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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.

DID THE USCG USE THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 1980 MARIEL
BOATLIFT FROM CUBA IN DEALING WITH THE HAITIAN MIGRATION
CRISIS OF 1991-2?

by

Rob Parker

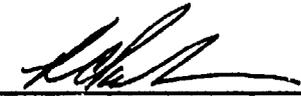
LCDR, U.S. Coast Guard

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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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93-10409



5018

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS			
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A; APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.			
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable) C	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION			
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) NAVAL WAR COLLEGE NEWPORT, R.I. 02841		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER			
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS			
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) DID THE USCG USE THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 1980 MARJEL BOATLIFT FROM CUBA IN DEALING WITH THE HAITIAN MIGRATION CRISIS OF 1991-92? (U)					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) LCDR Robert C. Parker, USCG					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT FINAL	13b. TIME COVERED FROM TO	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 22 Feb 1993	15. PAGE COUNT 49		
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.					
17. COSATI CODES		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) Mass Migration Alien Migration Interdiction Operations (AMIO) U.S. Coast Guard			
FIELD	GROUP				SUB-GROUP
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) During the Mariel Cuban Boatlift in 1980, we essentially had a government sponsored evacuation of Cuban refugees, assuming them all to be fleeing an oppressive Communist regime. Eleven years later, our government vacillated in policy guidance, making a challenging humanitarian crisis intervention mission much more difficult to execute. Operation ABLE MANNER continues to deal with this problem today. Clarity and consistency of policy guidance must be defined in order to deal effectively with future crises involving political and/or economic refugees. Clear and consistent policy in these situations will likely be absent. The USCG must develop written doctrine based on national security interests, and concept plans based on lessons learned and future intelligence, which will guide us in our planning and crisis response.					
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL CHAIRMAN, OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) 841-3414	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL C		

ABSTRACT

During the Mariel Cuban boatlift in 1980, we essentially had a government sponsored evacuation of Cuban refugees, assuming them all to be fleeing an oppressive Communist regime. Eleven years later, our government vacillated in policy guidance, making a challenging humanitarian crisis intervention mission much more difficult to execute. Operation ABLE MANNER continues to deal with this problem today. Clarity and consistency of policy guidance must be defined in order to deal effectively with future crises involving political and/or economic refugees. Clear and consistent policy in these volatile situations will likely be absent. The USCG must develop written doctrine based on national security interests and concept plans based on lessons learned and future intelligence, which will guide us in our planning and crisis response.

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PREFACE

I choose this topic out of personal interest. For the month immediately after the September 1991 coup in Haiti, and during January and February 1992, I was the Executive Officer in USCGC CAMPBELL (WMEC 909). We were heavily involved in AMIO along with almost every cutter and aircrew on the East Coast. I found we are very good at adapting to rapidly changing situations, but wondered if we could do better if we learned more lessons above the tactical level.

I initially planned to review the policy and guidance of INS and the Navy as well as the Coast Guard, but found it would push the scope of this paper well beyond its limits. I therefore limited agency policy and guidance to the U.S. Coast Guard.

During my research, I made many phone calls to people who surely had more pressing things to occupy their time than my questions. Though there were many, I specifically thank LCDR Peter Boynton at State Department and LCDR Bryon Ing on COMLANTAREA staff for their assistance, insight and patience.

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DID THE USCG USE THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 1980 MARIEL
BOATLIFT FROM CUBA IN DEALING WITH THE HAITIAN MIGRATION CRISIS
OF 1991-2?

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Problem. During its first one hundred years as a nation, the United States encouraged immigration. The federal government enacted no laws affecting the right of aliens to enter the country. The first federal laws to exclude aliens in 1875 were "qualitative" restrictions to bar convicts and prostitutes.¹ The situation in recent history is quite different. A 1981 GAO study was unable to get a handle on the number of illegal aliens in the United States--a matter that remains unresolved. Their best guess was 5 to 6 million.² This inability to control our border has serious implications for national security.

A National Dilemma. Mass illegal immigration threatens national security. Border control is problematic at best. Add to that the vastness of U.S. coastline and potential landing sites available, and there are unlimited ways to clandestinely land illegal aliens from the sea. When the scenario includes passage across the sea, issues focus on safety of life at sea first, then on the control of our maritime border. Balancing these two issues effectively is particularly difficult.

Alien Migration Interdiction Operations (AMIO). AMIO deals with "boat people" and two inevitable facts. First, and most important, boat people are on the high seas and must be taken safely to a place on land that can receive them. This key

point defines the environment and space and time factors of AMIO. Second, resettlement or asylum for a large group will cause an even greater mass of people to seek the same benefit.

Given the two facts above, it seems logical that we must, as a nation, be prepared to act quickly and decisively in seaborne mass migration situations if we are committed to both saving lives and controlling our borders. This is an onerous task due to the numerous private, state, federal, international, and multinational organizations and interests.

Peacetime Contingency Operations (PCO). AMIO could classify under the title of PCO in the Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) spectrum. U.S. Army Field Manual 100-20 defines LIC as "a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states."³ Although AMIO is usually a law enforcement mission rather than competition among states, its national security implications and dynamics exactly fit those listed as contributing to LIC: change, discontent, poverty, violence, and instability.⁴

PCO applicability to AMIO is not just an academic exercise. Assuming parallels are close enough, the imperatives and planning considerations apply for examining or formulating our own response. The imperatives include political dominance, unity of effort, adaptability, legitimacy, and perseverance. PCO/AMIO parallels create a jump-off point for recommending doctrine for the Coast Guard and creation of Concept Plans (CONPLANS) for handling the many crises ahead.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND ON TWO RECENT CASE HISTORIES

Maríel Boatlift 1980. Maríel gained notoriety in 1962 as the port to which the Soviets brought the missiles that sparked the Cuban Missile Crisis. In 1980, it was the scene of a much different contest between Cuba and the United States. On 31 January 1980, the CIA predicted another large scale Cuban emigration like Camarioca.¹ On 19 April 1980, the Cuban-American "Committee of 75" organized a flotilla of 42 boats and sailed from Miami to bring back refugees.² Internal tension caused Castro to use Maríel as a "relief valve," allowing emigration to the United States of family members, dissidents, and convicts.

Small craft of all types crowded into Maríel harbor; some to pick up relatives, others for financial gain. All were willing to risk prosecution by the U.S. government. Each boat was overloaded with family members as well as convicts and other "undesirables," then sent to sea. The enormity of simply getting these boats to shore without loss of life immediately drove the operations of the Coast Guard cutters and aircraft assigned. Enforcement on the water was deemed out of the question. U.S. Navy resources eventually augmented the force, minimizing potential loss of life. Still, the situation was not stable enough to pursue what would have been a fairly unpopular and rigorous law enforcement effort. The boatlift ended when Cuba unilaterally closed Maríel on 25 September

1980. In December 1980, Castro announced "Mariel has not been resolved; it has simply been suspended."³

A total of 125,000 people transited the route in thousands of boats of all descriptions during the 158 days (110,000 during a 5-week period). The total loss of life was 27 persons.⁴ Estimated total Federal funding for the operation is \$345.7 million. The operation involved 22 major cutters, 42 patrol boats, 43 smaller boats, untold USCG Auxiliary hours and resources, an LHA, 2 LPDs, 2 LSTs, 9 MSOs, and 9,026 hours by 36 helicopters and 33 fixed wing aircraft.

Haitian Interdiction, November 1991 - May 1992. A tenth of the population of Haiti lives in the United States. They are our fifth largest legal immigration group (over 140,000 in the last ten years) and one of our best immigrant populations.⁵

The United States has a bilateral agreement with Haiti that permits us to rescue Haitians at sea who are intending to emigrate to the United States, and to return to Haiti those who lack a basis for asylum. This agreement, reached in 1981, gives the Haitian and U.S. Governments a mutually acceptable way of dealing with the regular flow of Haitians who seek to come to the United States illegally. The agreement gives the United States authority to "take such measures as are necessary to establish the registry, condition and destination of the vessel and the status of those on board the vessel."⁶

Traffickers of illegal aliens in U.S., Haitian or stateless vessels are subject to prosecution and seizure of the vessel. Detained vessels and persons may be returned to a port in Haiti

with prior notification of the Haitian government. Haitians returned who are not traffickers will not be subject to prosecution for illegal departure.

