Mass media ethics vs. ethnicity: the Cuban American National Foundation's battle with the Miami Herald

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MASS MEDIA ETHICS VS. ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE CUBAN AMERICAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION'S BATTLE WITH THE MIAMI HERALD

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
Master in Mass Communication

in

The Manship School of Mass Communication

by

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B.A., Florida State University, 1998
December 2001
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ABSTRACT

In 1992, a prominent Cuban-American organization, the Cuban American National Foundation, launched a full-scale campaign against the Miami Herald following an editorial against the Cuban Democracy Act, sponsored by Congressman Robert Torricelli, (D-NJ). The bill, which the Foundation endorsed and helped craft, was aimed at tightening the loopholes on the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Two men—CANF Chairman Jorge Mas Canosa and Herald publisher David Lawrence—represented opposing sides of the feud. CANF galvanized the exile community to support its side of the debate. The Herald used its opinion and editorial pages to argue against Mas's charges that the newspaper attacked the values and culture of the Cuban-American people. The opposing sides symbolized two distinct paradigms of culture and politics that were vying for control over setting the agenda in Miami's public opinion sphere. The battle between a powerful Cuban exile organization and Miami's daily newspaper is a defining moment for journalism in the twenty-first century. It also serves as a cautionary tale for daily newspapers in highly multicultural and heavily populated metropolitan areas of the nation still struggling to meet the needs of their audiences while adhering to the tenets of American journalism. A historical analysis sets the groundwork for future qualitative and quantitative analyses.
Introduction

In 1992, a prominent Cuban-American organization, the Cuban American National Foundation, launched a full-scale campaign against the Miami Herald. The CANF and its Chairman, Jorge Mas Canosa, criticized the Herald for what it believed to be a “continuous and systematic campaign against Cuban Americans, their institutions, values, ethics and ideals,” (Chardy and Corzo, 1992, p. 3B). Mas’s January 20 statement followed an editorial against the Cuban Democracy Act, sponsored by Congressman Robert Torricelli, (D-NJ). The bill, which was to be introduced in the upcoming session, penalized corporations with headquarters in the U.S. that had foreign subsidiaries engaging in trade with Cuba.

On the other side of the conflict, Miami Herald publisher Dave Lawrence said that he would “never let this newspaper be intimidated in its ability and determination to pursue the truth” (Lawrence, 1992, March 22, p. 3C). Each side claimed a broad and lofty moral high ground that was rooted in basic ideological difference and cultural tension. Each had a cultural context for believing that their arguments were “true.”

The Cuban American National Foundation was outraged at what they believed was an inaccurate representation of Cuban exiles and their struggle for democracy in their homeland. The Miami Herald’s editors were angered by what they argued was an infringement of their rights under the First Amendment. They also insisted that they had not been insensitive to the causes and interests of the Cuban community. The Miami Herald tried to project ideals that journalism scholar Michael Schudson calls notions of classical democracy with its freedom of expression defense (1995), despite the fact that it was fighting a war against a substantial part of its consistent and influential readership. Both positions were part of a cultural and political battle waged
in the pages of the *Herald*, encapsulating a decades-long feeling of distrust and resentment toward media’s role in distorting the image of exiles in their cause for a free Cuba.

Although none of the literature indicates which side of the conflict “won” or “lost” in this case, the Foundation’s campaign against the daily newspaper with the highest circulation in the state is significant for several reasons. One reason is that this case may be a bellwether for metro-daily newspapers charged with the task of choosing the news that is fit to print while meeting the needs of its diverse readership. The CANF’s campaign against the *Herald* holds lessons for media observers and moguls who must face declining circulation amidst an ever-diversifying demographic in their respective metropolitan areas. More than ever, the melding of two different cultural ideas of “truth” and “news” are critical components of both contributing to an informed citizenry and holding on to advertising dollars.

Another reason is that Miami represents an ongoing social experiment of how the influences of culture, specifically Hispanic emigres, permeate even the most “American” of institutions, such as media. This is also an interesting case for social science researchers to observe what happens when institutions claiming to represent two cultural and political paradigms clash in the competition for power. In this case, it was the CANF against the Fourth Estate. The Foundation’s conflict with the *Herald* is an example of the symbiotic, love-hate relationship between the media and its citizens. As it faced a completely different demographic of readers, the *Herald* needed to cater to the constituency the CANF claimed it represented. Likewise, CANF needed the *Herald* as a means through which to tell its side of the Cuba policy story and influence public opinion.
In his foreword for the historic report by the Commission on Freedom of the Press, Robert M. Hutchins writes of the Commission’s awareness that every social institution influences the development of public opinion and American culture (1947, vii). However, these influences rarely negotiate through diplomatic and amicable means to arrive at one well-crafted version of current public opinion. The clash between the Foundation and Miami’s daily is a vivid illustration of what the Hutchins Commission warned newspapers about in 1947, that media’s function should vary within a given social context (p.12). Part of the problem, according to the Hutchins Commission, is that “the desire to suppress opinion different from one’s own is inveterate and probably ineradicable” (1947, p. 2). Simply, the Commission suggests that opposing points of view engage in a struggle that is usually to the detriment of the minority opinion, a perspective that serves as fodder for such communication theories as Noelle-Neumann’s Spiral of Silence (1984).

For practical reasons, the Miami Herald’s decidedly Anglo, Northeastern educated staff writers and editorial board gave way to the demands of a large part of its influential readership—the Cuban community. Its content and editorial position, for better or for worse, became more politically conservative following the CANF’s campaign, reflecting the dominant perspective of its audience (Soruco, 1996, p. 75).

In the case of CANF’s campaign, however, both parties on either side of the issue had comparable clout and each had equally powerful means through which to send its message. Lawrence had The Miami Herald; Mas had Hispanic radio and a top-roots network consisting of influential business leaders, elected officials, and leaders of Cuban grassroots activist groups. Central to the conflict was not necessarily a clash of
cultures—it was the struggle for the supreme control of setting the political agenda and influencing public opinion, specifically U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Words and symbols represented by the figure of Mas, who spoke of freedom in the homeland and a call for an end to Castro, utilized the Cubans’ already unsavory perceptions of media to mobilize the community against the Herald. Lawrence used the tenets of journalism and free speech to defend the Herald’s editorial position on both CANF and U.S. policy toward Cuba. This is contrary to more recent perspectives on ethnic hegemony, such as that of Samuel Huntington.

In his book, the *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the New World Order* (1996), Huntington argues that the spread of democracy following the Cold War would not solve centuries-long ethnic strife. Thus, in the future, cultural factors such as faith and ethnicity would be the source of conflict. Even Huntington, however, leaves Cuba out of the equation in his theory as the last vestige of “Communism,” or what the Cuban-American community often refers to as Castro’s own brand of Communism, *Fidelismo*. He claims democratization was “most successful in countries where Christian and Western influences were strong” (1996, p. 193).

Yet, Cuba has had a strong Roman-Catholic tradition, dating back to its occupation by Spain, and had “frigidaire” and American-made vehicles before most other Latin American countries. The island nation historically has been a hotbed of revolution and political upheaval for centuries. Tainted with eras of both European and American imperialism, it is more likely that forevermore conflicts within Cuba and the emigre communities in the U.S. will be political in nature. The fact that politics and culture are indistinguishable in the case of Cuba and Cuban immigrants makes it
difficult for social scientists to define the roots from which Cuban-American ideology and culture have developed.

In regard to CANF, it is hard to distinguish whether it was culturally or politically (or both) at odds with the Herald. Set with the ever-changing socio-political backdrop that is Miami, defining the “pictures in our heads” (Lippmann, 1949) of the Cuban-American community is key to influencing the public’s opinion of the trade embargo and immigration policy toward Cuba.

Since research illustrates so little about this heterogeneous group, the best way to trace the dominant ideologies and attitudes of Cuban-Americans is through local media, particularly the Miami Herald. In their 1956 book, *Four Theories of the Press*, Fred. S. Seibert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm argue that social structures shape the media. To understand how media functions one must look at political and social structure within a society. The authors contend that, “To see the social systems in their true relationship to the press, one has to look at certain basic beliefs and assumptions which the society holds.” These “beliefs and assumptions” are culturally constructed. While at the time the three scholars were using their thesis to give the reader a context for understanding the four theories of the press--the Authoritarian, the Libertarian, the Soviet Communist and Social Responsibility--the argument still holds true at the beginning of this millennium, especially since world politics has undergone such drastic change since the end of the Cold War.

Croucher specifically uses Miami as an example of the processes that construct public opinion and define social reality in a multi-ethnic community (1997). She also argues that no framework exists for analyzing ethnic change and struggles for power within competing groups in Miami. Croucher explains that the social and political
behavior among ethnic groups may be a preview of future social behavior in diverse areas of the nation (1996, p. 20). Furthermore, she emphasizes the need for historical analysis of ethnic political behavior in Miami:

This book argues that historical analysis of intergroup relations in Miami must not only serve as a backdrop for understanding the contemporary turmoil but also be seen as the raw material with which ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts have been socially constructed. It was this long history of conflict and political struggle in South Florida that produced the definitions of social reality that now circulate in and about Miami, definitions that both create and sustain tensions between ethnic groups (1997, p. 22).

This thesis is a historical analysis of the struggle of values driven by two competing ideological perspectives. It explores the unattainable standards of balance and “objectivity” in journalism and the newsroom’s tug-of-war with the interests of the community it serves. CANF’s campaign against the Miami daily newspaper should be regarded as a defining moment in journalism that is also a piece of the larger puzzle in ethnic and media relations. The following chapters will build upon the foundation for analyzing a conflict that occurred between a distinct political culture shaped by immigrant experience and an American institution of Libertarianism—the metro daily newspaper.

To allow for a more comprehensive approach to analysis using media sources, a qualitative approach is applied through the analysis of first-hand accounts and scholarly evidence. Anecdotal evidence from different perspectives of the CANF- Herald war, such as those of journalists, academics, and members of the Cuban-American community, are included in this work. In addition, the following chapters incorporate data in the form of publications and journal entries gathered during an internship with the Cuban American National Foundation. The internship lasted approximately six weeks during the summer of 1999. Observations were documented in journal entries
and interviews were conducted with various members of the staff and executive board.
This information was gathered in an attempt to bring more balance to this work, since
CANF has accused many of the newspaper sources cited in these pages of biased
coverage.

Following the introduction, the second chapter consists of a brief history of
Cuban emigres and a more comprehensive history of CANF, including background on
its founder, Jorge Mas Canosa. The successive waves of Cuban immigration after 1959
contributed to the political culture and demographic heterogeneity of the Miami enclave
and therefore deserve mention. The third chapter will provide a history of the Cuban-
American community’s clashes with media leading up to the attitudes and behaviors
that prompted its protest against the Herald. The fourth chapter will document the
CANF’s campaign. The fifth chapter will discuss the historical implications of this
campaign against a daily newspaper, which aims to represent the interests of a dynamic
and politically charged ethnic community. Chapter six will conclude this work and
make suggestions for future research.
History of the Miami Enclave

Miami is an explosively diverse city. Within the boundaries of Dade County, immigrants of diverse cultures have settled in ethnic enclaves such as Little Havana, Little Haiti and the predominantly Nicaraguan Sweetwater area. In addition to the emigre enclaves, the city is also home to a large Jewish population, located in North Miami and Miami Beach, and several African American communities such as Liberty City. Such a diverse population makes Miami a volatile urban area in which cultures constantly challenge the boundaries of society and politics.

The influence of immigration is also apparent in cities such as New York and Los Angeles. What makes Miami unique from more established cities with a significantly diverse population, however, is the effect that Cuban emigres have had in completely changing South Florida’s economic and social landscape. Likewise, no other ethnic minority has had as profound an impact on Miami politics as the Cuban population. The successive waves of migration have helped to construct the hierarchy of ideology that is represented by the older, more conservative exile community. Miami continues to evolve as it continues to suffer from an identity crisis “in the face of rapid…social and political change” (Croucher, 1997). Miami underwent this swift and pervading transformation after Fidel Castro’s revolution, which sent scores of Cubans into what they thought would be a temporary exile only 90 miles away.

In the 1950s, Cuba enjoyed one of the fastest growing middle classes of Caribbean and Latin American countries. Yet, it still suffered from upper and lower class disparities, which were particularly apparent when comparing the rural and urban areas (Portes, Bach, 1985, p. 140; Thomas, 1983, p. 3). Tensions between the classes
were further exacerbated by rampant corruption in business and government. The tradition of corruption in politics had been in place before Cuba gained its independence from Spain. Indeed, Cuba suffered through a cycle of corruption that ultimately resulted in revolution from the time of its independence, which was led by Cuban patriot Jose Marti.

Through four governments that purported to being more democratic than the previous, the Cuban people dealt with a growing gap between the lower and upper to upper-middle class. While sugar exports and tourism provided a booming economy in Cuba during the early 50s, most of the wealth, approximately 60 percent, went to the upper class, which comprised 20 percent of the total population at that time (Boswell, Curtis, p. 19, 1983). These socioeconomic conditions and a weak government helped set the stage for Castro’s revolution.

The literature indicates several waves of immigration that vary in number. Agreement on the distinct phases of immigration is unclear, as some social scientists indicate seven (Boswell, Curtis, 1983), and others describe five (Casals, 1979). This work will describe three, as does Gonzalo Soruco, whose research on media attitudes in the enclave is at the core of the issues explored in this paper. All three phases, which include the arrivals of the “Golden Exiles,” the emigres from freedom flights, and the refugees of the Mariel Boatlift follow Castro’s overthrow of the Fulgencio Batista regime in 1959. The boatlift will be more comprehensively described since that last significant immigration phase was part of a catalyst for political galvanization in the Miami enclave.
The Golden Exiles

The first wave of emigres following the revolution was composed mostly of the upper-class urbanites of Cuba, including doctors, lawyers and businessmen who prospered under Batista’s government and the Cuban economy. Cubans in this group, arriving between 1959, New Year’s Day, and 1962 are referred to as the “Golden Exiles” because of their affluence and high level of education (Boswell and Curtis, 1983, Soruco, 1996, Torres, 1999).

Conservative estimates suggest that 215,000 Cubans arrived in the U.S. at that time (Boswell, Curtis, 43, 1983). According to Llanes, this group was largely homogenous, exhibiting political values similar to those of the Republican party in the United States (p. 9, 1982). The Cuban missile crisis of October, 1961 put an end to all direct flights to America. During the period of 1962 to 1965, 74,000 Cuban emigrated by boat or through intermediate countries. Those who emigrated to the United States through intermediate countries did so most notably through Spain or Mexico ( Boswell, Curtis, p. 48, 1983; Garcia, p. 35, 1996; Soruco, p. 8, 1996).

