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Diplomatic

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This is Lionel Martin in Havana for Monday morning use the service message. I was asked to do a short update on the situation of the ~~refugees~~ cubans who sought asylum at the Peruvian embassy on Easter weekend. I'll begin

~~XXXXXXXX~~

less than 800 of the Cubans~~XXXXXXXX~~ who sought asylum at the Peruvian embassy have left Cuba. That leaves just 10,000 who have not left. And just how and when they are going to leave is now in doubt.

the idea of the Latin American country and ~~perhaps~~ the United States was that Costa Rica should be used as a staging area for the refugees. That is, that all the refugees going to countries in the Western Hemisphere - ~~200~~ 300 to Costa Rica itself, 200 to Ecuador, 500 to Venezuela, 1000 to Peru and 3500 to the United States would all be channeled through San Jose, Costa Rica.

But last Thursday, the Cuban government put an end to the airlift of refugees to Costa Rica. The Cubans say that each nation should pick up its own refugees, that the United States is only 90 miles away and that there is no reason for the 3500 refugees to go through ~~XXXXX~~ Costa Rica which is much further away.

Yesterday, the Costa Rican government surprised ~~many~~ many by announcing that was ready to take in all 10,000 refugees. It is now up to the Cuban government to make the next move and tell Costa Rica if it can resume the airlift. But, there might be some skepticism among Cuban leaders who might feel that once Costa Rica got the refugees in, they would simply ship them at, as originally planned, to the other nations.

Cuba should give its reply to the Costa Ricans very shortly.

This is Lionel Martin in Havana for CBC Radio News.

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CBC RN