Under "normal" conditions, one USCG cutter is assigned AMIO duties in the Windward Passage. An Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agent and interpreter augment the cutter's crew. Asylum interviews are conducted aboard the cutter, and the very few who qualify are taken to Guantanamo Bay Naval Station (GTMO) or directly to the United States. The remainder are repatriated to Port-au-Prince or Cap Haitien. For over ten years this employment of resources adequately coped with the trickle of refugees.

After the coup the trickle became a torrent. The number of refugees interdicted exceeded the capability to process them on cutters. GTMO was reluctantly opened as a temporary sanctuary for processing, but it too became overwhelmed. Unable to stem the flow, President Bush signed an executive order in May 1992 that remains in effect today and allows the USCG to directly repatriate illegal immigrants to their country of origin. Over 40,000 Haitians have been interdicted since the September 1991 coup (see Table 2).

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL POLICY (OR NOT) AND OBJECTIVES

We have to control our own immigration policy. We've got to do it with compassion. We've got to do it under the law, though. . . So our policy is, I think, the right policy.¹

President George Bush, May 1992.

AMIO--General. The obvious need to control our border is balanced against providing refuge for oppressed people. AMIO supports the national security objectives of the United States to "ensure its security as a free and independent nation, and the protection of its fundamental values, institutions, and people."² National policy on migrant interdiction is formed by public opinion, national and international law, national heritage, health concerns such as infectious diseases, election year politics and other political issues. An obvious place to find policy is our legislation, which should reflect all these factors on a broad scale. Another is in the statements of our leaders.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) is an attempt to regain control of our border and get a handle on the illegal aliens already in the United States. One of the two main sections entitled "Unlawful Transportation of Aliens to the United States" establishes criminal penalties for bringing undocumented aliens into the country, regardless of circumstances. Established to dissuade another boatlift scenario, this will only serve as a deterrent against another Mariel if enforced uniformly.

Policy can be influenced by public opinion or the media. An editorial in one magazine inflamed an already volatile issue (HIV-infected migrants at GTMO) by stating there are 290 Haitians and their dependents,

incarcerated behind barbed wire . . . living out another pathetic chapter in the saga of the Haitian boat people . . . [who] were press-ganged on the high seas by the U.S. Coast Guard and transported to Guantanamo. . . The majority of those hapless souls were forcibly returned to the authoritarian darkness of their homeland.³

This issue no doubt triggers emotions, but cooler heads must prevail in forming policy. The HIV issue is a problem today.

A State Department official recently summed up our refugee policy. "We are, of all the nations of the world, the one which receives for resettlement the largest number of refugees, and which gives the most tax dollars to the support of refugees in camps and as they repatriate around the world, and we will continue to do that."⁴

Mariel, 1980. It was not enough that the rescue of hostages in Iran just failed or the election year media was gathering steam. Mariel was a policy nightmare for the Carter administration. It was not unlike previous waves of émigrés, in that the majority of refugees, with their expectations, individualism, and resistance to conformity caused some social integration and adaptation problems.

Mass migration was further complicated by severe tension and lack of cooperation between the involved governments and Castro's deliberate attempts to use emigration as a political and economic safety valve. Every alternative plan was considered. Using larger passenger ships offshore was scrapped

because of the inherent hazards of transfers at sea. Closing Key West and Southern Florida was physically unmanageable. Placing a USCG Cutter in a Cuban port was dismissed after the violence at the US Interests section in Havana on 2 May. An airlift plan similar to Camarioca was overwhelmed by the sheer numbers. The only option not considered was to "do nothing." Castro was in complete control of the situation and intended to exercise the initiative.⁵

What was markedly different about Mariel was the "mix of refugees with dangerous criminals guilty of serious crimes--and the U.S. was powerless to control their arrival."⁶ 1,761 (1.4%) of the total arrivals were classified by INS as felons, convicted of murder, rape, or burglary. Even today, Cuba will not accept the return of these felons. Another 23,927 former prisoners (19.1% of the total) were classified as nonfelonious criminals and political prisoners. Approximately 2,000 of this group were identified as having been imprisoned for political reasons.⁷

Diplomatic efforts failed. Public opinion came full circle, from open arms to the realization of being duped by Castro. President Carter announced a "five-point plan," consistent with the consensus of 22 nations and seven international organizations. The main points included: air or sea lift of screened and qualified Cubans; a family registration center in Miami to collect names of eligible Cubans; prosecution of boat operators, and warning or encouragement to those in Mariel to return empty; an exclusion

for criminals and a negotiated return to Cuba; and seeking help from the U.N. and OAS as well as other international agencies.⁸

Just when it looked as if nothing could get worse, Haitian boat people began to come ashore in large numbers on Florida's south coast. To avoid the appearance of a racist double standard and to dodge the major fiscal responsibility attendant with refugee designation of over 100,000 refugees, the President created a new temporary parole status called "Cuban-Haitian Entrants (status pending)."

Haitian Operations, 1991-2. When the flood of Haitians began in November 1991, a State Department official said the overriding concern was to save lives. Factors taken into account initially included: U.S. Law and the 1981 agreement obligating the United States to prevent the unimpeded flow of Haitians; a desire to rescue people from vessels that put them at high risk of losing their lives at sea; carefully interviewing and identifying persons with a well-founded fear of persecution, bringing them to the United States; and above all, avoiding any action that would encourage more Haitians to risk their lives by boarding unsafe vessels in the belief that this would ensure them passage to the United States.⁹

New to the mass migration scenario was a Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) chaired by the State Department. Representatives included the Department of Defense (Deputy Assistant Secretary), Justice Department, INS, JCS (one- or two-star), and the Coast Guard (two-star). This body meets anywhere from once a month to twice a day, producing point

papers and decision memos. Downward dissemination of information occurs within agencies. The Haiti PCC has yet to establish enduring sub-working groups.¹⁰

At a higher level, the administration claimed they were endeavoring to address the basic needs of the people, increasing humanitarian assistance programs (over \$47 million), and health care services, which reached nearly 2 million people.¹¹

When the flood of Haitians became too much for INS agents aboard cutters, GTMO was used as a temporary sanctuary. A culminating point had been reached. Ironically, these actions violated the last (and presumably most important) factor considered in setting policy. The magnet effect of GTMO and cutters led to further overwhelming of capabilities, compelling the U.S. government to make the decision to return people directly to Haiti. In the month of May 1992, the Coast Guard interdicted more than 13,000 Haitians. Asylum requests for Haitians are now processed exclusively at the Embassy in Port-au-Prince (one of only four countries where this program exists). Embassy officials meet with those fearing identification by the military or police at a neutral location to determine eligibility. Haitians repatriated were (and still are) told of the embassy program and how to apply (the U.S. embassy is within sight of the pier used for repatriations).¹²

CHAPTER IV

USCG POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

Operating in U.S. waters, in the Exclusive Economic Zone, and on the high seas, the Coast Guard enforces all U.S. laws and treaties and supports national security objectives by . . . interdicting illegal migrants.¹

AMIO--General. AMIO guidance provided by the operational commander (Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District (CCGD7) in Miami) is periodically updated to reflect the latest changes. Published generic guidance on AMIO does not include concept plans for mass migration, other than a remake of the Mariel Boatlift situation where refugees are landed and processed on U.S. shores. Under this plan, there are 3 phases: 1) The Ready Phase, where all units and commands report development of a potential mass migration situation and upgrade preparedness to respond; 2) The Interdiction Phase, where units are deployed to intercept traffickers and potential traffickers of illegal aliens; and 3) The Landing Phase, where a multiagency force process the landed refugees according to U.S. law.² This detailed plan is ideal for a "Mariel look-alike," but concept plans apparently do not exist which would avoid a major rewrite of a non-applicable plan, or an incremental reaction to a volatile situation for which no plan exists. Current debriefs and rewrites tend toward detailed plans made for "what to do the next time this happens."

Mariel, 1980. Policy guidance was unclear in the early days of the Cuban boatlift. Events happened very quickly, and

the Coast Guard found itself reacting in incremental quantum leaps to an unprecedented flow of boat people. The Coast Guard's long-standing and overriding mission of saving lives at sea became the main focus, while shepherding an armada of overloaded boats. Failure to take early enforcement action implicitly encouraged more departures to Cuba. The flood continued, despite a severe thunderstorm that caused multiple loss of life and warnings that carrying illegal aliens could lead to arrest, fines, and seizure of boats. Adding to the apparent lack of intent to enforce the laws by the US was the stationing of cutters along the route from Mariel to Key West, giving a course to steer to the next ship and lighting law enforcement blue lights at night for the boats to steer on in the interest of safety.³ The press also mobilized sympathy for the Cuban boat people, making the idea of enforcement more unpopular, and causing decision makers to consider the possibility of riots in Miami if action was taken. Enforcement clearly took a back seat to the perception of a lifesaving situation.