It is also important to note that both the government and media helped to reinforce the image of the “golden exile.” The swift acceptance and resettlement of this first wave, which was fleeing the immediate danger of a Communist coup, generated a positive and supportive sentiment from the American public at that time. It was particularly easy for the U.S. government and media to construct an image of “Golden Exiles” from a group of upper and upper-middle class professionals who were staunch anti-Communists. Allman asserts that even from the beginning, the story of Cuban immigration has been the stuff of “legend, romance and myth.”
Others argue that “the Cuban success story” was seen so often in media that it created a stereotype (Llanes, 1982, 47). Croucher, for example, argues that the Cuban success story functioned to suit the interests of “certain individuals and groups, whether North American capitalists, U.S. politicians, or Cuban exiles” (Croucher, 1997, 140-141). Media helped reinforce this stereotype with such articles as “Those Amazing Cuban Emigres” (Alexander, July 1966). This successful “golden” image, however, was in sharp contrast to the public sentiment toward later migrations, specifically the Mariel boatlift.

The Freedom Flights

The next major phase of immigration was the period of the Freedom Flights, which took place from 1965 to 1973. In the aftermath of negotiations for prisoners of the Bay of Pigs invasion and following the missile crisis, Castro announced that he would allow those with relatives in the U.S. to leave the island beginning on October 10, 1965. Cubans were to be picked up by their U.S. relatives from the seaside town of Camarioca. Hundreds of boats and seacraft attempted to travel the 90-mile journey to Cuba. Some vessels were unsuccessful in crossing the Florida Straits and were intercepted in international waters. The Johnson administration began negotiations with the Cuban government for one of the first in a long line of immigration policies. These would later take center stage in the politics of the enclave and influence political attitudes toward subsequent administrations.

The “memorandum of understanding” as part of H.R. 2580 established an airlift with flights twice a day, five days a week between Miami and Havana. Approximately 297,318 Cubans emigrated by plane to the U.S. until the end of the flights in 1973.
Blue-collar and rural workers largely comprised this group of emigres (Boswell, Curtis, 1983, p. 48-49; Croucher, 1997, 106; Garcia, 1996, p. 42-43; Torres, 1999, p. 71). Torres also points out that this group was more ethnically diverse, including emigres from Jewish and Chinese populations of Cuba (1996, p. 43).

The Mariel Boatlift

More than 125,000 Cubans left the island between April 21 and September 26, 1980. As a means to generate revenue and illustrate to the exile community the success of his revolution, Castro announced in 1978 that he would allow week-long visits from U.S. relatives. The exiles brought as many goods as they could carry to their families in Cuba, attesting to their stories of success in America. Among the gifts visitors brought to their Cuban relatives were designer blue jeans. The collective effect of these visits came to be known among social scientists and historians as the “blue jeans revolution” (Olsen and Olsen, 1995, p. 80). The next wave of immigration lasted only five months but had a detrimental effect on the image of the exile community.

Cubans grew increasingly restless with their economic situation after visiting with their exile relatives and expressed the desire to leave the island. In April 1980, Castro announced that any Cubans wishing to leave the country could do so through the Peruvian embassy. Days later, more than 11,000 people requested to leave in the midst of staged demonstrations protesting the gusanos, or traitors to the revolution. Realizing the opportunity to pump some American currency into the Cuban economy, Castro cancelled emigration through the Peruvian embassy and ordered departure through the Mariel port.
Castro did not anticipate the large number of Cubans wishing to emigrate. Once again, *el líder* took advantage of a situation that nearly revealed the empirical failure of his revolution and decided to use the boatlift as a means through which to export his “undesirables.” When U.S. relatives arrived to pick up Cuban family members, they waited for days in their boats until they were allowed to board their passengers. Upon receiving their relatives, they were forced to accept strangers who may have been criminally insane persons or social deviants (Olsen, Olsen, 1995, p. 81).

Castro publicly announced that he was using the Mariel exodus as a means of purging the social and biological misfits from Cuba. According to several accounts, that aspect of the boatlift story was highly publicized with largely inaccurate information obtained by media. (Garcia, 199, p. 65; Jorge and Moncarz, 1987, p. 25; Olsen and Olsen, 1995, p. 81; Portes and Bach, 1985, 87). An estimated 26,000 emigres had criminal records. Most of them had been imprisoned for violations of *la ley de la peligrosidad* (Garcia, 1996, Pg, 64), or the law of dangerousness, roughly translated. Offenses ranged from prostitution to dealing on the black market. Others were political prisoners. Approximately 2,500 of the arrivals were hard criminals and were subsequently imprisoned in a Georgia Federal penitentiary. A few hundred more were placed in mental institutions (Jorge and Moncarz, 1987, p. 25) The U.S. government was overwhelmed with this unanticipated wave of migration. More Cubans settled in America in 1980 than during the period of arrival of the “Golden Exiles” in 1959-1963. To some extent, the negative attitudes toward the Mariel immigrants stemmed from the public’s more ominous reactions to media reports that exaggerated certain characteristics of race and gender in this group. Garcia cites that the *Washington Post*,
for example, reported that nearly 20,000 Cubans were homosexual when the estimate was actually 1,000 as reported by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (1996, p. 65). Included in this group were a larger number of blacks and mulattos of a lower socioeconomic status (Boswell and Curtis, 1983, p. 56; Soruco, 1996, p. 10; Garcia, 1996, p. 68).

With the Marielitos came the shift in immigrant rhetoric. They were no longer regarded as exiles, but rather as refugees. They came during years of economic recession in the 1980s within a five-month time period. Most of them settled in Miami (Jorge and Moncarz, 1987, p. 26). All of them had lived under Castro’s socialism for more than 20 years. Combined with the negative perception created by the news that Castro had unleashed rabid criminals and mental patients within this group, Mariel emigres were not warmly welcomed in Dade County. Even Cuban-Americans greeted this wave with hesitation, in fear that their golden narrative of success might be soiled by this younger, darker and ideologically different group (Boswell and Curtis, 1983, p. 56; Arocha, March, 23 1981, p. 2b).

Each wave of immigration helped to build an inadvertent hierarchy of power, beginning with the first arrivals—the “Golden Exiles.” This group was the most powerful and had been empowered by the initial rhetoric of success of the Johnson and Nixon administrations. By the time the Mariel refugees arrived on the scene, the wave that fled with the Batistianos had established themselves after more than twenty years of exile. They were the mostly professional status men and women who fled the immediate dangers of Communism. The elements of time and economic advancement ensured that the political perspectives of the Golden Exiles became the dominant
ideology of the Cuban-American community. A Cuba-away-from-Cuba culture has continued to flourish in a city that Cubans still call *el exilio*, or exile.

The conservative politics of the exile community were not just dominant perspectives shared in conversations at local coffee shops or at family gatherings. The exile ideology was immediately put into practice upon arriving in Miami. Cubans recreated their self-governing townships, or *municipios*, that existed among the six provinces of Cuba before the revolution. Approximately 114 of these townships were re-established by 1962, and were represented in a federation called the *Municipios de Cuba en el Exilio*. While each one of these townships functioned as a social organization that also helped familiarize subsequent waves of Cuban immigrants with life in the U.S., these groups were also deeply involved in politics. For example, representatives from 110 of these townships assembled through the *Junta Patriotica Cubana*, one of the first anti-Castro political organizations in exile (Boswell, Curtis, p. 176; Garcia, p. 91-92).

In the same way that Cubans need not be assimilated to participate in the democratic process, they also need not be assimilated to use media and contribute to its dialogue (Soruco, 16, 1996). In particular, the exiles brought with them a tradition of radio usage from their homeland. Following Castro’s revolution, the U.S. government took advantage of this medium in its public opinion war against the regime. The CIA selected exiles to bombard the airwaves with anti-Castro propaganda through Radio Swan in 1961. With the government’s consent, the exile community continued a style of talk radio that is far from apolitical.
The first wave of emigrants created the foundation for AM radio formats. Stations such as WQBA, “La Cubanisima,” and WAQUI, “Radio Mambi” are still popular outlets of media among older Cubans, even after the advent of the Internet. Political candidates still pander to their prospective Cuban-American constituents via the airwaves. These stations have been successful largely because they reflect the attitudes of the dominant conservative ideology. Spanish-language largely serves as a means through which to perpetuate the dominant exile ideology and reinforce its power in the enclave (Perez, 1992, p. 99). Columnist Liz Balmaseda referred to Miami as a “community where candidates traditionally stroke exile radio commentators, where they can make or break a campaign” (1992, Oct. 24, p. 1B). Today AM talk radio continues to serve as an important means through which to galvanize the Cuban-American community.

Contrary to the assimilation perspective, the American culture did not have a hegemonic effect on this group. Instead, what occurred was something social scientist Alex Portes suggests is acculturation-in-reverse (1995, xiv). In fact, several investigators of Cuban-American sociology have noted the empirical failure of the assimilation theory in predicting the behavior of the enclave (Portes, 1992, xv; Croucher, 1997, p. 8; Portes, Clark, and Cobas, September 1980). After several generations in the U.S., Cuban-Americans have not clearly followed the natural progression of assimilation theory through its cultural, structural, marital and ideological stages, as theorized by Milton Gordon in the early 1960s. Yet they grew accustomed to American political practices and quickly realized that the only possible
way to free their homeland was to take their cause for a free Cuba to the halls of the nation’s Capitol.

Ironically, media, along with politicians and other public officials, that helped create a “golden exile” image of Cuban Americans, had the power of this image thrust upon them. Politically active Cuban-Americans began to participate in the influencing of public opinion, bringing with them their own notions of “balance” and “truth.” As Cuban-Americans grew in numbers, they heavily participated in the democratic process while they and their children became prosperous in business.

Cuban-Americans mobilized their constituencies by reinforcing the solidarity of support of *la lucha*, or the cause of a free democratic Cuba. In a short time, Cuban Americans were able to organize themselves to wield political power in Washington. CANF Background

By 1981, this growing political participation served as a catalyst in the formation of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), the most effective mobilizing force behind the Cuban American community. Cuban American emigres experienced traumatic life-altering events, which have made them intolerant to any pro-dialogue perspectives on U.S.-Cuba policy. The uncompromising position that CANF has taken on behalf of the Cuban-American community has been a major source of political friction in Miami (Perez, 1992).

CANF was established at a time when Cuban-Americans became increasingly disillusioned with the Anglo establishment in Miami. The formation of this more politically sophisticated organization came after the Mariel Boatlift when the “Golden
Exile” discourse began to dissolve. Carter’s flip-flop decisions during the boatlift and the economic recession under his administration added to a climate of frustration.

The image of Cuban-Americans began to present a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the sentiment was that the affluent Cuban community had taken over and forced a white flight from Dade County. One author explains that by 1980, nearly a third of its Anglos moved out of the Dade County area, leaving behind a void in its population—a void that was later filled by the large influx of immigration (Portes, 1992, p. xiv).

On the other hand, Mariel refugees did not arrive with the same affluence and education as its golden predecessors. Furthermore, with Miami completely saturated with Cuban culture, the novelty of welcoming the “Golden Exiles” had worn thin. By 1980, many of the exile entrepreneurs who arrived during the first wave of immigration were now successful businesspeople and leaders in the Cuban-American community. At this time, veteran hardline exiles were ready to take la causa to the next level.

One of these leaders, arguably the most prominent figure in the Cuban-American community, was Jorge Mas. Born in 1939 in Santiago, Cuba, Mas would become the vital link between the exile community and opinion leaders. Mas’s life is a narrative that is sparse in the literature, especially in regard to specific instances that may have been controversial. First, an explanation of Mas’s life’s work for la causa illustrates that financial success did not precede political awareness for most Cuban exiles. The experiences from Castro’s revolution shaped not just an ideology but a political culture. Networking within the political and influential circles of the exile community helped pave the way for successful businessmen. Second, Mas’s story
denotes a broader historical and personal context for evaluating his actions in the campaign against the *Miami Herald*.

In the most poignant homage to the exile leader’s life, Ninoska Perez Castellón writes about his early days as a political activist (1998). Evidence suggests that even in primary school Mas gravitated toward the power of the spoken word. In his adolescence, he was already making commentaries on Cuban radio, which, as Nestor Feliu explains, resulted in Mas’s first exile from Cuba under the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship (translation, 1997, p. 38). Ironically, media, particularly broadcast, held a strong attraction for Mas. He returned to Cuba after the revolution. As a young law student, he was exiled a second time when he publicly confronted Castro at a university event (Hockstader, Booth, 1992, March 10, p. A1).

Mas’s work toward a free Cuba began in the early 1960s, upon his arrival in the United States. After the failed U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion, Mas enlisted in the army, in the hopes, Feliu elaborates, that the next campaign would be a success (1997, p. 39). He soon abandoned military life, however, when he realized that it would not lead to an imminent effort to end Castro’s rule.

In 1960, he was a radio commentator for biweekly broadcasts to Cuba on Radio Swan (Elliston, 1999, 221). He wrote for small daily newspapers in the exile community, such as *Liberación*, which, along with radio, were the main form of media within the Cuban exile community. His natural talent for broadcast commentary established him as young leader within the exile community. Mas was the leader of the younger exile community as head of the *Juventud Cubana*. 
In between rallies, local radio addresses, and writing articles for the small dailies, Mas delivered milk, as well as the latest news from Cuba, door-to-door to Miami residents. “Sometimes,” Mas commented, “I didn’t have enough time to change before a speech so I went in my milkman’s uniform” (Pérez-Castellón, 1998, p. 37). He was the leader of RECE, Representation of Cuban Exiles, one of the first anti-Castro groups, and was the editor of its monthly publication (Felíu, 1997, p. 33). In 1964 on his first trip to Washington as a RECE representative, the rising exile leader realized the importance of political participation in the democratic process. (Pérez-Castellón, 1998, p. 45). Between the late 60s and early 80s, Mas initiated contact with important politicos, such as Henry Kissinger and Jeane Kirkpatrick. He went beyond the familiar radio media in the Cuban enclave to make appearances on such television programs as “The Today Show” in 1975 (Pérez-Castellón, 1998, p. 50). Curiously, he forged a highly successful presence with media in these early years—a relationship that would later become volatile.

