status, citizenship or any adjustment of immigration status.

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I ask for your assurance that these Florida inmates will be included in any return of refugee prisoners to Cuba, and that the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Executive Office of Immigration Review will expedite exclusionary hearings for these inmates. Originally, we were told that these hearings would begin in late summer 1984. Subsequently it was indicated that hearings would begin in October 1984. After no hearings were held, a third beginning date of the first week of December was promised. All of these commitments have come and gone and now we are told that hearings will not begin until mid-January. It is a matter of the utmost urgency that these hearings proceed. It would be a travesty of justice if these inmates were left behind in Florida prison cells because of administrative delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob Graham".

Governor

BG/rmr

cc: Alan Nelson, Commissioner
Immigration and Naturalization
Service