The stakes in the game were complicated and unnerving for a humanitarian mission. Cuban missile boats and MIG jets often engaged in inconsistent and irrational provocative acts with USCG search planes and cutters, and sank a Bahamian patrol boat towing a Cuban fishing boat in Bahamian waters. This added to the complexity of the search and rescue (SAR) situation. Standard peacetime ROE was maintained and use of force to stop vessels was consistent with USCG law enforcement practices.⁴

The Coast Guard quickly realized it would not have enough resources. Lack of established measures of effectiveness, and the volatile and uncertain nature of the exodus, made accurate assessments of required resources difficult. Availability of assets became the driving factor. A joint plan laid out employment of USN assets. OPORDERS were kept as uncomplicated as possible. The Navy would "own" the area north of 24 degrees North latitude, and the Coast Guard would have the area to the south to take advantage of the less threatening perception of USCG vessels. Commander, Amphibious Group Two served as OTC for USN forces with a Coast Guard Commander assigned as liaison officer. TACON was CCGD7. Coast Guard forces reported to the USCG OSC (O-6 WHEC CO). Separate chains of command worked well, and were probably best, given the very different command styles afforded by disparate staffing levels.⁵

CCGD7 control provided unity of effort (see Figure 1). CCGD7 considered creating a separate staff to handle the crisis. They abandoned the idea in the interest of maintaining continuity and using the staff most familiar with the problems and the area of operations. Interestingly, Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area (COMLANTAREA) removed himself from the chain of command to facilitate better direct communications between Miami and Washington, DC.⁶

Upon announcement of the five-point plan, the role of units on scene became primarily law enforcement vice SAR. With the situation more manageable, a measure of effectiveness (MOE) was needed to determine redeployment:

$$\text{Interdiction Effectiveness (E)} = \frac{S \times 100}{S+N+dM}$$

E = Percent of Effectiveness.

S = Number of Southbound boats interdicted.

N = Number of Northbound arrivals in Florida.

dM = Change in the number of boats in Mariel.⁷

CCGD7 used this MOE for the remainder of the operation.

Haitian Operations, 1991-1992. Like the Mariel Boatlift, these operations grew in quantum leaps. The assigned AMIO cutter waited anxiously after the coup for a flood of boat people, but it did not come until almost six weeks later. It was more obviously a law enforcement situation from the outset because the 1981 bilateral agreement was still in force, and the mission was familiar.

Safety of life at sea was still a pressing issue and became the overriding concern at times in determining employment of air and surface assets. The ROE considerations were strictly a law enforcement concern, using standard Coast Guard use of force policy. There were no provocative acts by other countries' assets. USMC security detachments embarked in cutters during repatriation operations for extra security forces. They were instructed in, and governed by, the Coast Guard use of force policy (usually taught by law enforcement teams from the cutters). Specific guidance on the use of force, and contingency plans while moored in Port-au-Prince disembarking Haitians were issued by CCGD7.⁸ All operating forces were organic to the Coast Guard, and chain of command was familiar to all participants (see Figure 2).

CHAPTER V

LESSONS LEARNED (OR NOT)

Legal Aspects (Legitimacy). Before, during and after mass migration scenarios, legal considerations will be crucial. A dichotomy of legal viewpoints accompanied both recent cases. In any mass migration circumstance, there will be a need to balance the interests of the United States with individual rights. In the case of mass migration by sea, balance also includes the issue of safety of life at sea. Planning for future scenarios will necessarily involve legislation, but requires additional measures. Acts like the IRCA have improved deterrence, but are not a complete solution. After Mariel, the Associate Counsel General for the INS suggested future situations should be treated as a military operation. "It will take an executive order . . . legislation is adequate but not the answer."¹ The Haitian exodus of 1991-2 was treated as a military operation, but dependence on the adequacy of the 1981 bilateral agreement with Haiti delayed issuance of an executive order until resources were overwhelmed.

Organization: Who is In-Charge? During Mariel, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinated all federal efforts. The utility of a single lead agency and the short-fuse funding capability of FEMA were very useful. This lesson was not learned for the Haitian operation. An interagency committee investigated the conditions and procedures at GTMO and found that several agencies were involved in the operations, but there was no designated lead

agency responsible for the operation.² Despite the many resources applied to the interview process in Guantanamo and on the cutters (at great cost to programs stateside where a backlog of 227,800 asylum cases was created)³, the lack of a single federal agency or person in charge at the scene in Guantanamo significantly detracted from unity of effort.

The question of a lead agency was a hot potato, but the Coast Guard ended up in charge of operations on and over water by default as the lead maritime law enforcement agency. CJTF GTMO took the lead for camp operations, but had no direct authority over INS agents who were the critical path in camp throughput.

During Mariel, the White House was directly involved in coordinating the federal response, limiting flexibility and constructive oversight. A recommendation after the fact suggested the Attorney General and Justice Department should take the lead in future operations, because of the law enforcement nature.⁴ This was meant for a Cuban scenario, and seems limited to scenarios where migration reaches U.S. shores.

During recent Haitian AMIO, national policy was developed and directed in an interagency Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) in Washington (See Figures 2 and 3). This mechanism provided more flexibility than control from the White House, and assured consistent policy between agencies. At times this was the only means of handling seemingly trivial matters.⁵ It could not assure day-to-day operations in a uniform and coordinated manner.

Coast Guard lessons learned from Mariel include a recommendation to have a flag officer act as the primary liaison with other agencies in Washington. A more formal organization was also recommended in the event personalities come into play in a non-synergistic way.⁶ The establishment of the Haiti PCC accomplished this. Staff organization for the district commander was reviewed in the "Report on the Cuban Sea Lift of 1980" that recommended augmenting "existing staff components and operational forces within an already established organizational framework rather than create a new, different, and special organization."⁷ This unpublished doctrine remains today.

The Media and Public Opinion. In preparing a 1982 Mass Migration Plan, the U.S. Attorney's Office recognized the importance of public relations in controlling a boatlift situation. Then CAPT J.W. Kime, was the Coast Guard's liaison with the U.S. Attorney's Office. He opined

In a future situation we need to talk to the Spanish language radio stations and newspapers and solicit their cooperation. The momentum of a boatlift can be fueled or dampened by what the Spanish language media says. Appeals for more reason could lessen the emotional response.⁸

The lesson was indelible and applied to more than Cuba. In the recent Haitian crises, several pleas over Haitian and international media seemed to make a difference. These came from the deposed President of Haiti, the U.S. President, and Admiral Kime himself (now Commandant of the Coast Guard).

Initiative. A lesson learned and repeated suggests a reactive versus proactive law enforcement posture will be the

norm at the outset of AMIO. Admiral Kime discussed the implications for another Cuban boatlift, but the lessons can be applied equally for other cases, "We need to stress prevention. We need to attack the problem before the boats get into the water . . . Interdiction on the water by itself won't do it with the resources we have available."⁹ Adequacy of government legal authority to take early preventive law enforcement action was, and will continue to be, problematic.

During Haitian AMIO, it took a while for our national decision makers to realize the key to the problem--if none of the departing migrants were quickly returned, a flood would follow. The single most important factor in meeting national objectives became the rapid repatriation of illegal migrants.¹⁰ The key here is a good marriage of public opinion, a solid legal stance (legitimacy), early enforcement action (initiative and adaptability) and decisive executive decision making (political dominance).

Sustainment. Coast Guard resources are insufficient for a single-agency response to a mass migration situation. Resources will necessarily be drawn from other agencies, and possibly other countries. This must be a national level decision. Each agency or country involved must voice the short and long term costs in terms of mission offset (e.g., counter-narcotics operations, defense operations or SAR), or deferred maintenance and training that will lead to a lessened readiness posture for future operations.

CHAPTER VI

CURRENT SITUATION: OPERATION "ABLE MANNER"

National Policy. The Haiti PCC is still coordinating policy. On May 24, 1992, President Bush signed Executive Order No. 12807--"Interdiction of Illegal Aliens." It had two primary parts: 1) it directed the Secretary of State to work with foreign governments to prevent illegal migration to the United States by sea; and 2) it directed the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating "to issue appropriate instructions to the Coast Guard in order to enforce the suspension of the entry of undocumented aliens by sea and the interdiction of any defined vessel carrying such aliens."¹ If a violation is found, the vessel and its passengers are returned to the country of origin. This may entail removal of the passengers in unsafe vessels and what has become known as "forced repatriation" by the cutters. These actions may only be taken beyond U.S. territorial seas.