In 1981, Mas’s vision of a more sophisticated political lobbying amalgam culminated in the creation of the Cuban American National Foundation. At the first meeting, fifteen Cuban exiles established the flagship executive board of directors. The CANF statement of principles and objectives asserts the main goal of the organization is to “challenge the myths propagated by the Cuban government.” The same publication also declares that CANF serve as vehicle to “clarify public opinion, fight bigotry, protect human rights, and promote Cuban culture and achievements” (CANF, 1981, p. 4).
CANF, a non-profit organization funded by its members, boasts more than 54,000 active members. Its initial objective was to establish a means to combat Castro’s propaganda apparatus. The foundation would function as a vehicle that would inform the public about internal issues, such as human rights violations. The organization would also inform the public about external issues, such as new policy toward the island nation (Fundacion Nacional Cubana Americana, 1992). Essentially, the organization would serve to sway public opinion away from the romanticism of Castro’s revolution, and toward a harsher view of human rights abuses on the island.

CANF executive board continues to be composed of affluent Cuban self-made businessmen, who, according to spokesperson Mariela Ferretti, “put their money where their mouth is” (Personal interview, July 17, 1999). CANF continues to have a board composed of approximately 60 executive board members, who continue the tradition of an annual $10,000 contribution. The executive board members are also primary decision-makers of the organization. At their annual meeting, el Congresso, board members from all of their offices meet to discuss the following year’s agenda.

According to presentation materials from its 16th annual meeting, CANF has 10 chapters located in major cities in the nation and abroad, in addition to its office in Washington, D.C. The chapters are located in Puerto Rico, New Jersey, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Orlando, Jacksonville, New Orleans, and Tampa (CANF, July 18, 1999). The Foundation established a chapter in Spain and also briefly opened a chapter in Moscow under President Boris Yeltsin (Perez-Castellon, 1998, p. 113).

The Foundation uses member contributions for its programs, which fall under the umbrella of the Jorge Mas Freedom Fund. The Endowment For Cuban American
Studies sponsors scholarly endeavors, such as seminars, research grants and publication. The Mas Family Scholarships offers competitive financial aid to college students.

The Foundation For Human Rights has been one of the most effective and highly respected efforts of the organization. This program was directed by one man, Luis Zuniga, a former political prisoner in Cuba. Until his recent resignation from the Foundation, Zuniga represented CANF at the annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which has condemned Cuba’s treatment of dissidents, activists and political prisoners before the international community. The human rights division of the Foundation has been absolutely instrumental in giving independent journalists and political dissidents a voice through tape-recorded reports conducted through phone calls. CANF members transcribe the information and send it out to media outlets or post press releases on the Foundation website.

Aside from the programs that fall under the CANF financial umbrella, executives established the Free Cuba Political Action Committee. Free Cuba PAC, for example, contributions to federal candidates during the 1997-1998 year totaled $102,500, with $53,500 going to Democrats and $49,000 going to Republicans (Center for Responsive Politics, 1999). By 1986, CANF’s operating budget was $1.5 million (Garcia, 1996, p. 150). Through the leverage of the Free Cuba PAC and Mas’s influential Washington contacts, CANF gained considerable influence during the Reagan and Bush administrations.

One of its most important and controversial achievements, however, was in the policy arena. In 1985, CANF helped to establish the federally funded Radio Marti, through a major lobbying effort and the support of the Reagan Administration. Reagan
and Mas engaged in a political courtship that would later prove mutually beneficial. By the time Reagan accepted CANF’s invitation to give a speech before its members and the exile community in 1983, Mas was already involved in plans for establishing Radio Marti. Observers may recall the news footage of Reagan enjoying black beans and rice at *la Esquina de Tejas*, a popular restaurant in Little Havana where he had his famous Cuban-style meal. Since Reagan, many other candidates have made their rounds in Miami, vying for support from the Cuban community. In 1999, CANF invited Donald Trump to one of their functions. However, no candidate has been able to politically court the exile community as well as Reagan did through his relationship with Jorge Mas.

When the Reagan administration put together a Presidential Commission on Broadcasting to Cuba to explore possibilities for Radio Marti, Mas was appointed the head of the executive board. After two years of lobbying, Radio Marti, one of the foundation’s greatest victories, became a reality under the Reagan administration. The president subsequently appointed Mas as chairman of the advisory board of Radio Marti until his death in 1997. The exile leader was also the driving force behind the establishment of TV Marti through his influence in the Reagan and Bush administrations. The establishment of both outlets was shrouded in controversy. Several members of both the Cuban-American and broadcast communities criticized Mas’s hold on both media, often portraying Radio and TV Marti as tools of CANF propaganda.

One of the most compelling criticisms emerged within the staff from station manager Ernesto Betancourt, who publicly protested the use of the federally funded
Betancourt was dismissed in 1990. TV Marti was also a contentious program, which the International Telecommunications Union claimed violated international treaties. In addition, critics said that television reception was being jammed by the Castro regime (Shannon, 1990). Betancourt would later voice his criticisms of Mas’s media tactics during the campaign against the *Herald*.

Each of CANF’s charter members contributed $10,000 (Lidin, 1987, March 29, p. 26). Many of the members were Bay of Pigs veterans and had been involved exile politics since their migration across the Florida Straits. Some had been involved in the sapling political organizations of the *municipios* that flourished into the Foundation. The members comprised a wealthy segment of the Cuban-American population. Some of the more influential members such as Pedro Adrian, developer of the highly prosperous Adrian Homes subsidiaries, are business leaders in the South Florida construction industry. Some such as Manuel Cutillas, the owner of Bacardi Rum, are multi-millionaires with international renown.

The CANF executive board members are a diverse cross-section of exile success stories in various industries and local civic activities. For example, the stout, mild-mannered Felipe Valls made his millions as a restauranteur. He is the owner of the Versailles, undeniably one of the most important Cuban-American landmarks. During the day, the corner coffee shop window is a hub for the Cuban business networks. Situated on *Calle Ocho*, or Eighth Street, on the way to the Coral Gables business district, the Versailles is a convenient spot to buy a *colada* of espresso and rekindle old business contacts. If there were a place to find out what was going on in the exile community or the business network, the Versailles would be it. During coverage of the
Elian saga, reporters flocked to the Versailles to gauge the attitudes of the Cuban community toward the child’s possible deportation. In one respect or another, each of CANF’s members had a uniquely strong connection to the Cuban-American community and all were essential for the organization’s success.

As Mas garnered clout in policymaking circles, so did he collect enemies and, more frequently, critics of his leadership style. Several executive directors resigned from the Foundation under Mas’s leadership, mostly citing irreconcilable differences. Among them were charter members of the organization, such as Frank Calzon, who headed the Washington, D.C. headquarters and helped establish the organization with Mas, and Raul Masvidal, who ran for Miami mayor and lost to Xavier Suarez. During the CANF’s campaign, many of these personalities, including Masvidal and Betancourt, emerged in the editorial pages of the Herald in support of the newspaper’s right to freedom of expression. The tone in which many of these former members of CANF described Mas was less than cordial.
Cuban-Americans’ Attitudes Toward Media

“Ha, if I had two years of my life to spare, I would compile the research necessary to prove the horrible coverage of Cuba by media” (Perez Castellon, Personal Communication, June 9, 1999). Seven years after the CANF’s campaign against the Herald, such statements as Ninoska Perez Castellon’s reflect the Foundation’s continued disdain for American media. Perez, known in the exile community as the voice of the Foundation is also, according to members of the organization, the heart and soul of CANF after its founder, Jorge Mas, died (Menendez, 1999, July 26.; Ferretti, 1999, July 13).

Years after CANF campaigned against the local daily and garnered its constant and particular attention, even the Foundation’s Vice President still says that media “are all out to get us” (Del Valle, 1999, June 9). While these statements may suggest a distrust of media that borders on paranoia, Cuban-Americans’ attitudes toward media have been shaped by a rocky history.

Since the before the 1959 revolution, the relationship between media and the Cuban-American community has been ostensibly fickle. The distrust of American journalism can be traced back to New York Times reporter Herbert Matthew’s famous interview with Castro in the Sierra Maestra in 1957. After Castro’s first and failed attempt to overthrow Fulgencio Batista’s government at the Moncada barracks in 1953, he invited Matthews to his elusive Sierra Maestra camp. Batista had enforced censorship and Castro was anxious to spread the word that he was alive and that his large army was still an impending threat. The incident at Sierra Maestra, was what Daniel Boorstin might call a psuedo-event (1961), and this particular instance of Castro
produced a pseudo-revolution that arguably played a key role in his ultimate overthrow of Batista.

The story goes that as Herbert Matthews interviewed Castro about the strength of his revolution, the same 15 soldiers paraded behind the two men, while at each stretch they stopped to switch hats, appearing to be a different troupe of guerillas. With a stage and a virtual script, Castro got the interview that saved his revolution. Because Batista enforced censorship to prevent rekindling revolutionary support, many believed that Castro was dead. Not only did Matthews report that el líder was alive and well, he also attested to a revolutionary force three hundred strong. Matthews painted a romantic picture of a rebel with a democratic cause. Five years later, Castro declared he was a Communist (Wallach, 1987).

So began the awkward connection between the American press and the exile community. In most of the interviews with CANF members in 1999, the mention of Herbert Matthews’ name was met with at least a smirk. Since that time, the exile community tends to regard American media as a pawn of Castro’s public opinion strategy, at least. At most, it is viewed as a willing accessory to Castro’s oppressive campaign of misinformation, to the detriment the Cuban homeland. With the Matthews interview as their first impression of liberal media, the exiles’ view of journalism was tainted with permanent apprehension.

Still, Matthew’s newspaper, New York Times is located far from el exilio in Miami. Any future gripes and protests would not hurt the newspaper’s bottom line. This was not true for the Miami Herald, situated in Downtown Miami just minutes from Little Havana, Florida.
The negative portrayal of Cubans was a factor that gave rise to both the formation of the CANF and the Cuban community’s growing animosity toward the *Herald*. The Mariel boatlift, which changed the rhetoric toward the enclave community, caused a collective resentment among the non-Hispanic citizens of Dade county. Thomas Boswell and James Curtis argue that, although the coverage of Cuban-Americans in media could be characterized as uneven at worst, it had been essentially positive, up until the Mariel immigration wave (1984, p. 6). According to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the U.S. media has exhibited the tendency to hold liberal views on Cuba:

> The media fails to focus on the human rights abuses and the crackdown on peaceful dissidents and very rarely do they venture out into areas outside of the tourist hotels and hospitals and instead they focus their coverage on such things as sporting events. They often trivialize the suffering of the people of Cuba by failing to recognize the oppressive conditions in which they live and in playing up Castro as some type of heroic figure instead of the tyrant that he truly is (1999, September).

One of Lehtinen’s Congressional aides agrees that media often romanticize Castro and tend to be more sympathetic to his Communist revolution than to the regimes of the Right. “Whether it be Dan Rather or Barbara Walters, reporters don’t ask the same probing questions they would ask of Pinochet. They treat Castro with kid gloves” (Pollack, 1999, August 13).

Gonzalo Soruco’s *Cubans in Mass Media in South Florida* (1996) brings to light the complexity of the tenuous relationship between American media and the Cuban enclave. He discusses the contrasting perspectives of assimilation versus conflict and consciousness theory (1996, Pgs. 27-29). Consciousness theory is much more applicable than assimilation theory in the case of the Cuban enclave, especially in
regard to media. As the enclave grew, and exiles held on to pre-Castro Cuba and the subsequent waves of migration added sociological layers to the community, the Cuban community continued to reinforce its social and political culture. Media in the enclave mirrors that phenomenon. The consciousness of the enclave developed thorough experiences such as exile and immigration. The experiences of the Cuban exiles have made them distrustful of liberal democratic institutions, most notably American media.

The *Miami Herald* was part of the liberal media establishment in the early 1980s and had not yet come to terms with the ideological differences between the newsroom and its Cuban readership. The newspaper’s tone and editorial position was only a reflection of the tense and highly political environment that followed the arrival of the refugees. For example, as gesture of welcome, the Metro-Dade Commission passed an ordinance officially making the county bilingual in the early 1970s. In 1980, native Miamians mobilized and pushed a referendum to make English the only language recognized by Dade county (Olson and Olson, p. 87).

With the inaccuracies reported about the supposed *Marielitos* in such national publications as the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, Cubans felt American media was indifferent and, at times, discriminatory in its news and editorials (Garcia, 1996, p 65; Portes and Stepick, 1993, p. 53). Today, journalists admit that the *Herald* largely ignored the needs of Cuban community (Lizza, 2000, p.18; 1992, p. 24). In a 1999 interview, Kirk Reagan Menendez, who currently serves as CANF’s vice president, agrees that the misperceptions of the Cuban community have been caused by the media and the public’s indifference to cause for a free Cuba (June 1999).
One scholarly work underscored the critical role that the *Miami Herald* played in perpetuating divisiveness among ethnic groups in Miami:

Many analysts and interview respondents emphasized the very critical role the media, and particularly the Miami Herald, has played in dramatizing events, manipulating symbols, and creating or perpetuating perceptions that foster divisiveness among different racial and ethnic groups in the metropolitan Miami area (Croucher, 1997, p. 94).

Leaders of the Hispanic community claimed that the *Herald* was biased in its coverage of the Cuban community, even before the Mariel boatlift. One example was when Miami Mayor Maurice Ferre accused the *Herald* of “anti-Latin bias and “breeding divisiveness among Miami’s Latin community” at an Associated Press conference in 1978 (Miami Herald, p. 19). By the 1980s, The *Herald* was virtually isolated from the Cuban community and political change, as Soruco explains,

During the 1980s, while Ronald Reagan was mesmerizing the nation with his own agenda and calling for a return to conservative values, the *Herald* stubbornly stayed the liberal course in its editorial and reportorial policy. Weaned as its editors were on the solid traditions of American journalism and the principles of press freedom, objectivity, and responsibility, they found the idea of buckling to the demands of exiles painful and even ominous (1996, p. 41-42).

Another article in the *New Republic* agreed with the Cuban community view that the *Herald* badly treated this significant segment of its readership.

The *Herald*’s treatment of Miami’s Cuban-Americans was grossly insensitive, bordering on xenophobic. So when the Cuban-Americans, in part motivated by that coverage, began to organize into a political force in the mid-80s, it was hardly a surprise that they flexed some of their muscle in the *Herald*’s direction (Lizza, 2000, p. 18).

The media’s attitudes toward the growing Cuban-Americans served to further politically mobilize the enclave, which preserved a festering resentment toward the local newspaper. In particular, the Cuban-Americans galvanized against any
attack on the dominant conservative ideology, which most prominently appeared in the pages of the *Herald’s* editorial section.

