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AM-CUBA-IMMIGRATION

U.S. AND CUBAN REPRESENTATIVES MEET ON IMMIGRATION AGREEMENT
BY LIONEL MARTIN

HAVANA, DEC 21, REUTER - U.S. AND CUBAN OFFICIALS MET HERE EARLIER THIS MONTH TO WORK OUT DETAILS OF THE IMMIGRATION ACCORD WHICH SPARKED RIOTS BY CUBAN PRISONERS IN THE UNITED STATES LAST MONTH, THE OFFICIAL CUBAN NEWSPAPER GRANMA SAID ON MONDAY.

IT SAID TALKS ON THE AGREEMENT, WHICH WOULD ALLOW 20,000 CUBANS TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES EACH YEAR UNDER AN IMMIGRATION QUOTA AND ANOTHER 3,000 EX-POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO ENTER AS REFUGEES, WERE HELD IN HAVANA FROM DEC. 15 TO 18.

THE ARTICLE DID NOT SAY WHEN THE FIRST CUBAN EMIGREES WOULD BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE FOR THE UNITED STATES BUT A DIPLOMATIC SOURCE AT THE U.S. INTEREST SECTION IN HAVANA SAID THAT ADDITIONAL U.S. GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL HAD BEEN SENT TO CUBA TO HELP PROCESS APPLICATIONS.

UNDER THE NOVEMBER AGREEMENT, THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AGREED TO ACCEPT THE RETURN OF SOME 2,700 "UNDESIRABLE" CUBAN EXILES WHO ARE NOW BEING HELD IN U.S. PRISONS.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ACCORD SET OFF RIOTS AT THE FEDERAL PENITENTIARY IN ATLANTA AND A DETENTION CENTER IN OAKDALE, LA., BY MORE THAN A THOUSAND CUBAN DETAINEES WHO DEMANDED THEY BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE UNITED STATES.

AS PART OF THE SETTLEMENT TO END THE TWO SIEGES, THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AGREED THAT DETAINEES WOULD RECEIVE AN INDIVIDUAL REVIEW OF THEIR CASES, BEFORE A DECISION WAS REACHED TO RETURN THEM TO THEIR HOMELAND.

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AT A NEWS CONFERENCE, LAST MONTH, THE HEAD OF THE U.S. INTEREST SECTION, JOHN TAYLOR, SAID THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 23,000 APPLICATIONS ON FILE TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES.

HE SAID THAT THE IMMIGRATION PROCESS MUST BE INITIATED IN THE UNITED STATES BY RELATIVES OF CUBANS WHO WANT TO LEAVE THE ISLAND.

THE AGREEMENT SIGNED IN MEXICO CITY ON NOV. 19 CALLED FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF THE DECEMBER 1984 IMMIGRATION AGREEMENT, SUSPENDED BY CUBA IN MAY 1985 TO PROTEST BROADCASTS DIRECTED TO CUBA BY THE U.S.-OWNED AND OPERATED RADIO MARTI.

MEANWHILE, SOME 300 CUBAN FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAD RECEIVED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE PRIOR TO THE RENEWAL OF THE NOVEMBER AGREEMENT ARE EXPECTED TO LEAVE FOR THE UNITED STATES WITHIN A FEW WEEKS.

THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN THEM PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL BY THE U.S. ROMAN CATHOLIC EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGREED TO FACILITATE THEIR ENTRY AS REFUGEES.

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