The executive order seemed perfectly clear, if not perfectly legal. The Court of Appeals reviewed the order and overturned it. The Supreme Court reviewed and upheld it. It seemed we had a solid and effective national policy at last, but it was also an election year.

On 29 July 1992, presidential candidate Bill Clinton stated:

The Court of Appeals made the right decision in overturning the Bush Administration's cruel policy of returning Haitian refugees to a brutal dictatorship without an asylum hearing. The Bush Administration is wrong to deny Haitian refugees the right to make their case for political asylum. We respect the right of

refugees from other parts of the world to apply for political asylum, and Haitians should not be treated differently.²

Americans are accustomed to dismissing campaign rhetoric, but the Haitians may be forgiven for interpreting this as a sign they would be given more favorable treatment once Mr. Clinton was elected and inaugurated. A massive boat building surge started in Haiti, and transition teams for the administration met with involved agencies to coordinate a response. Shortly before his inauguration, President Clinton went public with the pronouncement that the executive order would stand; at least for the time being.

The campaign rhetoric caused mobilization of resources to combat a flood of refugees that were supposedly hanging on a promise of changed asylum policy. One article reported that virtually none of the boat people returned shortly after the inauguration even knew who Bill Clinton was, while priests and other activists in Port-au-Prince expressed outrage at this seemingly arbitrary change of heart.³

Other inconsistencies in U.S. policy occurred recently concerning HIV infected Haitians and their families still held at GTMO. On 8 February 1993, the Clinton administration announced it would remove infection with the AIDS virus from the list of conditions that restrict migrants from entering the United States.⁴ U.S. law prohibits the entry of persons with incurable communicable diseases, like HIV, unless the Attorney General grants a waiver based on a more rigorous standard of fear of persecution if returned.⁵ On 18 February 1993, the

U.S. Senate joined the battle and voted to uphold the ban on HIV infected migrants.

The Coast Guard Mission. The 24 May 1992 executive order designated the Coast Guard the lead agency for Haitian AMIO. Translation of that policy into a mission statement for the Coast Guard would look something like: Locate migrant vessels, taking migrants safely aboard U.S. government vessels where necessary, and returning them immediately to their country of origin in order to protect safety of life at sea and enforce U.S. laws and treaties.

The mission statement issued by the operational commander (CCGD7), reads like this:

- 1) Detect, monitor and interdict vessels of AMIO interest.
- 2) Detect, monitor and intercept/board vessels of law enforcement interest.
- 3) Maintain custody of interdicted migrants until Statement of No Objection (SNO) for direct repatriation can be obtained from CTG 44.7.
- 4) Maintain alert SAR posture for response to distress situations.
- 5) Remain flexible and adapt to changing policies that may involve procedures concerning the interdiction, interim custody and repatriation of illegal migrants.⁶

Tasking under the current OORDER, including an extremely detailed AMIO Logistics Support Plan, is very well suited to the task at hand and accounts for nearly all lessons learned within the Coast Guard during 1991-2 AMIO. Had a CONPLAN existed for the 1991-2 Haitian AMIO the mass exodus experienced may have been averted.

Other potential threats were disseminated to the operating forces. Shortly before the presidential inauguration, supplemental guidance was drafted and issued to deal with the possibility of an increased exodus from the Dominican Republic

(with whom we have no standing bilateral agreement on interdiction or repatriation of illegal aliens).⁷ This also came on the heels of advice to the fleet about the increasing problem of AMIO involving Chinese (PRC) nationals.⁸

Rules of Engagement (ROE). Standard USCG law enforcement use of force is in effect for forces of ABLE MANNER. The Coast Guard distributed supplemental guidance to list valid assumptions and provisions during operational scenarios and repatriation.⁹ Periodic message tasking publishes changes or updates.

U.S. Navy. U.S. Navy resources were requested and provided to give additional air and surface assets, and hopefully accommodate any surge capability to avoid reopening the processing camp at GTMO. Navy resources are under TACON of a USCG cutter, with no interoperability problems reported to date. There is no "stovepipe" in TACON for assets as experienced during Mariel. USN assets are assisted by Coast Guard AMIO Liaison Teams (CGALTs) consisting of one officer and one petty officer who provide AMIO awareness and details, as well as law enforcement authority and coordination of USCG standard operating procedures. As before, unity of effort for operating forces is provided by CCGD7 direction as the operational commander (see Figure 3). The PCC directs and coordinates multiagency unity of effort.

Resources. Current players in ABLE MANNER are the Coast Guard and Navy. 18 Cutters (1 WHEC, 11 WMEC, and 6 WPB) and 5 surface combatants (1 DD, 2 FFG, 2 LSD) make up the surface

forces. Other USN surface assets on 96-hour recall include 2 LSTs, 2 FFGs, and an oiler. All air assets are currently provided by the USCG (4 HU-25/C-130, 7 HH-65/HH-3). Air assets are forward deployed to GTMO, except one HH-65 based on a cutter and 1 HH-3 deployed from Great Inagua Island, Bahamas. Logistics support to GTMO is by C-130 and Casa-212 from CONUS. USN MPA assets are on standby if needed.¹⁰ Dedication of these resources was a balance of capability and availability.

Sustainment. A forward-based task element at GTMO (CTE 44.7.1) coordinates logistics. This works well for resupply of operating forces, but Coast Guard (and other agency) participation in ABLE MANNER comes at a cost. This is recognized in the message from the Atlantic Area Commander:

Significant impact on Operational programs can be expected during this shift in emphasis. The extent of this influence is dependent upon the duration of the potential crisis. Operational impacts include: a) Patrol extensions and early sailings . . . ; b) A lessened counter narcotics posture . . . ; c) (Gulf of Mexico) patrols will be canceled . . . ; d) Naval exercise participation may be reduced and . . . if an overwhelming exodus does occur, further assistance can also be expected from USN ships; e) personnel augmentation . . . ; f) Every effort (will be made) to maintain REFTRA and major availability schedules for cutters.¹¹

This impact may be significant given our commitment to the operation as stated by the operational commander: "We're going to stay down there until we think the crisis is over, and at that time we'll adjust forces as necessary. We'll dedicate the forces required to carry out our mission . . . today, tomorrow or a month from now."¹²

What is Success? The redeployment of forces is a difficult task if no measures of effectiveness (MOE) exist.

The obvious MOE would be the number of Haitians illegally landed on U.S. shores compared to the number of departures from Haiti, but there are far too many soft tangibles to get a firm handle on this figure, and it does not account for deterrence. In a 23 January 1993 message, the Atlantic Area Commander said we were doing "OK" even though we did not have MOE:

Operation ABLE MANNER is working. The robust presence of a combined USCG/USN task group in the Windward Passage is serving to deter a mass migration of Haitians attempting to sail to the U.S. By deterring the perilous voyages of small, overcrowded and unseaworthy Haitian Sailboats, we have indirectly saved the lives of an undetermined number of migrants who may have perished if they had embarked during recent rough weather conditions.¹³

He went on to say the potential and capability for a mass migration still existed, alluding to the difficulty of obtaining a measurable MOE, "Until the threat of a mass migration abates, our only course will be to station a sufficient number of U.S. vessels in the Windward Passage capable of rescuing large numbers of Haitians and returning them to Haiti."¹⁴

A Campaign with no End? It appears we embarked on a campaign with no immediate end in sight. It certainly has no purely military solution. As with so many other military operations, the primacy of politics is key in putting an end to this operation. Policy makers must be keenly aware of the action/reaction chain that escalates so quickly, and must be prepared to make bold but not hasty decisions. The military must understand the dynamic political nature of the situation and prepare accordingly.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: A LOOK AHEAD

A major finding of the commission for the four-year study of international migration and cooperative economic development (established under the IRCA) was that "any serious cooperative effort to reduce migratory pressures at their source must be pursued over decades, even in the face of immediate contradictory results."¹ The United States has found a temporary solution to the Haitian AMIO problem, but AMIO is a problem that will be with us for some time. The Coast Guard will continue to take a lead role. According to our own policy, "To meet the future challenges, the Coast Guard will . . . lead international efforts in . . . maritime law enforcement [and] serve as the lead U.S. Maritime Law Enforcement Authority."² Lessons were learned primarily at the tactical level. We don't seem to look at the operational level for lessons learned, especially if the operation is more than a year old. We must continue to adapt to rapidly changing situations based on our lessons learned from previous operations, but this alone will not be enough.