CANF greatly supported and, more important, played an integral role in legislation to tighten the trade embargo on Cuba instituted by the Eisenhower Administration. May 24, 1987, the *Herald* ran an editorial that supported legislation that would close the loopholes on the trade embargo (p. 5B). Despite its editorial position at times, Cuban-Americans still felt that the *Herald* was guilty of bias against their community and politics.

The Foundation ran its first one-page advertisement in the *Herald* on October 19, 1987, claiming that both its editorials and news were biased against the Cuban American community. The ad placement, signed by all 49 executive directors and trustees of the foundation, came just one month before the *Herald* began to publish the Spanish-language *El Nuevo Herald*. Among other charges, CANF argued that,

> The *Miami Herald*'s abuses go beyond insensitivity. Over the years, the *Herald* has exhibited a pattern of neglect, manipulation and censorship of Cuban and Cuban-American news (CANF, *The Miami Herald*, 1987, October 19).

The ad further claimed that the entire Cuban community would be at odds with the *Herald* “until it adopts a balanced editorial and news coverage policy” (CANF, *The Miami Herald*, 1987, October 19).

Some leaders in the Cuban-American community disagreed with the CANF’s decision to place the advertisement, arguing that it further divided an already segmented community. City Commissioner Joe Carollo, who would run against two foundation supported opponents upon re-election that year, openly blasted the CANF as a “clique
of millionaires who have made a very profitable business out of combating Communism but who really want to take control of the city of Miami” (Volsky, 1987, October 25).

In the effort to reach out the Cuban community, Knight Ridder, the parent company that owns the *Miami Herald*, hired David Lawrence in 1989 to replace Richard Capen and become the newspaper’s new publisher. Lawrence, who was an editor for the *Detroit Free Press*, was an advocate for civic, or public, journalism (Lizza, 2000, p. 18). One of the main goals of his tenure was to foster a more amicable relationship between the *Herald* and the diverse communities not far from the gates of the *Herald* One Plaza. His propensity to bring civic involvement into the newsroom was an important factor in his hire, and he thus employed the growing trend toward public journalism to achieve that goal.

The public journalism movement grew out of the public’s increased disillusionment with newspapers and journalists’ professional dissatisfaction with reporting the news (Charity, 1995, p. 1). Mindich explains that public journalism “crosses the line from reporting to engaging citizens in seeking solutions” (1998, p. 135). By 1989 this movement in journalism gained considerable momentum, and the *Detroit Free Press*, under Lawrence’s editorship, was actively involved in practicing public journalism, particularly in regard to children’s issues (Charity, p. 123).

To his newsroom colleagues, Lawrence was walking a fine line between fostering a better relationship with members of the community and sacrificing the journalistic integrity of the *Herald*. According to Mike Clary, former *Herald* staff writer, Lawrence was considered “the middle man” among his colleagues at the Miami newspaper, who tried to serve as a “peacemaker in a community fraught with sweeping
demographic changes and the ethnic tensions they have aggravated” (1990, p. 33).

Rather than being a public journalist, Clary calls Lawrence the “quintessential corporate journalist” ” (1990, p. 33).

Lawrence attempted to bridge community differences at a time when the Herald’s coverage of Cuba displayed an unprecedented degree of negative criticism. He tried to rein in his newsroom to avoid sparking a conflict with area business leaders and organizations, particularly when dealing with the Cuban exile community. Soruco cites that according to Herald staff, Lawrence has been known to tell members of the editorial board to “tone it down” in regard to editorial criticisms of exile programs and activities (Clary, 1990, p.33).

Despite Lawrence’s attempts on behalf of the Herald, CANF, which was considered the most influential lobbying and grassroots organization of that time, continued to object to the newspaper’s coverage. The greatest backlash often came as a result of negative reports on or editorials against U.S. policy efforts to tighten the embargo, as well as other projects in which CANF and its members were involved. The Foundation was, and continues to be, heavily involved in those efforts and would not tolerate public dissent from a major institution in its backyard.

In one draft of an opinion piece, one-time CANF president Tony Costa blasts former Herald editor Jim Hampton for his editorial against the Mack Amendment to the embargo, which prohibited the foreign subsidiaries of companies with headquarters in the U.S. from doing business with Cuba. In that draft, Costa contended that the Herald showed a double standard in its position on the embargo in contrast to its support of sanctions against South Africa as means to end apartheid.
In 24 editorials between 1986-1987, the Herald denounced—quite rightly—the racist regime in Pretoria and called on the Reagan Administration to impose “full economic and political sanctions on South Africa” ... The Herald may have an explanation for these contradictory stances, but you have not offered it to your heavily Cuban American readership, 88 percent of whom support increasing economic pressure on Castro’s regime (Costa, CANF draft correspondence, 1990).

CANF officials also took offense to the Herald’s coverage of human rights in Cuba. With its daily communications with dissident groups and independent journalists in Cuba, the Foundation keeps a keen eye on reports about human rights conditions on the island. Foundation human rights representatives often challenge local and national media on its coverage and counter the stories with reports received from Cuban journalists.

In one letter, Ninoska Perez-Castellon wrote that she was “appalled” by a story on Cuba’s care of AIDS patients. She cited one report by a dissident journalist group that prisoners of the same prison that the Herald reported to have visited were subjected to inhuman conditions, such as routine beatings and malnutrition (Perez-Castellon, 1991, November 11). Her retort, which was sent to David Lawrence, was never published.

Such exchanges of correspondence became more frequent as CANF’s political clout grew and became more involved in the crafting of U.S. policy toward Cuba. The leaders of the Foundation were concerned about the Herald’s coverage and editorial positions on policies and relationships that they believed would be essential for achieving their goal of a free Cuba. The communications between Mas and Jim Hampton, editor of the Miami Herald, became incrementally less amicable as the exile leader rose as a public figure.
In one editorial, the *Herald* called for Mas’s resignation from the President’s advisory council on Radio Marti, citing a conflict of interest. The Federally-funded Radio Marti had rebroadcast Mas’s speech at a CANF-sponsored rally at the Orange Bowl. In his letter to Hampton, the exile leader said it was “easy to predict” the *Herald*’s editorial asking for his resignation “because the *Herald* uses every opportunity” to question the Radio Marti’s credibility. The letter was only partially published in the *Herald*. So Mas sent the letter to El Diario de Las Americas, which printed it in its entirety (*Diario de las Americas*, 1990, February, p. 1A).

After reporting a story from EFE, a Spanish-language news service, alleging that CANF offered a $50 million loan to the Hungarian government, the Foundation made it clear to Lawrence that it considered the *Herald* to be as much of an enemy as Castro.

Mr. Lawrence, we do not seek to insult but we do not intend to dismiss. We seek redress and a stop to the malicious pattern. A long time ago we came to the conclusion that the liberation of Cuba would have to be fought without help from the Miami *Herald*. Today, we may have to conclude, as sad as it is, that it must be fought against the *Herald* as well as against Castro (Hernandez, 1991, July 3).

Each one of these instances added to CANF’s mounting hostility toward the *Herald*.

An editorial against the first of the Foundation’s efforts to close the loopholes on the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba brought these tensions to the fore.
CANF vs. the Miami Herald

On January 18, 1992, the Herald ran an editorial against a bill due to be introduced by Congressman Robert Torricelli, a Democrat from New Jersey. As with the establishment of Radio and TV Marti and the Mack Amendment, a precursor to the Torricelli bill, CANF was the driving force behind the congressman’s Cuban Democracy Act. Following the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement, President George Bush vetoed the Mack amendment in 1990 to avoid any gesture that would infringe upon the spirit of the new agreement with Mexico and Canada. Similar to the Mack amendment, Torricelli’s bill penalized companies in the U.S. with foreign subsidiaries in Cuba.

The new bill was the Foundation’s second significant attempt at tightening the embargo with Cuba. It signified the culmination of all of CANF’s efforts – the campaign contributions through the Free Cuba PAC and its relationships with the Reagan and Bush administrations and other world leaders. The importance of the Torricelli bill is highly emphasized in the Foundation’s materials (1992; Leyva, 1994; Perez-Castellon, 1998). Its final passage signaled the beginning of CANF’s most successful years in the policy arena. When it passed, the Cuban Democracy Act helped lay the groundwork for subsequent legislation, such as the Helms-Burton act in 1994.

So when the Herald ran the editorial against Torricelli’s bill, the Foundation, specifically Jorge Mas Canosa, began a swift and harsh campaign against the daily that lasted approximately five months in the spring of 1992. The editorial ran at a crucial time when maintaining the Cuban-American community’s support of such a measure was critical to its success in Congress.
The piece reintroduced some of the familiar arguments against the embargo and any tightening measures, contending that it would hurt the people of Cuba the most rather than cripple Castro’s oppressive government. It also blasted the crafting of the policy, calling it a “jumble” of embargo measures and that its “intentions were at odds with its likely results” (1992, January 18, p. A4).

The portion that was likely considered the most damaging to the perception that the predominantly Cuban-American Miami community supported such a policy was the metro daily’s call on Congress to defeat the legislation in its entirety:

Congress thus should defeat Mr. Torricelli’s proposal. Making the embargo airtight will not promote democracy or liberty in Cuba, but it could promote chaos and catastrophic violence. Perhaps Mr. Torricelli believes that after the end of lavish Soviet subsidies to Cuba, closing the few air holes left to the island’s terminally ill economy will unleash massive disturbances, food riots, or an anti-Castro military coup (1992, Jan. 18, p. A4).

After the fateful editorial, Mas quickly mobilized his human and material resources during the following week. He took to the Spanish-language airwaves the next day with a barrage of complaints against the Herald. The statement accused the daily of being no better than the Granma, the state-sanctioned newspaper of the Cuban government. The CANF leader also called on fellow Cubans Roberto Suarez, Miami Herald Publishing Company president, and Carlos Verdecia, editor of El Nuevo Herald to resign from the newspaper as a show of solidarity with the Cuban community. Neither one of the Herald’s highest ranking Cuban employees resigned.

Although the CANF leader’s anger was mostly directed at the Herald, Mas also addressed the editorial that El Nuevo ran on the same day as the piece condemning the Torricelli bill. The Spanish daily also ran an editorial on January 18 that compared exile
leaders to harpies who actively seek their own “Castroism” (Reynaldo, 1992). In particular, the author claimed that every Cuban in the community had presidential aspirations, suggesting an inherent characteristic of egotism among Cuban-Americans (Reynaldo, 1992, p. 12A).

Lawrence and Suarez responded to Mas’ allegations by arguing that the Herald and El Nuevo Herald had both been fair and balanced in their coverage of Cuba and local Cubans. Lawrence and Suarez said their “position in support of a free Cuba” had been “unequivocal” (1992, Jan. 21, p. 5A). Further, they stressed the journalistic duty of presenting various and, at times, unpopular perspectives in the community’s newspaper:

It’s also important to point out that the foundation of excellence in journalism, as well as a democracy, require us to print all sides, even when we might disagree with a perspective or an opinion. We have worked hard to be fair, and feel badly when anyone thinks otherwise. We will always remain willing to try and do even better (1992, Jan. 21, p. 4A).

This exchange between two powerful and important community institutions was the beginning of a conflict that set in motion a series of events in a city that was already plagued with divisiveness. During the five months of CANF’s battle with the Herald, the community witnessed a full-scale campaign against its local newspaper, investigations by two leading international organizations, and the formation of an anti-defamation league.

By Tuesday, January 21, Foundation treasurer Feliciano Foyo approved check requests to fund an advertising campaign throughout the city of Miami. The CANF’s message to the community was succinct and clear – “I don’t believe the Miami Herald” (Appendix A).
The check request memorandum itemized the cost and quantity of different types of advertising. The Foundation planned to use busses, billboards, and aerial ads to influence the rest of the community to withhold support from the Herald. The billboard would be located on the corner of Douglas Road and Flagler Street facing east, so that people would read CANF’s message as they headed home after work toward the sprawling suburbs of West Miami. The Foundation’s defiant declaration would also be seen on the taillights and sides of 60 buses, respectively. The organization would then choose two events from a possible three—the Grand Prix of Miami, the Calle Ocho festival, or the Lipton Tennis Tournament—at which planes would fly their message overhead. In addition, CANF would use bus benches and bumper stickers in their campaign plan.

The memo also itemized the cost of printing of a scholarly paper written by Dr. Fran Matera, an Arizona State University mass communication professor, the Herald’s bias against the Cuban-American community and the Foundation (Appendix A). The Foundation tried to implement its advertising campaign with the city’s bus system in early March. The Metro-Dade Transit Agency temporarily blocked the lease for the ads until the phrase “paid advertisement” accompanied CANF’s “I do not believe the Miami Herald” message (Miami Herald, 1992, March 10, p. 2B). The ads first appeared on March 13.

Tuesday, January 21, was also the day that Mas challenged Lawrence to a public debate on the Herald’s coverage. On Monday, he had already made the announcement that the Foundation was launching a campaign, and a public debate was part of the strategy. Another part of the campaign, Mas announced, was the creation of the Cuban

During the rest of the week, however, Herald readers watched a debate surge in editorial pages. Reports of the conflict spilled over onto the pages of El Nuevo Herald and El Diario de Las Americas, Miami’s other Spanish-language daily. Mas continued his battle over the airwaves of the exile community. Meanwhile, Lawrence ran the first of a two-part editorial, “Come on, Mr. Mas, be fair,” which began with the publisher admitting that “it had not been a pleasant week” (1992, Jan. 26, p. 13A). Again, Lawrence defended his newspaper’s fairness and balance in covering the exile community and Cuba:

Nowhere more regularly than in our own editorial pages has a newspaper spoken out more forcefully against Cuba’s dictatorship–41 editorials in the past year alone. No newspaper in this country has written more frequently, or with more insight, about Cuban-Americans–their concerns, their agonies, their culture (1992, Jan. 26, p. 13A).

Lawrence continued to emphasize Libertarian practices of American journalism, explaining that the duty of a newspaper is to “inform through its news columns and to serve as a marketplace of ideas in its opinion pages” (1992, Jan. 26, p. 13A).

Two days later, both on the airwaves and in the pages of El Diario, Mas said he would take apart each of the Herald’s lies in the following days. He planned a CANF rally at the Dade County Auditorium to talk about the Herald’s “20 years of silence and complicity” against Cuban politics. He cited specific instances of negative coverage, including stories on the Foundation’s Exodus program to relocate Cubans in third countries to the U.S., and Radio Marti. He vowed that Cubans would stand firm against
the *Miami Herald*’s “intellectual terrorism, intimidation and abuses” (Diario de las Americas, Jan. 28, p. 1A).