DOD Drawdown. The Coast Guard will not be able to "go it alone" for major AMIO surges. As defense cuts become reality and regional challenges increase, availability of DOD resources for future operations will remain a question mark. This becomes particularly cogent if the United States is engaged in a major regional contingency. Drawdown of DOD makes the equation harder to solve, and demands alternative planning.

What is Needed? The first consideration is political primacy. One recommendation of the four-year study mentioned above suggests "immigration and refugee matters should be centralized and streamlined into a new Agency for Migration Affairs"³ in order to provide policy input and guidance for all foreign and domestic policy decisions. While it may be a helpful solution, it will not be realized in the current atmosphere of government drawdown. Executive decision making will continue to make or break AMIO in the early stages.

One consistent factor in Coast Guard AMIO operations is a somewhat awkward transition from "normal" law enforcement operations to crisis action planning or crisis response. Development of service doctrine and concept plans would help guide the Coast Guard through the potential shoals of less budget and more missions.

We have repeatedly seen that early response in AMIO is critical. Concept plans for AMIO would allow the flexibility to have a "shell" that is adaptable by category, such as "any Caribbean island nation," or maybe a separate list of considerations for each country attached to a single basic plan. This would hopefully reduce the possibility of a "No Plan" response and the accompanying awkward transition. Plans would require periodic review, and generic or broad input from lessons learned during operations can be incorporated into updates. Again, the focus must reach above the tactical level. Concept plans would be developed by each District Commander, and reviewed at the Area level for consistency and potential

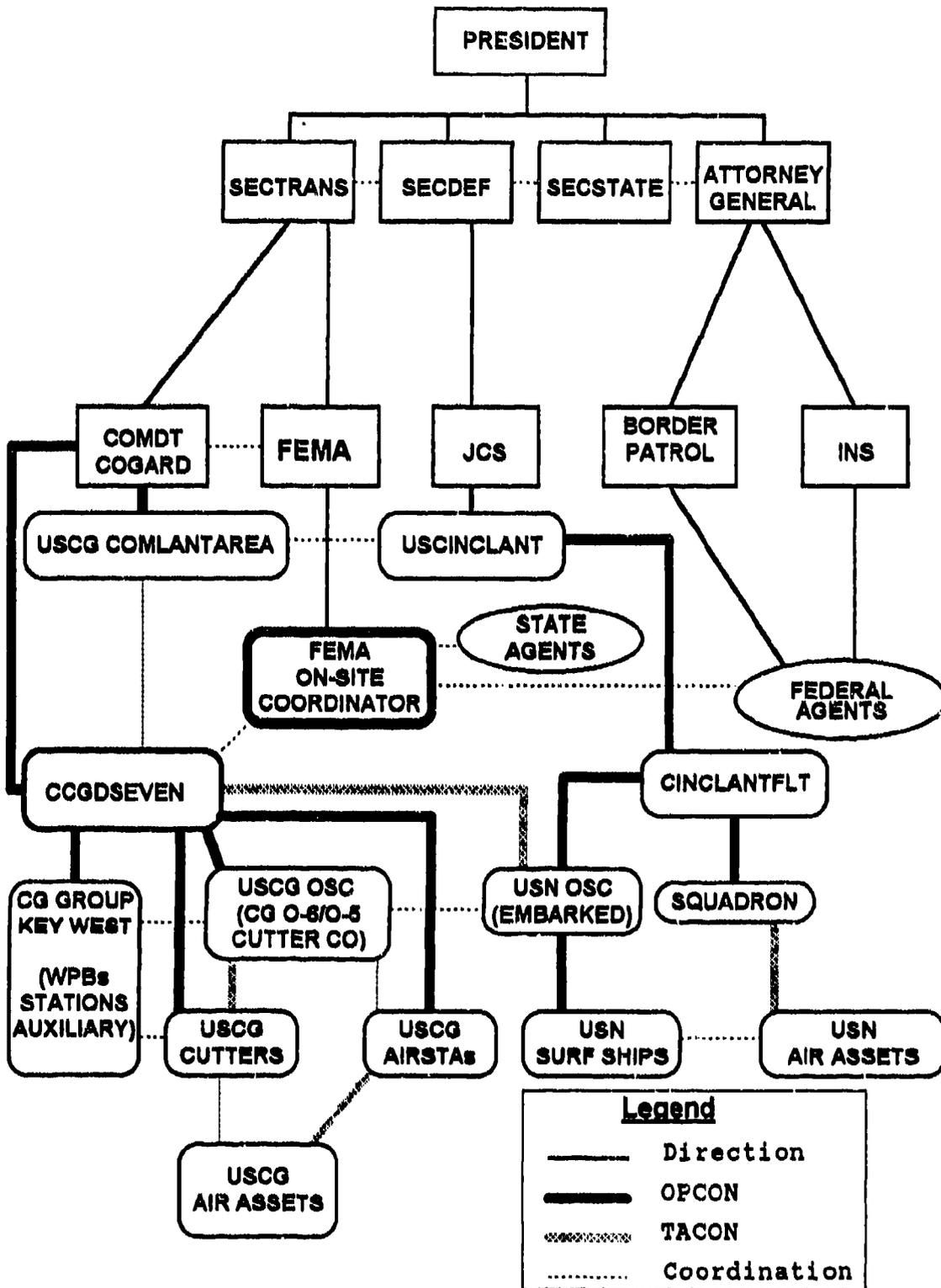
regional application. The plans should be published separate from other guidance to allow ease of review and updates.

To properly guide the development of concept plans, doctrine should be developed. It should take advantage of the strengths of the service, such as flexibility and adaptability, less threatening forward presence, and skilled sailors and aviators in meeting challenges such as AMIO. Doctrine should be developed based on statutory authority and responsibilities in meeting national security objectives. The recent publication of The United States Coast Guard; A Distinct Instrument of National Security is a good start.

The Future. The U.S. is in the midst of the second great immigration in its history. During the 1980s, between 8 and 9 million immigrants entered the U.S., legally and illegally. This number is roughly 50 per cent larger than the 1970s, and much larger than any decade since World War I. What is more important, the population of the countries making up the Caribbean basin is expected to double by 2010.⁴ The inability of these countries to provide employment for a rapidly expanding work force can only lead to one result: the pressure of those seeking to enter the United States is almost certain to increase.