Mas attempted a second time to engage Lawrence in a public forum. He invited Lawrence to a rally in honor of Jose Marti and to have a dialogue on the *Herald*’s coverage of the Cuban-American community. Mas told the publisher that Congressman Torricelli would also be in attendance to discuss the intent of his Cuban Democracy Act. In part two of Lawrence’s editorial, the *Herald* printed Mas’s invitation to the CANF rally at an auditorium near Little Havana, Miami.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. I now ask that you take your first step. Jose Marti was a man who understood the power of the written word and the responsibility which must go hand in hand with such power. It is therefore altogether fitting that you join us on this special day (1992, Jan. 28, p. 13A).

Lawrence said that Mas’s invitation exhibited a well-meaning effort to engage in a discussion about the community conflict and he therefore planned to attend the Foundation event. Until he found out that the conciliatory tone in the invitation was in sharp contrast with what the Foundation leader was saying on AM radio and in *El Diario*.

If I thought that you really wanted a discussion, Mr. Mas, I would be there. But I’d be a fool to be a party to my own lynching, or anyone else’s. You don’t start a real discussion by using phrases such as ‘intellectual terrorism.’ And you are obviously not intimidated, Mr. Mas. You, in fact, are the intimidator (1992, Jan. 28, p. 13A).

Between editorial exchanges, members of the Miami community heavily contributed to the debate. Several letters to the editor were printed throughout the controversy in the newspaper’s “Readers Forum.” By the end of January, the *Herald* was devoting most of its space for opinion, viewpoint and editorials to the dueling
factions represented by Mas and Lawrence. The letters printed in the Herald and El Nuevo Herald were largely in support of the newspapers defense of its coverage and its right to editorial opinion. For example, six out of seven letters printed on January 31 supported the Herald. While the majority of editorials were decidedly in favor of the Herald, such evidence does not necessarily prove that most of the Miami community agreed with the newspaper. Since editors oversee the “Viewpoints” section of the newspaper, the absence of many editorials in support of Mas’s view may illustrate the possibility that Herald executives intentionally kept those opinions out of its pages.

Mas accused the Herald of censuring the letters to the editor, claiming that the daily’s editorial pages “have been an exclusive club for a few privileged” members of the community. He said that in the newspaper’s supposed, “marketplace of ideas, some ideas were simply more equal than others” (Mas, 1992, Feb. 2, p. 23A).

In that more than 2500-word editorial entitled “A question of basic human rights,” Mas cited 16 specific instances in which he said the Herald’s coverage was biased against the Cuban-American people. Among these was Mas’s observation that since 1989 the Herald had published 13 editorials, mentioning either the exile leader or the Foundation. Of those editorials, Mas said 10 were unfavorable and three were neutral.

The piece also addressed the issue of alleged “sexism” within the ranks of the Foundation. Thus the number of editorials in support of either the Foundation or the Herald is not indicative of the majority opinion in the community. He specifically referred to Liz Balmaseda’s column about a recent conference that covered the topic “The future of women in a free Cuba,” which was organized by Aida Levitan, owner of
a prominent Hispanic public relations and advertising agency in Miami. Mas was invited to this conference, but Domingo Moreira, a CANF executive director, attended in his stead. He was quoted as saying that new laws would not be necessary to protect women’s rights in a free Cuba. The laws, he said, should be the same for everyone and success should depend on competition, and not special favors (Balmaseda, 1991, Nov. 2, p. 3A). Balmaseda wrote that she considered the Moreira’s statement to be rather ironic “…coming from a lobbying group that had benefited from special federal programs” that “…allow private groups to sponsor political refugees” (Balmaseda, 1991, Nov. 2, p. 3A). Further, she pointed out that only three of CANF’s 53 directors were female.

In his February 2 editorial, Mas said that Liz Balmaseda forgot to mention all the women who run the Foundation, such as Perez Castellon, Mirta Iglesias, assistant to the president, and Matilde Quintana, computer systems administrator for the Miami office (Mas, 1992, Feb. 2, p. 23A).

Levitan, the conference organizer, in a 1999 interview stated that the Foundation was known as an “elitist and masculinist” organization. Even though women ran CANF, the decisionmakers were a close-knit group of directors, the majority of whom were male in 1999. “Jorge Mas Canosa was the ultimate caudillo” (Levitan, 1999, August 18). Caudillo is a Spanish word that means “strongman,” denoting the tendency to overpower others at all costs.

During the five-month conflict, several colleagues who Mas had somehow scorned in the past, such as Masvidal and former Radio Marti director Ernesto Betancourt, came out of the woodwork to decry CANF’s accusations against the

The former CANF director and one of Mas’s known enemies, wrote:

> Now that my former colleagues of the Cuban American National Foundation have introduced you to how their form of democracy works, my thoughts are with you, along with my prayers. Please don’t allow the *Herald* to be pushed around (1992, Jan. 31, p. 11A).

Masvidal also lost a mayoral election to Xavier Suarez, whose campaign was strongly endorsed by the Foundation.

Ernesto F. Betancourt took full advantage of this opportunity to voice his opposition to Mas in the conflict. The former director of Radio Marti was dismissed after he and Mas could not agree on the station’s programming (Elliston, 1999, p. 273; Garcia, 1996, p. 247). In his lengthy opinion piece published in the *Herald*, Betancourt expressed the irony of Mas’s accusations against the *Herald* after having kept a tight grip on Radio Marti. He said that Mas “ought to know better than to use intimidating tactics to hinder the freedom of a paper’s coverage.” Betancourt also argued that Mas was the true intimidator, not the *Herald*.

Finally, Mr. Mas was convicted of slandering his own brother. Now he has the gall of organizing a Cuban Anti-Defamation League. Indeed, such an entity is needed, but to protect Cuban-Americans who disagree with Mr. Mas from his slanders (Betancourt, 1992, Feb. 18, p. 13A).

By February 6, the Cuban Committee Against Defamation had convened for the first time. Its mission was to determine prejudice in news reports and observe the portrayals of Cuban-Americans in media (Corzo, Santiago, 1992, p.1B). Two complaints were filed with the group. The first piece of business on the agenda was the
Foundation’s complaint against the *Herald*. Mayor Xavier Suarez was on the committee, along with approximately 15 members of the Foundation (Appendix B). Lawrence and his fellow colleagues from both the *Herald* and *El Nuevo* met with the committee to discuss the newspapers’ coverage and later described the meeting as “robust, to say the least” (Chardy, Corzo, 1992, Feb. 7, p. 3B). Suarez’s memorandum regarding the committee’s meeting with Lawrence and other *Herald* executives notes that “after much effort on [the newspaper executives’] part, I believe we (the executive committee) left convinced that they do not understand or do not want to admit the problem” (Appendix B).

Suarez, who took a lead role in the league, regularly corresponded with *Herald* executives, including Knight Ridder CEO James Batten. In a February 10 letter, Suarez recounts a telephone conversation in which he reiterated his resentment of Batten’s question of whether the committee against defamation was “controlled by Jorge Mas” (Suarez, 1992, February 10). A number of articles reported Suarez’s assertion that the Cuban Committee Against Defamation was not driven by CANF’s campaign against the *Herald*. The mayor said that the fact that the group formed at the time was “a chronological coincidence” (Clary, 1992, March 1, p. 4A). Nonetheless, Mas announced the creation of the league in conjunction with his charges against the *Herald* at a press conference in late January. The CANF leader was also listed as a member of the committee.

Some members of the Hispanic media community were reluctant to support the efforts of the committee. Emilio Milian, a radio commentator for WWFE “Radio Fe” said he feared that the committee would interfere with the First Amendment.
Further, he said that he worried that the group would be “used to the personal benefit of persons or entities” (Chardy, Corzo, 1992, p. 1B). Milian, known for his pro-dialogue stance in regard to U.S.-Cuba policy, was the victim of a bomb explosion during his tenure at WQBA. The bomb went off under the hood of his car, resulting in the amputation of both of his legs (Soruco, 1996, p. 39, Balmaseda, 1992, March 21, p. 3A). The station directors of WQBA and WAQI did not comment on the creation of the anti-defamation group (Chardy, Corzo, 1992, p. 1B).

Mas continued to air his attacks on the Herald on local radio stations and the editorial pages of daily Spanish and English-language newspapers. In tandem with rallies, meetings, and other grassroots means, the CANF’s campaign unwittingly began to stir the hostilities of some segments of the Cuban-American. This hostility manifested in vile attacks on the Herald and its top executives. Its vending machines were vandalized with graffiti and signs. Feces were reportedly stuffed into the coin slots (Kurtz, 1992, Feb. 4, p. D1). Makeshift signs were placed on machines and read in Spanish “Miami Herald official organ of the Communist party” (Miami Herald, 1992, February 2, p. 13A). The Herald’s top executives Carlos Verdecia, Roberto Suarez, and Lawrence received death threats and the newspaper received a bomb threat (Chardy, 1992, Jan. 31, p. 3B; Hockstader, Booth, 1992, p. A1; Kurtz, 1992, Feb. 4, p. D1). The FBI and the City of Miami Police Department were called in to investigate the threats (Clary, 1992, March 1, p. 4A).

Lawrence in the meantime continued to use the “Viewpoints” section of the Herald to respond to the events of recent days. He called the entire episode “a defining moment for our community.” The publisher retold the news of the threats on Herald
employees and the vandalism of newspaper racks in Hialeah, Coconut Grove and Miami Beach. While Lawrence did not accuse Mas, he did suggest that the exile leader incited people to commit the acts against the Herald.

We have no one to accuse. Among the most visible and vocal of our critics are people who would never countenance or encourage violence themselves. But when you make wild and angry accusations, like some of this “pro-Castro” garbage, you stir up the less well-intentioned and the more misguided (Lawrence, 1992, Feb. 2, p.13A).

The intensely heated debate between Lawrence and Mas seemed to reach its climax when two international organizations intervened to investigate the conflict. One was the Inter American Press Association, an organization with a mission to protect freedom of the press throughout the Americas, and the other was the Americas Watch, a human rights group.

The IAPA, an amalgam of international and national journalists, customarily investigates threats to press freedom in militarized zones in the Americas. The five-member team made its first trip in IAPA history to investigate the threats against the Miami Herald, and to look into the circumstances that may have given them rise. The team included journalists from such Latin American nations as Brazil and Venezuela. The organization ironically found itself in the unique position of critiquing the practices of part of a press system it endeavored to model in other countries.

In its mission statement following the investigation, the IAPA said that it considered the threats against the Herald to be “serious” and urged “authorities to investigate them thoroughly and prosecute those responsible (The Miami Herald, 1992, March 22, p. 2B; Lawrence, 1992, March 27, p. 13A). The association also pointed out
that the Herald and CANF battle should serve as an important lesson to other newspapers, which face an ever-changing demographic of readers.

We also consider the tension between the Herald and some Miami Cuban exile groups as a “warning flag” for all newspapers undergoing major demographic changes...Maintaining a free press is vital to the demographic functioning of all communities, especially those undergoing major changes in composition of community such as Miami. So we call for vigorous support to the Herald from other members of the media, particularly in Florida, in connection with the continuing investigation against the paper (The Miami Herald, 1992, March 22, p. 2B; Lawrence, 1992, March 27, p. 13A).

The study also concluded that, while the Herald was striving to meet the needs of its diverse readership, the IAPA assessed that the daily was partly responsible for the events of past weeks. The distance that the Herald initially placed between itself and its coverage of the Cuban community lingered over time and resurfaced in CANF’s campaign. The Herald was working toward the deconstruction of what Gonzalo Soruco coined “Fort Herald” (1996, p.41). The IAPA acknowledged that the Herald’s treatment of the Cuban-American and, more specifically, the exile community played a part in the heightened hostilities it was experiencing.

The Miami Herald is clearly trying very hard to meet the challenge of covering a changing community, and even its critics admit it has made progress. However, it is also true that the Herald was slow to understand the new cultures within its readership area (The Miami Herald, 1992, March 22, p. 2B; Lawrence, 1992, March 27, p. 13A).

Although IAPA President James McClatchy assigned responsibility to the groups represented by Mas and Lawrence, both the publisher and Foundation leader used the report to bolster their arguments against each other. The Friday following the release of the association study, Lawrence ran the statement of the IAPA’s conclusions. The IAPA logo appeared above the headline “From the publisher.” The statement was
sandwiched between Lawrence’s declarations that his newspaper had not requested the independent inquiry and that the *Herald* “will continue to seek to be fair to all” (Lawrence, 1992, March 27, p. 13A).

The Foundation issued its statement following the release of the IAPA’s study, commending the association for its findings and conclusions. In its three-fold response to the study, which also agreed with its assessment that those who threatened the *Herald* should be found and prosecuted, CANF emphasized its finding that the *Herald* was partly responsible for the tense climate in the community.

We congratulate the Inter American Press Association for recognizing publicly that the Miami *Herald* has been slow in understanding our culture…But the Miami *Herald*, and especially *El Nuevo Herald*, still have a long way to go to understand and respect our ideals and our institutions (The Miami *Herald*, 1992, March 22, p. 2B).

Both Mas and Lawrence viewed the IAPA study as proof that each was correct in their positions in the conflict, and framed the association’s statement accordingly. CANF viewed the report as a vindication of what it had been saying to *Herald* executives all along – that they simply did not make the effort to understand the Cuban-American culture. In the last of his lengthy opinion pieces, Mas once more cited the IAPA’s findings that the *Herald* was “late in responding to the needs of the Cuban-American community” (Mas, 1992, March 27).

However, the IAPA was more critical of the exile community in its findings. It specifically admonished the exile groups for comparing the *Herald* to a Communist-run state newspaper.

It is ludicrous to state, as some groups do, that the Miami *Herald* is a propaganda organ of the Castro government in Cuba. Such irrational charges are damaging to the cause of free speech (The Miami *Herald*, 1992, March 22, p. 2B).
As with the IAPA study, Americas Watch also condemned exile groups in its study for creating a political environment of intimidation and censure (Garcia, 1996, p. 151; Rohter, 1992, March 19, p. A16).

By April 5, the dispute between Mas and Lawrence had passed its peak in the pages of the *Herald*. The 900-word opinion pieces and editorials had dwindled down to a few paragraphs each. The pieces expressed a desire by both sides to come to a resolution. Through the four months, the placement of Lawrence and Mas’s pieces had become so commonplace that it practically had its own section in the newspaper under the headline “More on CANF-Herald Dispute” (1992, April 5, p. 3B). In his piece, Mas wrote,

> The responsibility to be fair, and the duty to assure that we learn from this dispute, belongs to us as well as The *Herald*. How to lay the groundwork for a better understanding among all of us belongs to us. You and I, Mr. Lawrence (1992, April 5, p. 3B).