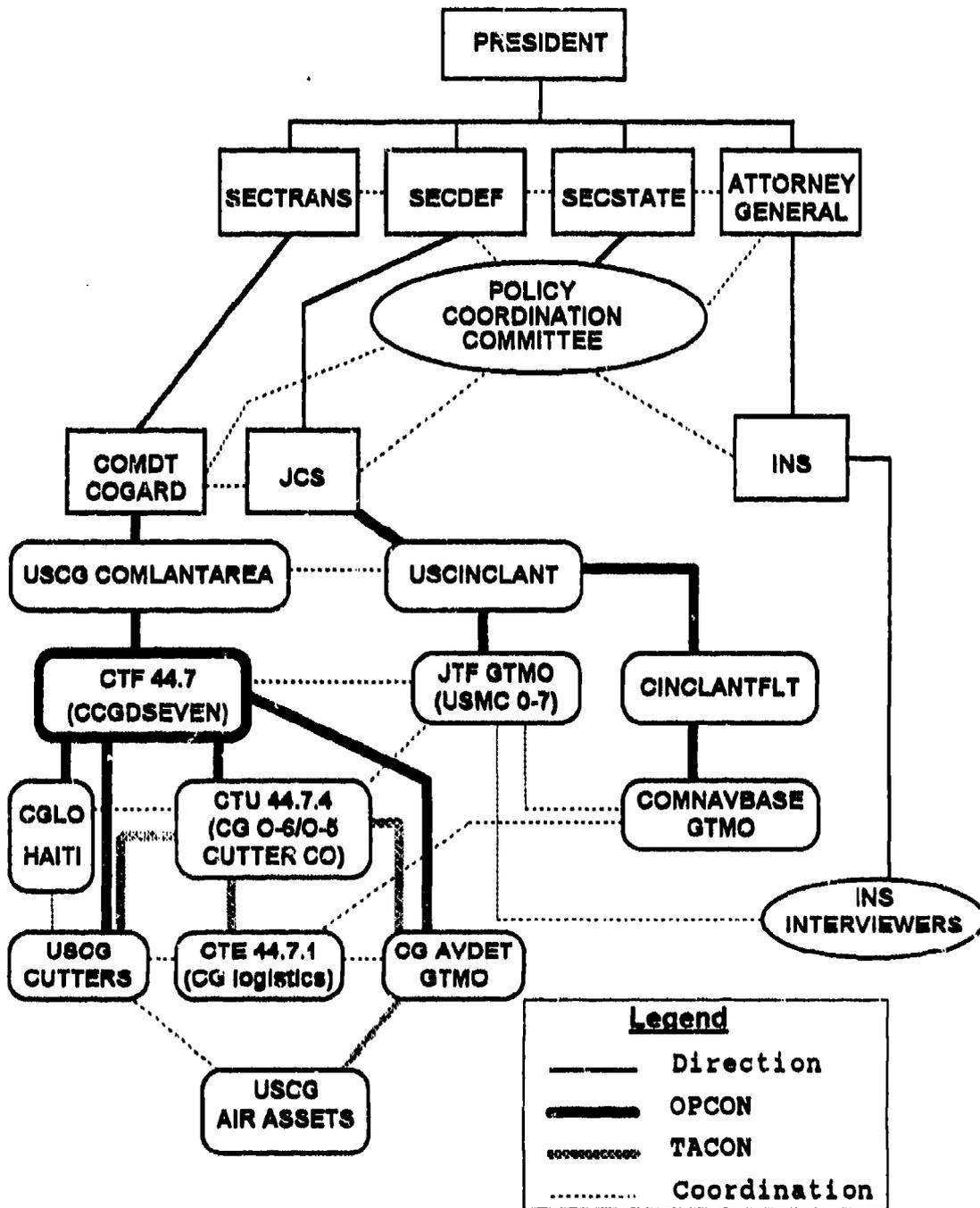
If the Coast Guard desires to take the initiative in planning for what is a growing problem, we must develop organizational doctrine consistent with national policy. We must also plan for future contingencies rather than simply learn our lessons on "how to do this better next time."

APPENDIX I
Figure 1



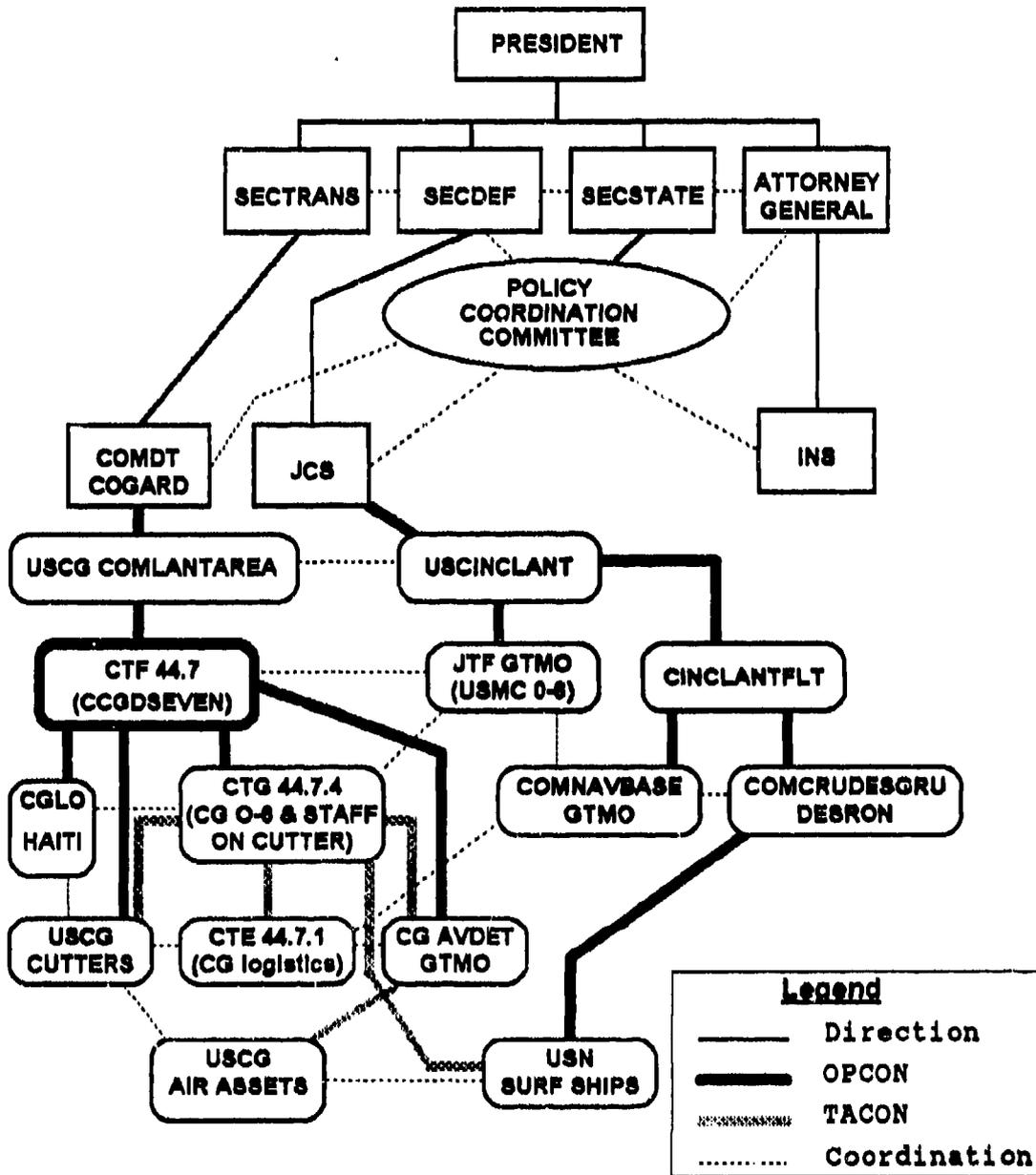
Chain of Command (once USN Ships arrived on station)
1980 Mariel Boatlift Operations

Figure 2



Chain of Command (once JTF GTMO in place)
 Until closing of GTMO Camp
 1991-1992 Haitian Operations

Figure 3



**Current Chain of Command
1992-1993 Haitian AMIO
(After closing of GTMO Camp & arrival of USN Assets)**

Coast Guard Cuban Rescue Statistics

Source: Seventh Coast Guard District Public Affairs Office (305) 536-5641. These are numbers of Cuban migrants rescued by or reported to the Coast Guard.

YEARLY

1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
N/A	N/A	47	19	43	27	44	59	391	467	2,203	2,557	158*

MONTH-BY-MONTH

1989

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	0	4	7	26	20	36	84	95	80	30	9

1990

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
42	24	18	47	40	25	22	55	84	30	9	71

1991

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
53	13	116	272	378	390	190	204	252	175	69	91

1992

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
80	53	144	153	191	93	293	485	468	263	191	143

1993

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
158*											

*As of February 1, 1993 (Release #01-27)