The first line of Lawrence’s response posed the question, “Why don’t we just agree to disagree?” (1992, April 5, p. 3B). By April 19, Lawrence was discussing new matters in the “Viewpoints” section. Only three paragraphs mentioning the updates on the publisher’s recent conversations with Mas accompanied the piece on Florida Governor Lawton Chiles (Miami *Herald*, 1992, April 19, p. 3C).

Following what seemed like a virulent winter in the tropics of Miami, Lawrence and Mas reconciled their differences in May, although a compromise was not reached. The Miami *Herald* and CANF did not come to an agreement on the coverage of Cuba and the exile community. Mas announced that he had called off the campaign against the daily for the time being. The exile leader proclaimed that the Foundation had been
successful in achieving its campaign goals. The coverage, he said, had become “more objective” in the weeks following IAPA study (Viglucci, 1992, May 22, p. 3A).
Lawrence still argued that the Herald had not been insensitive to the issues and needs of the Cuban-American community.

Mas and Lawrence each declared a truce on the way to an Easter Seals fundraiser. They were both scheduled to speak at the event. The comments they made to each other were reminiscent of a celebrity roast script and not as if the two had been engaged in a bitter battle over the Herald’s agenda. Mas said commended Lawrence for putting “up a hell of a fight on behalf of his people, no matter how wrong they are” (Viglucci, 1992, May 22, p. 3A).

The nasty battle prompted by an editorial against Congressman Torricelli’s Cuban Democracy Act was over. After several rounds of acerbic exchanges in the pages of the Herald, a few death threats, police and FBI investigations, and an independent inquiry, the two men had come to the conclusion that they should agree to disagree.

Amidst the resolution, Mayor Xavier Suarez poised himself as the mediator between both sides. He said that “explaining Mas to Lawrence and Lawrence to Mas” had been among the most difficult of the mayor’s endeavors (Miami Herald, 1992, May 22, p. 3C). A second draft provided in the Foundation’s materials, dated April 2, suggests that Mas intended to end the campaign against the newspaper early before the Herald published the last of his opinion pieces in late April (Appendix C).
Lessons Learned

The end of the CANF campaign brought publicity to the divisiveness of the Miami community. Some scholars and observers suggest that the conflict was a result of cultural misunderstanding. Anthony Maingot, a social scientist at the University of Miami, believes that the heated exchanges between Lawrence and Mas were representative of two distinct worlds of culture (1992, p. 9A). Media portrayed the clash of Miami powerhouses as revealing “ethnic rifts” (Constable, 1992, p. 3). Upon closer inspection, those analyses of the campaign against the Herald concede that politics is at the root of the contention, not only between the Foundation and the newspaper, but also among the increasingly heterogeneous makeup of the Cuban community.

The first wave of Cuban emigres from Castro’s revolution, the “Golden Exiles,” built a culture out of a political ideology. The catalysts for the Foundation’s most vehement attacks on the Herald have been political in nature. An important point to note, particularly as it relates to the Cuban community, is that culture and politics are intertwined so much that these elements are indistinguishable from each other. Even though CANF’s campaign was sparked by a negative editorial against Congressman Torricelli’s bill, Mas was not off the mark in arguing that such a gesture was an attack on the culture of the Cuban community.

To a certain extent, Mas’s Foundation and Lawrence’s Herald emerged victorious from the four-month-long contest of wills, if only for the short term. The publisher held fast to his initial contention that his newspaper had not been insensitive to the issues and needs of the Cuban-American community. In addition, the IAPA statement mostly condemned the exile community for its behavior during the campaign,
particularly warning them about making such incendiary remarks as comparing the
*Herald* to Castro’s *Granma*. This independent study somewhat vindicated the *Herald*
from the charge of bias in its coverage of the Cuban community, although the IAPA
team also pointed out the newspaper should have responded more quickly to the
demographic change in its readership. In fact, Lawrence was later named president of
the IAPA in 1995. In his incoming speech, the Herald publisher called on Latin
American nations “to educate readers and dispel myths and stereotypes” (Editor &

The *Herald* fought a long hard struggle for the right to its editorial opinion on
U.S.-Cuba policy issues in the end. Although such a perspective may not help to foster
relations with CANF or the exile community, nothing can ever really force the
newspaper to concede its viewpoint, except perhaps a decline in circulation. Despite
the billboard, bumper stickers and buses that read “I don’t believe the Miami *Herald,*
the newspaper was not hurt financially.

As the entire dispute played out in the pages of the *Herald*, most people were
ultimately compelled to keep up with every episode of Mas vs. Lawrence. This is
evident in that the *Herald* lost less than 60 subscribers and experienced an increase in
advertising sales during the months of the campaign (Adweek, 1992, May 4).

As for Mas, the Foundation had proven its point and boosted its membership
along the way. Francisco “Pepe” Hernandez, CANF president, told reporters that
membership increased by 1,200 during the campaign. According to Hernandez, the
increase signaled the full support of the Cuban community (Clary, 1992, March 1, p.
A4) on their side of the dispute. Mas succeeded in bringing attention to the “institutions,
values, ethics and ideals” (Chardy and Corzo, 1992, p. 3B) of the Cuban-American community too a degree, although it came as a result of an editorial against a CANF-endorsed policy measure. The campaign took center stage in local media and also gained significant coverage across the nation. This gave Mas the unique opportunity to frame his message, using the symbols of Cuban culture and patriotism to mobilize his de facto constituents.

After Mas proclaimed the campaign’s success, CANF had the confidence to fight other battles. In October, the Foundation filed a libel suit against Americas Watch for its report, “A Dangerous Dialogue,” charging that the Foundation was using government funds through the National Endowment for Democracy to support its programs. CANF lawyer Richard Mayberry also demanded an apology and a retraction from the human rights group for claiming that his clients contributed to an environment of censorship and intimidation in Miami (Mayberry, 1992, Oct. 7). The Foundation also initiated legal action against the Public Broadcasting System for a documentary entitled “A Campaign for Cuba” for making statements similar to those reported by Americas Watch (Mayberry, 1992, Oct. 13).

In 1996, the Foundation won another noteworthy victory against the New Republic for an article that about the life of CANF Chairman Jorge Mas Canosa. The 1994 article was written by Anne Louise Bardach, a contributing editor at Vanity Fair magazine, and was entitled “Clinton’s Miami Mobster.” Bardach likened Mas to a mobster twice more in the article: in the headline and in the text of the piece.
The article, much like the Miami Herald’s editorial against the Cuban Democracy Act, could not have come at a more critical time in the Mas’s relationship with Clinton.

The exile leader was in negotiations with the Clinton Administration to reevaluate the policy toward Cuban rafters. Immediately, CANF lawyers sprung into action and filed a libel suit against the New Republic and the author of the scandalous article, and this time Mas clearly won the battle.

Bardach had made a number of mistakes that were uncommon for a journalist of her caliber. She used anonymous sources from the State Department in gathering the information that led her to compare the exile leader to a Miami crime boss. In addition, she did not interview Mas or any of his colleagues at CANF and in the exile community, save for Raul Masvidal, the former Foundation director who resurfaced as one of the harshest critics of Mas during the Herald dispute in 1992 (Ackerman, 1996, June 20).

The New Republic in its own right exhibited sloppy editing of the article. The magazine’s editors mistakenly described Bardach as a freelance writer when in fact she was a contributing editor to Vanity Fair. In 1996, The New Republic settled with Mas and the Foundation for $100,000. CANF used the money to establish scholarships for Cuban-American journalism students with financial need (Pogrebin, 1996, Sept. 17, p. A17).

Jorge Mas Canosa died the fall of the following year at the age of 58. Even after the Foundation lost its inspirational leader who was known to have met every challenge with his well-known declaration, “Adelante, adelante,” or “forward, forward,” it
continued to challenge media. The organization no longer found itself at odds with the Herald’s coverage. After its mostly symbolic triumph against the New Republic, CANF took on the conservative exile community’s greatest nemesis in American media, the New York Times. Ann Louise Bardach, along with Times writer Larry Rohter, was again in a feud with CANF, this time implicating Mas and other directors in terrorist activities in Havana. The articles were an account of Luis Posada Carriles’s experiences as a militant anti-Castro activist hiding in the jungles of Guatemala. This particular series of articles, in fact, was the first time Posada disclosed the full details of his 37-year involvement with exile leaders, most prominently members of CANF. Ann Louise Bardach and Larry Rohter reported that Posada said the “hotel bombings and other operations had been supported by leaders of the Cuban American National Foundation” (July 12, 1998).

Immediately, CANF leaders contacted *Times* editors to challenge the allegations in the articles. A faxed letter from George Fowler, III, CANF executive director and lawyer representing the Foundation, demanded a full page retraction of the portions of the July 12 article that implicated “the Foundation and its leaders in the funding of any violent acts in Cuba or through Mr. Luis Posada Posada” (Fowler, Personal Communication, July 15, 1998).

The letter also demanded that the retraction include Posada’s statements to media, in which he denied ever implicating CANF leaders in his schemes, financially or otherwise. Following the articles in the *Times*, Posada told Spanish language television station WLTV-23 that Bardach contacted him to offer him “the chance to clarify the distortions in the media.” Instead, Posada claimed Bardach distorted his story and
“wrote a terrible report of falsehoods” (Yanez, July 15, 1998). CANF finally challenged the editors and reporters to produce the tape that specifically said that the organization had financed or been responsible for the bombings. Rojas explained that when the *Times* reporter could not corroborate what she had claimed Posada told her in interviews, the editors had no other choice but to negotiate a retraction. “When they finally did run a correction to the article, they didn’t call it a retraction,” explained Fernando Rojas, spokesperson and political advisor for Mas. After agreeing to a admitting their oversight, the editors commented that CANF “sure knows how to get its message across” (Personal communication, June 16, 1999). Indeed, CANF did not get the front-page retraction its lawyers requested. It appeared to be more an affirmation of the original article than it was an admission of error. The *Times’* Sunday, August 16 edition printed a three-paragraph editor’s note on page 2A, citing an “editing oversight” in one sentence of the article. However, the third paragraph does not specifically state that CANF did not financially support the bombings:

He [Posada] also noted that leaders of the foundation had publicly expressed support for the bombings, which they characterized as an act of internal rebellion. But as was made clear elsewhere in the article, Mr. Posada said Mr. Mas and other leaders of the foundation did not earmark money for specific operations and asked not to be told how he used their funds (New York Times, August 16, 1998, p. 2A).

In the long term, the clash between the *Herald* and the Foundation hindered both institutions, to the detriment of the entire community. The CANF’s campaign permanently changed the way the newspaper dealt with stories on or affecting the Cuban community. Stories on Cuba were given much more editorial consideration and required more effort from reporters. Doug Clifton, the *Herald’s* executive editor, admitted shortly after the Foundation feud that the newspaper was much more careful in
reviewing stories on Cuba and the exile community than it had been before CANF’s full-scale campaign. He said that “it was good sense” to be more careful in editing copy after being the target of “an intense public relations campaign to attack your credibility” (O’Connor, 1992, p. 42).

Lawrence was already viewed by his newsroom colleagues as a corporate journalist willing to compromise journalistic values to appease the dominant voices of a divided community. The lengthy exchange further tarnished his reputation and also caused resentment among reporters on his staff. Several journalists and scholars argued that Lawrence ceded too much ground to the dominant exile perspective that CANF represented. Lawrence’s attempts to build bridges across the Cuban-American cultural divide was considered by many to be more akin to pandering to the dominant exile ideology (Swartz, 1999, June 7, p. 36). Further, his style of civic journalism was not well received by his own staff.

Many at the Herald argued that Lawrence did not give an equal voice to all the diverse segments that comprise Miami, such as the other Hispanic and Caribbean ethnic enclaves. Special attention was placed on coverage of Cuba and Cuban Miami. Herald reporters said that coverage of the Foundation and Cuban-Americans was carefully scrutinized. After the CANF-Herald dispute, one of the daily’s reporters said “there has been a watershed in how we operate with Cuban questions” (O’Connor, 1992, p. 42). A New Republic article in mid-May called El Nuevo Herald “a mouthpiece for the exile leadership” (Lizza, 2000, May 15, p. 18).

Other observers suggested that Lawrence’s idealistic attempts at changing the newspaper’s relationship with a multi-ethnic community ended up catering to the
loudest voice in the city—the voice of the Cuban exiles as represented by the Foundation. His effort toward fostering a more cohesive community in which the Herald could thrive was therefore regarded as a failure (Swartz, 1999, June 7, p. 36).

The *Herald* also nearly suffered a loss in its ability to gather news on Cuba, as a direct result of the several months of exchanges between Lawrence and Mas. The very fact that both figures engaged in a dialogue on the rights of a free press and its duty to the citizens of Miami was enough convince Fidel Castro that the *Herald* was yielding to the demands of the Foundation. The Cuban government initially denied visas for *Herald* reporters. Castro cited Lawrence’s editorials, specifically repeating the publisher’s statement that the *Herald* had not shifted its longtime editorial position against *el lider* (Clifton, 1992, May 3, p. 3C).

Miami’s metro daily, through no fault of its own, was in the precarious position of reporting news both on the island and in the Cuban community, while endeavoring to neither offend Castro nor the Foundation. The CANF’s campaign put pressure on the *Herald* staff to pay particular attention to Cuba-related news, and when it did, its reporters were prohibited from covering Cuba from the inside. Ironically, because the composition of its readership requires the *Herald* to report news on Cuba with greater depth and breadth than most any other daily in the U.S., Castro will less likely approve visas for its Miami staff. Instead, the regime preferred that the *Herald* send a writer from the Washington bureau, who “was not tainted by Miami” (Clifton, 1992, May 3, p. 3C).

The CANF-*Herald* battle especially exposed the deep political rifts of that existed between the Libertarian system of media and an ethnic community diametrically
opposed to liberal ideology. CANF’s campaign against the *Herald* served as an example of the worst-case scenario in writing about the exile community.

Members of media, such as Jim Mullin, editor for the *New Times* weekly paper, were harshly critical of Lawrence’s long-winded diatribes with Mas. Also, the Foundation’s charge that the *Herald* was biased against the Cuban-American community was not resolved in the end. The newspaper never offered the exile community any compelling reason to end their decades-long distrust of media. The Foundation continued to be absolutely vigilant over the coverage of their organization and Cuban Miami, as well as any policy measures it endorsed.