doc: (SIMONE) Cuban/Haitian.stats

TABLE 2

Coast Guard Haitian Rescue Statistics

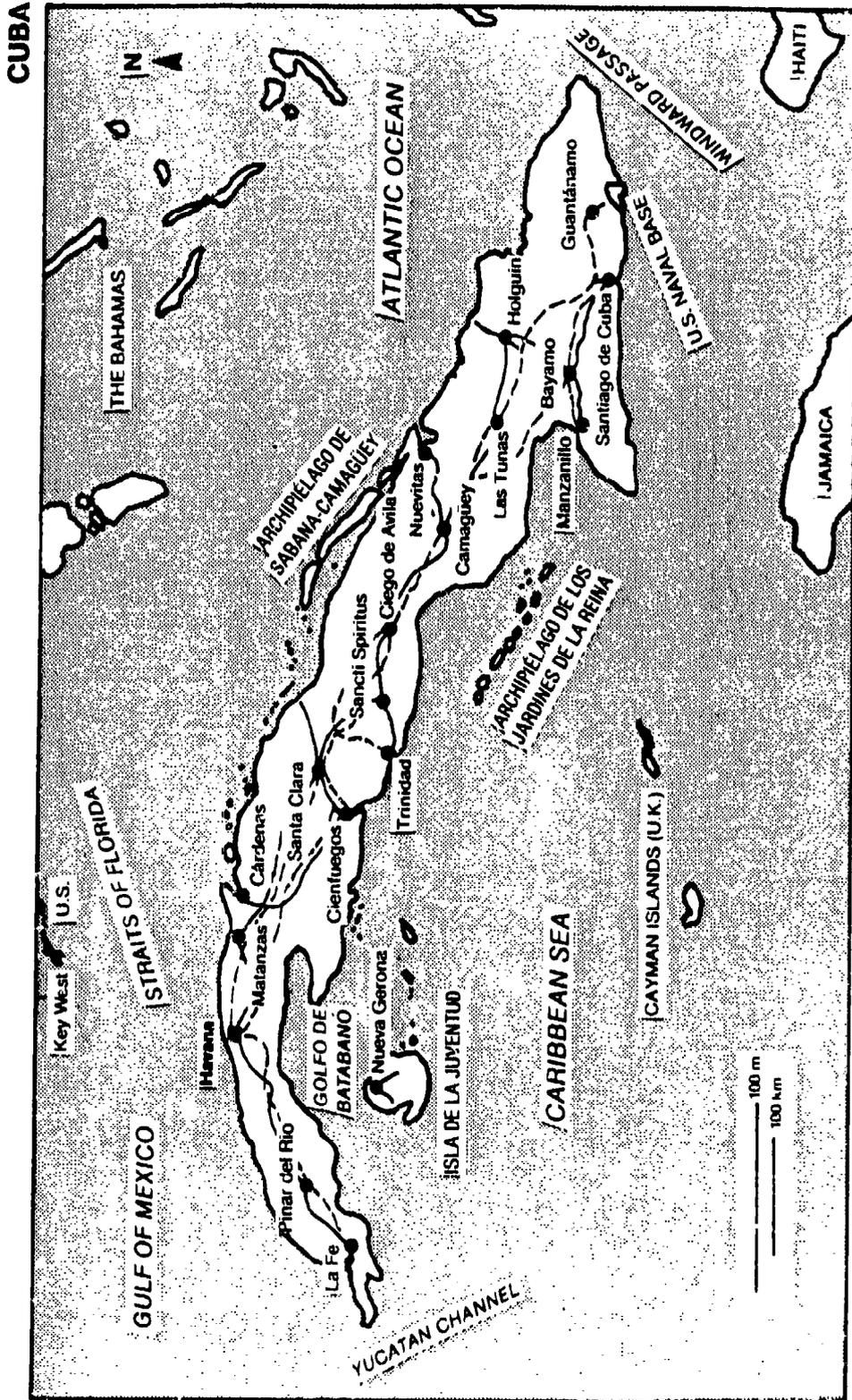
Source: Seventh Coast Guard District Public Affairs Office (305)536-5641
 (Numbers reflect only those cases involving the Seventh Coast Guard District)

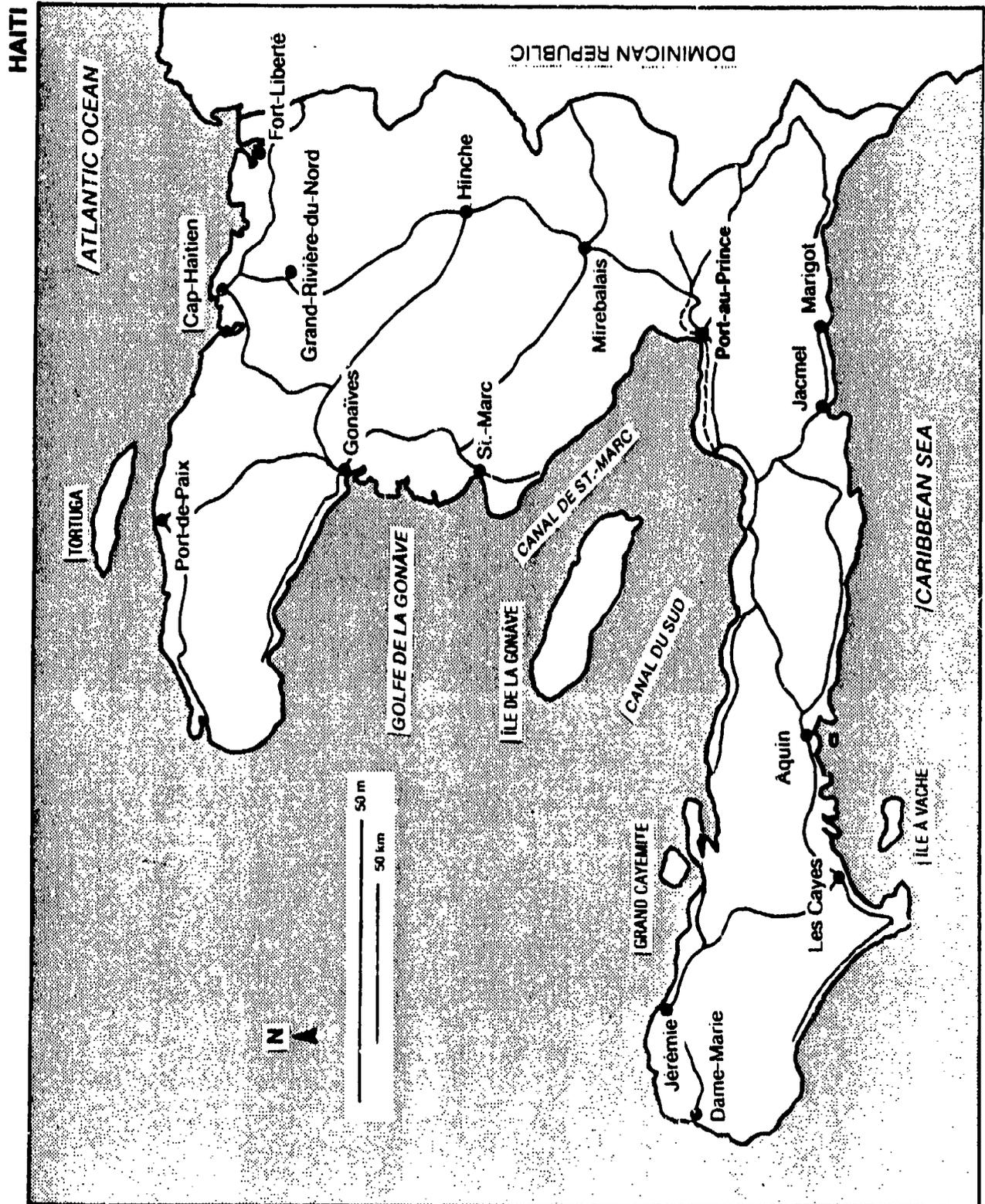
		YEARLY												
		<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
64	158	687	2,951	2,327	3,176	3,588	4,699	3,368	1,131	9,941	31,401	1,354*		
		MONTHLY												
		<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	
1981		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56	8	0	
1982		106	0	12	0	13	0	8	0	0	0	0	19	
1983		0	13	0	44	29	153	90	6	33	142	60	117	
1984		30	326	26	74	250	187	43	58	393	149	872	543	
1985		104	20	67	682	256	24	0	294	548	44	16	272	
1986		261	470	160	545	180	92	0	1,255	7	8	37	161	
1987		218	27	250	31	187	165	606	602	544	369	419	170	
1988		497	0	739	328	526	401	402	172	348	452	392	442	
1989		340	141	1,533	417	0	136	150	70	423	121	0	37	
1990		54	90	0	101	0	123	207	0	136	95	94	231	
1991		246	0	0	717	70	127	198	43	163	19	6,012	2,346	
1992		6,477	1,401	1,158	6,144	13,053	473	160	252	84	714	713	772	
1993		1,354*												

NOTE: Two groups of Haitians, 234 and 186 on 40-foot sailboats motored into GITMO 22APR92 and 05MAY92 and were met by U.S. Navy Port Control officers. These numbers are not reflected in Coast Guard totals. These numbers also do not reflect the two journalists onboard a boat 25JAN92, nor the one resident alien onboard a boat 04NOV91.