These circumstances constitute a double-edged sword in reporting news in the enclave, particularly for Cuban-American journalists. For example, Juan O. Tamayo, a seasoned journalist who has covered the Middle East and the Gulf War, is a Cuban-American who has deliberately kept away from covering Cuba. He explains the no-win situation of covering the news on the island, especially when any aspect of the story might deal with exile leadership. “That was my last line of defense – that I will not cover the exile community,” Tamayo said. After several years of working outside of Miami’s beltway, the career foreign journalist found himself in the quandary he tried to avoid.

In 1998, Tamayo broke the story on Luis Posada Carriles, the alleged perpetrator of hotel bombings in Havana, who initially linked CANF in the terrorist plot. Tamayo said that the CANF took to AM radio, as it customarily did, and called him everything from a spy for the Cuban government to accusing him of having a mistress in El Salvador.
Yet, Tamayo admits that the relationship between the Cuban community and the *Herald*, and the Anglo media in general, has been very bad. He also points out that “Dave [Lawrence] can be a real asshole” (Tamayo, 1999, Aug. 5).

The worst part of covering Cuba-related stories, however, is that because he is Cuban-American, fellow journalists automatically assume that the story will be reported with a conservative “exile” slant:

The assumption is that I have something intrinsically, or whatever you want to call it, that makes me have a bias on Cuba. That really pisses me off. I think that’s the worst part of that job, and in a way I think it denotes a certain kind of racism. So no matter how liberal I think I am, whether I agree with the members of the journalism community or the exile community, there are members of the journalism community who see you as a stereotype (Tamayo, 1999, Aug. 5, personal interview).

The non-Cuban community in Miami may have lost the most at the close of the dispute. For four months, Miami’s only English-language daily exchanged viewpoints on an issue that involved only one segment of its readership, albeit the largest growing segment of the city’s population. During that bitter winter between the *Herald* and CANF, the “marketplace of ideas” in the pages of the daily only had one thing to offer to all its readers. Spring arrived and nothing had been resolved between Lawrence and Mas, and their debate had overshadowed the discussion of any other pressing issue in the community.

In a letter to the editor, one Miami resident wrote, “You show a staggering lack of judgment in giving Mr. Mas and people of this caliber so much space” (Miami *Herald*, 1992, February 10). The newspaper’s duty of providing the reader with the comprehensive review of the day’s events had been diminished for the sake of a debate between two of Miami’s most powerful men. In addition, only two perspectives on the
Cuba policy issue received ample space in the pages of the *Herald* for discussion. Consequently, even at moments when the virulent exchange of *ad hominem* attacks revealed traces of substantive debate, the Miami community was denied the ability to form a thoughtful, well-rounded opinion through the self-righting process.

The difficulty of covering Cuba-related stories, as evidenced through Tamayo’s anecdote and the CANF campaign, may have a chilling effect on the next generation of Cuban-Americans with a desire to participate in the politics of the Miami their parents have created. Interviews with young, politically active Cubans indicate that both coverage and the way in which the Foundation deals with media should change (Cruz, 1999, August 13; Pollack, 1999, August 13; Miranda, 1999, July 26, personal interviews).

Henry Pollack, 31, and Alex Cruz, 23, both aides to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, agree that the CANF leadership alienates younger Cubans, especially those who were not born in Miami and arrived in later waves of immigration. “I don’t think that the Foundation has anything to do with me; they only represent a small segment of wealthy older businessmen” (Pollack, 1999, August 13, personal interview). Mario Miranda, Jr., 26, son of Jorge Mas Canosa’s former bodyguard and organizer of *Jovenes de la Fundacion*, had seen a sharp decline in attendance from the initial meeting of the Foundation Youth. “It’s just that we are all so busy, that it just got harder to get together” (Miranda, 1999, July 26).

The interview responses of these younger Cuban-Americans denote a sense of detachment from their parent’s version of a cause for a free Cuba. They are more concerned with Cuba now, and what the island nation will be when Castro falls. This
change in perspective is a generational factor on which the Herald should keep a keen eye if it wants to foster the next generation of newspaper readers.

One lesson learned from the CANF campaign against the Herald is that the recommendations of the Commission on Freedom of the Press in 1947 are applicable today. The Commission strongly recommended a self-regulating entity to prevent government intervention in the functions of the free press. The IAPA study functioned as the self-regulating entity that the Commission suggests (1947, p.74). Robert Hutchins and his fellow commission members used the example of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, but given the diverse make-up of cities like Miami, the IAPA serves a more appropriate purpose.

Also, with the advent of the Information Age and the sharp increase in population of Hispanics in the U.S., the IAPA is better equipped to evaluate questions of newsworthiness and accurate coverage. The significance of stories to readers in multi-ethnic communities is no longer bound by county, state, or national borders. The dynamic between the Herald and the exile community illustrates that point. Thus, the Herald is well served by the self-regulatory function the Inter American Press Association served in its disagreements with CANF and Mas.

The Herald’s role in the heated debate with the Foundation proved the timeless value of yet another of the recommendations made by the Hutchins Commission. As a result of four months of debate and the subsequent shift in newsroom policy regarding stories on Cuba, other members of the local and national journalism community engaged in vigorous mutual criticism (Hutchins, 1947, p. 94).
Jim Mullins, editor of the *New Times*, an alternative bi-weekly paper, had a field day criticizing Mas for his attempts to strongarm the *Herald* and Lawrence for acting fooling in letting the exile leader get away with his tactics. Mike Clary, former staff writer for the *Herald* all but predicted that the editorial policy would be changed to suit the needs of the exile community. Upon Lawrence’s arrival at the Miami newsroom, Clary wrote that staff knew the former *Detroit Free Press* editor was put at the *Herald* to keep an eye on the bottom line and cater to the whims of Miami’s segmented community.
Conclusion

The conflict between Mas and Lawrence in 1992 was a defining moment in Miami history that also serves as an example for other diverse metro areas. It was a political struggle of two social and political paradigms veiled by cultures. The competing values represented by words and symbols served to mobilize an ethnic community and caused a Metropolitan daily paper to reevaluate its tone and substance in regard to a single issue.

One set of values had been shaped by the traumatic experience of exile. The other had been fueled by its insistence it had achieved the lofty goals of balance and “objectivity.” The battle between the Foundation and the Herald was a vivid glimpse of what daily newspapers in ethnically diverse metropolitan areas can expect as they deal with perspectives that are intrinsically at odds with journalism values.

In particular, the social tensions between media and Cuban Miami comprise an ongoing experiment of that have never been thoroughly analyzed in scholarly context. At a convention for the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, David Lawrence made the following remarks:

What is happening in Miami today is a preview of what will be happening in many American communities in the coming years. If newspapers are to thrive – even survive – they must keep up with their changing communities. To achieve excellence a newspaper must cover all the communities within the greater community…Newspapers can succeed only if they reflect the full diversity of the communities we serve (Stein, 1992, May 2, p. 23).

Lawrence’s advice underscores the immense significance historically analyzing the CANF’s campaign against the Miami Herald and, to a greater extent, the tense relations between an ethnic community and its local metro daily.
Just a few years after Lawrence made his remarks at the NAHJ convention, two other metropolitan areas experienced a similar situation as the Herald-CANF battle. In 1998, the members of the local Puerto Rican community gathered outside the doors of the Boston Globe. They were protesting a columnist’s characterization of their island as a “Caribbean Dogpatch” (Sullivan, 1998, Dec. 8, p. 20). The editorial board quickly addressed the issue with representatives of the ethnic community.

The Los Angeles Times was also besieged with several hundred local citizens, protesting the daily’s portrayal of Latinos. They objected to the LA Times’ negative coverage of Latino youths in its crime stories. The demonstrators stood outside the Times Mirror Square building, calling for a boycott of the newspaper until the publisher listened and responded to their complaints (Los Angeles Times, 1998, Dec. 21, p. 8B). These kinds of confrontations will to occur more often as the rising Hispanic population continues to retain its ethnic consciousness, selecting certain aspects of assimilation but keeping their ability to mobilize in solidarity around issues that affect their politics of ethnic identity.

CANF’s campaign against the Herald was greater in magnitude and had a deeper impact on the media practices and coverage in Cuban Miami than those of the LA Times and the Boston Globe. The exilio is a unique metropolitan area that has been completely transformed by immigrant politics and culture. There is no adequate framework that can explain or even elucidate the uniqueness of experiences in the Miami community. Ironically, this uniqueness transcends the borders of Dade County and is evident in many large multiethnic cities, such as Los Angeles and New York.
Social scientists continue to argue that Miami is a microcosm of the ethnic dynamics that are occurring throughout the world, especially as it relates to media:

The forces that transformed Miami are very much at play elsewhere…Miami may not show to other cities the exact image of their own futures, but the social transformations that have taken place in South Florida contain important lessons for the momentous changes now occurring in American urban life (Portes, 1992, p. xv).

The argument made by several observers and scholars cited in the previous chapter that Lawrence pandered to the political views and interests of the exile community presents a serious problem for the Miami Herald in the long term. As generational differences and factors of assimilation start to take effect, the readership needs of Cuban-Miami change, and the local daily paper must change along with it.

In acknowledging that the conservative exile ideology is dominant and static, the Herald may not be poised to quickly change with its dynamic, multi-ethnic community. The various waves of immigration, from the “Golden Exiles” to the Marielitos, and more recently the Cuban rafters that arrived throughout the early 1990s has made Cuban-American attitudes toward media difficult to gauge. Yet, as the Hispanic population in the U.S. continues to grow into the largest minority group by the year 2010, media must learn to meet the needs of this increasingly important part of its audience and readership.

Unfortunately, research on media uses and attitudes of Cuban-Americans and other Hispanic groups is virtually unchartered territory. This may be one of the reasons why metropolitan daily newspapers, in this case the Herald, have been so slow to understand their diverse readerships, as the Inter American Press Association’s study
concluded in 1992. Only recently have Hispanics become the subject of study due to their growing buying power (Subervi-Velez, 1986).

The first step in understanding the processes of a multi-ethnic community that constantly changes with every successive generation and wave of immigration is to historically document events such as the dispute between the Herald and CANF. Only then can editors or social investigators derive meaning from these events and apply them to other metro dailies facing a rapidly changing demographic of readers. This work had to rely on first-hand accounts, organization materials, and articles from the very same newspaper that the exile community charged with bias and cultural insensitivity.

This thesis provides only a historical fragment of analysis for understanding the context of CANF’s attitudes toward the Miami Herald. Although historical analyses of the politics and immigration are plentiful, literature on the history of Cubans’ relationship with media is woefully sparse. The body of research on Cuban-Americans lacks a more comprehensive historical analysis on usage of and attitudes toward media in the Cuban community.

An ethnographic profile of different areas of Cuban Miami would greatly complement any historical background to be used to evaluate messages and the mediums for those messages. Since ethnic communities and the political dynamic of each is in a constant state of flux, periodic ethnographic reports would provide the richest detail possible for understanding media behaviors and attitudes. This type of study would be of special use to media such as the Herald. Like other metro dailies, the
Herald conducts readership research frequently. However, telephone and e-mail surveys often do not explain the “why” behind the “what” supplied by the answer.

While this work provides a context for investigating the dispute between the two ideologically opposed institutions represented by Mas and Lawrence, a historical analysis of the CANF’s campaign still leaves many questions unanswered. Central to this conflict is the issue of whether the Herald was biased in its coverage of the exile community and showed a lack of balance in its editorials on U.S.-Cuba policy. A content analysis of the Herald’s stories and editorials would provide answers to this question.

Because the image of Cubans has differed according to each wave of immigration, a content analysis should begin with coverage of the first wave of emigres following Fidel Castro’s revolution, the era of the “Golden Exiles.” Ideally, the content analysis should be conducted on all three of the major immigration waves. Each era of coverage should be compared with the other to denote any change in the portrayal of Cuban immigrants from 1960 to 1990. A content analysis of this sort will serve a historical purpose in addition to illustrating media’s perceptions of Cuban-Americans.

Another question that this historical analysis has not answered is whether the Foundation’s distrust of media is representative of all of Cuban Miami. A random telephone survey conducted by bilingual encoders would help to uncover if in fact the CANF’s attitudes and actions toward the Herald are on par with the interests of the constituents it claims to represent. Second-hand evidence showing that the Herald did not experience a substantial drop in readership suggests that not every Cuban-American in Miami was influenced to “not believe the Miami Herald.”
Survey research would also be useful in exploring media attitudes and usage among different ages and levels of socioeconomic status of Cubans, while taking into account the factor of immigration experience. This type research should incorporate the use of whole population samples rather than probability samples, as Soruco suggests (1996, p. 31). Whole populations take into account factors of assimilation and generational difference.

Probability samples would likely select respondents from areas such as Little Havana, in the heart of the Cuban enclave that is home to older, less assimilated Cubans. The exile ideology, as it corresponds with the first wave of immigrants fleeing Communist Cuba, pervades these areas. As the Cuban-American community moves into the third and fourth generations, it is less likely to reside in the enclave. Surveys on whole populations are therefore important in gathering an accurate representation of the Cuban community.
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Feliciano Foyo
From: Francisco J. Hernandez
Re: Advertising Check Request
Date: 2/21/92

Please prepare checks for the different amounts listed below as soon as possible. Bill Barzee will pick up the checks when they are ready. If you have any questions, please call.

Make check payable to: For the amount of:
3-M NATIONAL $2,800.00
Gateway Outdoor Advertising $3,000.00
Rose Printing $925.00
Aerial Advertising $450.00

DESCRIPTIONS

3-M National Billboard
South side of Flagler east of Douglas, facing east for westbound traffic.
SIZE: 10 X 48 Ft. Illuminated
MESSAGE: I don’t believe The Miami Herald

Gateway Outdoor Advertising
Taillight 21" x 72"
60 Buses (We chose the routes)

Rose Printing
Printing for Bus Signs

Aerial Advertising
Plane tows message written out in 7 Ft. letters.
Actual Time Over Gran Prix 2/23 1:30hr
ADVERTISING PROPOSAL

I BILLBOARDS (3-M NATIONAL)

South side of Flagler east of Douglas, facing east for westbound traffic. (This sign is illuminated at night and is positioned for maximum exposure for people coming home from downtown between 4 and 6pm. Sign will go up less than ten days after receipt of check. Prices based on one month run.)