* AS OF RELEASE NO. 01-22(January 25, 1993)

doc: (SIMONE) Cuban/Haitian.stats





APPENDIX IV

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMIO - Alien Migration Interdiction Operation(s)
AVDET - Aviation detachment
CCGD7 - Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District (Miami, FL)
CGALT - Coast Guard AMIO liaison team
CGLO - Coast Guard liaison officer
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF - Commander, joint task force
CO - Commanding Officer
COMDT COGARD - Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard
COMLANTAREA - Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area (New York)
CONPLAN - Concept plan
CONUS - Continental United States
CTE - Commander, task element
CTG - Commander, task group
DD - Destroyer
DOD - Department of Defense
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFG - Guided Missile Frigate
GTMO - U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
INS - Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRCA - Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
JCS - Joint Chiefs of Staff
LHA - Amphibious Assault ship
LOC - Line(s) of communication
LPD - Landing Platform, Dock
LSD - Landing Ship, Dock
LST - Landing Ship, Tank
MOE - Measure(s) of effectiveness
MPA - Maritime patrol aircraft
MSO - Minesweeper, oceangoing
OAS - Organization of American States
OPCON - Operational control
OPORDER - Operations order
OSC - On Scene Commander
OSD - Office of the Secretary of Defense
OTC - Officer in Tactical Command
PCC - Policy Coordinating Committee
PRC - Peoples' Republic of China
REFTRA - Refresher training
SAR - Search and rescue
SNO - Statement of no objection
SOP - Standard operating procedures
TACON - Tactical control
UMIB - Urgent marine information broadcast
USCG - U.S. Coast Guard
USMC - U.S. Marine Corps
USN - U.S. Navy
WHEC - High endurance cutter
WMEC - Medium endurance cutter
WPB - Patrol boat

NOTES

Chapter I

¹David Carliner et al., The Rights of Aliens and Refugees: The Basic ACLU Guide to Alien and Refugee Rights, (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990), p.55.

²U.S. General Accounting Office, Number of Undocumented Aliens Residing in the United States Unknown, Report to the Congress by the Comptroller General (Washington: 6 April 1981), pp.3-8.

³U.S. Army and Air Force Departments, Field Manual No. 100-20, Air Force Pamphlet No. 3-20, "Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict." (Washington: 1990), p.1-1.

⁴Ibid., p.1-2.

Chapter II

¹On 28 September 1965, Castro announced that as of 10 October 1965, the Cuban port of Camarioca would be opened to the boats of "Cuban Exiles" who wished to return to Cuba to pick up relatives. The relatives leaving Cuba were forced to abandon their homes and property to the government when they went to Camarioca to await the boats. The Cuban government suddenly closed the port on 15 November 1965 and terminated the "boatlift" after 2,979 Cubans had left the island. The 2,104 people remaining in the Camarioca compound were transported to Florida on boats chartered by the United States. The "Camarioca Boatlift" ended because President Lyndon B. Johnson had negotiated the safer and more orderly use of commercial aircraft for the transportation of refugees. The "Freedom Flights," as they were called, began on 1 December 1965 and continued with two flights a day, five days a week until August 1971, when they were stopped. During the "Freedom Flights," 260,561 Cubans came to the United States on 3,049 flights. (Source: Larzelere, The 1980 Cuban Boatlift.)

²Larzelere, Alex. The 1980 Cuban Boatlift. (Washington, DC: National University Press, 1988), pp.xxvi-xxxii.

³Ibid., pp.380-391.

⁴Ibid., p.172.

⁵Brunson McKinley, "Statement," U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Policy Toward Haitian Refugees, Joint Hearing (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1992), pp.39-50.

⁶Republic of Haiti, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Bilateral Agreement on Interdiction of Illegal Haitian Migrants, Bilateral Agreement with the United States, (Port-au-Prince, Haiti: 1981), pp.1-3.

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¹U.S. President, Remarks, Q&A session with Mount Paran Christian School community in Marietta, GA, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 6 April 1992, pp. 939.

²U.S. President. National Security Strategy of the United States. (Washington: January 1993), p.3.

³Victor Navasky, "HIV Prisoners," The Nation, 30 November 1992, p.651.

⁴Brunson McKinley, "Statement," U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Policy Toward Haitian Refugees, Joint Hearing (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1992), pp.39-50.

⁵Ibid., p.252.

⁶Larzelere, Alex. The 1980 Cuban Boatlift. (Washington, DC: National University Press, 1988), p.224.

⁷Ibid., pp.225-231.

⁸Jimmy Carter, Public Papers of the President of the United States (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1981), pp.913-4.

⁹"U.S. Response to the Recent Haitian Exodus," US Department of State Dispatch, 25 November 1991, pp.864-5.

¹⁰Telephone conversation with LCDR Peter Boynton, USCG Liaison to State Department, Washington, DC, 29 January 1993.

¹¹Brunson McKinley, statement, pp.39-50.

¹²Ibid.

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¹U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Coast Guard. The United States Coast Guard: A Distinct Instrument of National Security. (Washington: 1993), p.2.

²U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District, "Mass Migration Plan," CCGD SEVEN SOP, (Miami: 1992), Appendix 5 to Annex C.

³Larzelere, Alex. The 1980 Cuban Boatlift. (Washington, DC: National University Press, 1988), p.158.

⁴Ibid., pp.160-168.

⁵Ibid., pp.191-198.

⁶Ibid., p.192.

⁷Ibid., p.309.

⁸Personal experience of author as Executive Officer in USCGC CAMPBELL (WMEC 909), which was tasked with AMIO during October 1991 and January/February 1992.

Chapter V

¹Craig O. Raynsford, quoted in Alex Larzelere, The 1980 Cuban Boatlift, from a 1987 interview in Washington, DC.

²U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, U.S. Processing of Haitian Asylum Seekers, Testimony (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1992), pp.1-5.

³Susan Beck, "Cast Away," The American Lawyer, October 1992, p.59.

⁴Larzelere, Alex. The 1980 Cuban Boatlift. (Washington, DC: National University Press, 1988), p.413.

⁵ Personal experience of author (January 1992) as Executive Officer in USCGC CAMPBELL (WMEC 909). INS agents refused to conduct interviews until the refugees were bathed. The interviews were critical to the throughput of the camp, and the problem was eventually resolved in the PCC in Washington rather than on the ground in Guantanamo for want of a lead agency that could mandate continued work.

⁶Larzelere, pp.181-3.

⁷Ibid., pp.176-8.

⁸J. William Kime, RADM, USCG, quoted in Larzelere, The 1980 Cuban Boatlift, from a 1987 interview in Washington. p. 413. ADM Kime is the current Commandant of the Coast Guard.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Telephone conversation with LCDR Peter Boynton, USCG Liaison to State Department, Washington, DC. 29 January 1993.

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¹U.S. President, Executive Order, "Interdiction of Illegal Aliens," Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 6 April 1992, pp. 923-924.

²"Special Issue on President-Elect Clinton's Foreign Policy Positions," Foreign Policy Bulletin, November/December 1992, p. 12.

³J.F.O. McAllister, "Lives on Hold," Time, 1 February 1993, pp.50-51.

⁴Philip J. Hilts, "Clinton to Lift Ban on H.I.V.-Infected Aliens," NY Times, 9 February 1993. p.A17.

⁵U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, U.S. Processing of Haitian Asylum Seekers, Testimony (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1992), p.2.

⁶U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Task Unit 44.7.4, "OPTASK AMIO," CTU FOUR FOUR PT SEVEN PT FOUR message 261200Z DEC 92.

⁷U.S. Coast Guard, Commandant, "DOMREP AMIO Procedures/Policy," COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-O/G-LMI/C-NRS// message 211824Z JAN 93.

⁸U.S. Coast Guard, Commandant, "Risks Associated with AMIO Involving PRC Nationals," COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-O// message 131735Z JAN 93.

⁹U.S. Coast Guard, Commandant (G-OLE/G-LMI), "Use of Force in Ongoing AMIO Operations," Washington: 22 May 1992.

¹⁰Telephone conversation with LCDR B. Ing, Coast Guard Atlantic Area Operations staff, New York, 12 February 1992.

¹¹U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Atlantic Area, "Haitian Migration Preparedness," COMLANTAREA COGARD NEW YORK NY//A// message 152058Z JAN 93.

¹²Mark D. Faram, "Coast Guard Keeps its Eyes on Haiti," Navy Times, 1 February 1993.

¹³U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Atlantic Area, "Operation ABLE MANNER," COMLANTAREA COGARD NEW YORK NY//A// message 230003Z JAN 93.

¹⁴Ibid.

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¹U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Report of the Commission for the study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1990), Appendix 1.

²U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Coast Guard. The United States Coast Guard: A Distinct Instrument of National Security. (Washington: 1993), p.5.

³U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Appendix 1.

⁴Robert W. Tucker et al., ed., Immigration and U.S. Foreign Policy (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), pp.1-2.

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