SIZE: 10 X 48 Ft. Illuminated
COST: $2,800.00
MESSAGE: EL HERALD OCULTA LA VERDAD

Other locations available at this time:

West side of NW 27th Ave., 50 ft North of NW 17th St., facing South for Northbound traffic.
Size: 14 x 48 Ft. Illuminated
Cost: $1,790

North side of 103rd 1/2 Mile West of NW 32d Ave. Facing East for West bound traffic.
Size: 14 x 48 Ft. Illuminated
Cost: $1,595

West side of SW 27th Ave., 50 ft South of Flagler, facing South for Northbound traffic.
Size: 10 x 48 Ft. Not Illuminated
Cost: $2,000

South side of Bird Road at SW 71st Ave., facing west for Eastbound traffic.
Size: 14 x 48 Ft. Illuminated
Cost: $2,800

Northwest corner Lejeune/Okeechobee Road, facing West for Eastbound traffic.
Size: 14 x 48 Ft. Illuminated
Cost: $2,800

These signs would go up approx. two weeks after receipt of check. If we order 3 or more signs, cost will be reduced by 10%.

(Prices based on managers discount for non-profit groups)
II METRO BUS (Gateway, Inc.)

Prices based on one month run.

**Taillight 21" x 72"**
60 Buses (We chose the routes)
Cost: $3,000 plus production.

**Side of Bus 30" x 144"**
60 Buses (We chose the routes)
Cost: $4,500 plus production

(Prices based on 50% discount for non-profit groups)

**PRODUCTION COST**

A. **TAILLIGHT**
Two colors (Black print on yellow background)

1) Same message for all signs  
   Cost: $660.00

2) Two different messages (20 in English, 40 in Spanish)  
   Cost: $925.00

3) Three different messages (20 in English, 20 in Spanish, 20 in Spanish)  
   Cost: $1080.00

B. **SIDE OF BUS**
Two colors (Black print on yellow background)

1) Same message for all signs  
   Cost: $1,270.00

2) Two different messages (20 in English, 40 in Spanish)  
   Cost: $1,575.00

3) Three different messages (20 in English, 20 in Spanish, 20 in Spanish)  
   Cost: $1,985.00

(Prices based on 15% discount for non-profit groups)
III BANNER TOWING PLANE (Aerial Advertising)

Plane tows message written out in 7 Pt. letters.  
Actual Time Over Event: 1:30 hr  
Cost: $450.00 per event based on two events.  
Total cost for two events (3 hrs of air time): $900

South Florida Events:  
Gran Prix February 22, 23  
Calle Ocho March 15th  
Lipton Tennis on Key Biscayne March 13-22  

(Prices based on managers discount for non-profit groups)

IV BUS BENCHES (Bus Bench Co.)

100 Benches  
Cost: $3,300.00 plus production  

200 Benches  
Cost: $6,600.00 plus production  

Production Cost  
100 Benches: $2800.00  
200 Benches: $5600.00

(These figures are based on a proposal submitted to Mr. Erello Pena by Steve Martin, President of Bus Bench Co. Mr. Pena has pointed out that the cost figures are 50% off and that he believes there is more room for negotiation.)
V BUMPER STICKERS

20,000 Bumper Stickers (Black print on yellow background)
10,000 English "I don't believe The Miami Herald"
10,000 Spanish "Yo No Creo en El Nuevo Herald"

Total Cost: $3281.63

These have been ordered and will be delivered February 14th.
(Price includes manager's discount)

VI PRINTING COST FOR DR. MATERA'S PAPER (Original Impressions)

10,000 copies in English
10,000 copies in Spanish

Prices quoted are estimates. Final cost will depend on quality of paper selected, type of binding job, and whether or not we would want the document typeset.

10,000 copies in English
Cost: $3,627

10,000 copies in Spanish
Cost: $3,627

Total cost estimate: $7,124

These prices are based on 8 1/2" x 11" basic letter quality paper, black ink print on both sides with a magazine type binding and wrap around self cover. As noted above, prices are estimates. We should be able to negotiate a better deal in the next two or three days.
VII EL NUEVO HERALD ADVERTISING

Rates based on 1/8th of a page. Copy photo ready.

Sunday $513.00 per day
Week day $479.29 per day

Discounts for multiple runs

3 times in one month:
$446.56 per day
$484.32 per sunday

5 times in one month:
$439.84 per day
$477.12 per sunday

10 times in one month:
$425.92 per day
$462.08 per sunday

20 times in one month:
$394.40 per day
$427.84 per sunday

(For example, running the add 4 times a week for four weeks would be $6,310.40 plus 4 Sundays at $1,711.36 would be a total run of 20 times in a month for a total cost of $8,021.76)

These figures are based on strict retail rates. Non-profit special rates were not asked about at this time.
APPENDIX B

CUBAN COMMITTEE AGAINST DEFAMATION
P.O. Box 523831
Miami, FL 33152

AGENDA
February 21, 1992 5:00pm

I Call Meeting to Order

II Record Attendance of Directors

III Old Business

A. Cuban American National Foundation's Complaint Against
   The Miami Herald

B. Tony Calatayud's Complaint Filed Against Cambio 16

IV New Business

A. Ratify By-Laws

B. Other New Business

V Adjournment
Sr. Roberto Suarez,
Editor, Nuevo Herald.

Estimado Roberto:

He leído en la primera página de la sección B de la edición de hoy 6 de febrero, con el subtítulo "Enfoque provoca opiniones contradictorias", el cual me ha causado gran desagrado, pues se tergiversa una respuesta a preguntas sobre el reciente Comité contra la Desinformación. En el sentido de que no estoy de acuerdo con el mismo y se me atribuye la frase: "...todo esto es para buscar una polémica y el Herald no le debe dar ese chance..." Esto es distorsionar mi opinión y parcializarme en favor del Nuevo Herald. En este asunto he tomado una posición imparcial, según le comuniqué al Sr. David Lawrence a Ud. y al Sr. Jorge Mas Canosa.

Tenemos muchos problemas en el exilio, para seguir añadiendo otros y dado que las respuestas se tergiversan, suprimiéndolos o añadiéndoles conceptos, me veré obligado en el futuro a escribir cualquier respuesta a los periodistas de ese periódico. Esto es lo que causa problemas entre los cubanos y el Nuevo Herald.

No tengo por qué parcializarme con el Herald, pues la Junta acaba de realizar la Cena Martiana, con invitados especiales y el Herald no publicó una palabra y además desconoció nuestra presencia en el acto de New York. Entre las organizaciones mencionadas por el Herald se omitió el nombre de la Junta, que fue una de las principales organizadoras por las Regionales de New Jersey y New York, presencia que fue reconocida por todos los periódicos que hicieron el reportaje de ese acto. Deploro este desagradable incidente.

Quedo afectuosamente,

Dr. Manuel A. de Varona
Presidente
JUNTA PATRIOTICA CUBANA.
An Ethnic Community at Odds With the Local Newspaper
- The Miami Herald’s Coverage of Cuban Issues -

By: Fran R. Matera, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor at the
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and
Telecommunication
Arizona State University

On October 19, 1987, the Cuban American National Foundation placed a full-page advertisement in The Miami Herald blasting the newspaper’s coverage of Cubans and Cuban American issues. The sharply-worded ad followed nearly three decades of acrimony between Miami’s dominant Latin immigrant population and South Florida’s influential, Anglo-owned, Anglo-edited newspaper.

The attack came a month before The Herald tried anew to reach the Hispanic market by restructuring and updating its Spanish-language insert, El Miami Herald. The Foundation, which had no reason to believe El Nuevo Herald would be any more in tune with the Cuban community than El Miami Herald, took both offense and the offensive. It assailed the paper’s editorial policy as “ignorant” and its coverage of Cuban Americans as inaccurate. It further claimed the publication’s true interest in Cuban Americans was motivated by the exiles’ bank accounts. It charged, in part, that:

“The Miami Herald is aggressive in its ignorance of our people... The Miami Herald’s abuses go beyond insensitivity. Over the years, The Herald has exhibited a pattern of neglect, manipulation and censorship of Cuban and Cuban American news... It refuses to understand how anyone can feel such passion against communism without being right-wing kooks on the fringe of society... The Miami Herald cannot dismiss our values and institutions and still expect to win our patronage... The Miami Herald will never be accepted until it realizes that when it unfairly attacks or misrepresents the institutions we seek to build in this country, it attacks the very roots and culture we are seeking to establish... Cuban Americans will continue to prosper and contribute to this wonderful land that is our home. We are not so certain that a paper that has been so disdainful of our community can long survive, let alone prosper...”

They are strong words, the kind that should have made any community-minded newspaper publisher take notice. One would have thought that over the ensuing half-decade, The Herald would have ironed out its differences with the Cuban community. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. Today, the chasm between The Miami Herald and the Cuban American citizens it serves is wider than in 1987. Emotions have reached a boiling point.

In early 1992, Foundation chairman Jorge Mas Canosa appeared on a Spanish-language radio station and unleashed his
harshest criticism of The Herald to date: "The Miami Herald and [publisher] David Lawrence and [El Nuevo Herald publisher] Roberto Suarez have assumed the same postures that Fidel Castro has assumed for 33 years. Castro attacks, he destroys men, the integrity of whole families and, after all is said and done, presents himself as a victim of the United States. David Lawrence and Roberto Suarez do the same thing. They insult, misinform, distort, destroy men and institutions... Like Cuba's Granma, The Miami Herald does not allow dissident opinions, free opinions contrary to theirs. When someone dares to espouse those opinions, they do what they did yesterday -- half a page by their most powerful executives directed against me... In Cuba there is only one newspaper, Granma. Over there only one opinion is published, Fidel Castro's. In Miami, there is only one English-language newspaper, The Herald. Here, only one opinion is published, theirs. The time has come for our community to demand respect and for its opinions to be published with the diversity and the guarantees that a free society offers. That is why we struggle in Cuba, and our adherence to those principles will not permit us to back down before The Miami Herald's intellectual terrorism, its intimidation and its abuses."

In response, Herald publisher David Lawrence wrote in his column: "... You are obviously not intimidated, Mr. Mas. You, in fact, are the intimidator. You've made up your mind about The Truth. Your words betray you. You see yourself as the victim. You see us as Granma, the Communist Party newspaper. You know better, Mr. Mas. Granma wouldn't run your opinions. We do run your opinions. You will find many opinions published in The Herald. Some will agree with yours, other will not. In a democracy many opinions are necessary to an honest discussion."

It was the second such column Lawrence wrote directed at Mas Canosa under the headlines "Come on Mr. Mas, be fair" and "Come on Mr. Mas, be fair: Part II." The columns were mostly a defense of The Herald's coverage of Cuban issues.

"Nowhere more regularly than in our own editorial pages has a newspaper spoken out more forcefully against Cuba's dictatorship -- 41 editorials in the past year alone," Lawrence wrote. "No newspaper in this country has written more frequently, or with more insight, about Cuban Americans -- their concerns, their agonies, their culture. There is not a newspaper that has defended more passionately the cause of human rights in Cuba, to such a degree that the Cuban regime has accused us of being pawns of the CIA and U.S. imperialism."

While such defenses are notable, it is the blatant accusations and biting invectives used by both Lawrence and Mas Canosa that stand out in the unprecedented exchange.

On January 22, 1992, Cuban American leaders, led by Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez, announced the formation of the Cuban
Anti-Defamation Committee, an organization formed to aggressively fight "unfair characterizations" about Cubans in the media.

"The purpose is to defend the character, the good name and the influence of this community, of the accomplishments of the Cuban community against those who would distort, defame and attack our community," Suarez said.

Others took a more violent approach. A death threat to Lawrence and Suarez came through the mail. A caller said a bomb had been planted in the lobby of The Herald's building. Forty newspaper vending machines were defaced and vandalized in and around Miami, including nine that were smeared with feces.

Lawrence, in another column published February 2, indirectly blamed Mas Canosa.

"We have no one to accuse. Among the most visible and vocal of our critics are people who would never countenance or encourage violence themselves. But when you make wild and angry accusations, like some of this 'pro-Castro' garbage, you stir up the less well-intentioned and the more misguided. We cannot afford to forget that it only takes one dangerous fool to alter the course of history... Please know, I say politely but firmly, that we will never let this newspaper be intimidated in its ability and determination to pursue the truth."

How did it come to this in Miami?

After a few relatively quiet years following Mas Canosa's initial statement in 1987, the 1990s opened with the Cubans and The Herald once again at each other's throats over ideological issues. In some ways, the Cuban/Miami Herald conflict mirrors the animosity that exists in many other cities where the citizens are far more conservative than the editors of the local newspaper. In Miami, however, where everything seems to be taken to the extreme, the passions are fueled by more than just political and cultural differences. The perpetually boiling caldron of emotions is fueled by two main ingredients: The unrelenting love Cuban Americans still have for their island homeland; and the undiminished hatred the vast majority of Cuban Americans hold toward Fidel Castro and communism.

The battle lines have been drawn most recently over an issue that has divided the Cuban community itself. For decades, it was considered blasphemous in Miami to even consider the concept of negotiating with Fidel Castro. The idea stirred such intense feelings that the debate rarely reached the point of determining just what was to be negotiated. For three decades, there appeared little to talk about. Miami's moderate Cubans feel the only acceptable solution to their long exile is the abdication of power by Castro. The more impassioned Cubans, or those still hurt and enraged over the
death, imprisonment, or torture of family members in Castro's prisons, will accept nothing short of Castro's death.

Over the past decade, however, a small but increasingly influential movement has begun among Cubans, both exiles in Miami and dissidents inside Cuba, who favor a dialogue with Castro. Because this "pro-dialogue" movement folds nicely into the liberal ideology, it's not surprising that the movement has received extensive coverage in The Miami Herald. It's also not surprising that these stories have fed the fury of the anti-dialogue Cuban majority.

By its count, the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) cites 102 stories in The Herald dating back to January 1988 that mentioned pro-dialogue leader Elizardo Sanchez. By comparison, the Foundation says there were only nine stories during that same period that mention the names or activities of any of six different anti-dialogue leaders.

Part of the explanation for the difference in coverage can be attributed to the simple fact that anything new is news, and the pro-dialogue movement is therefore, by definition, more newsworthy. However, an analysis of the stories themselves reveals that instead of pointing out that the pro-dialogue view is still the minority, and re-emphasizing the position of the majority, most of the stories have run without being put in this proper context.

The CANF's statisticians cite an even more disturbing example of The Herald's editorial support for the activities of liberal Cuban Americans. When dissident Gustavo Arco promped an anti-dialogue stance, he was mentioned 15 times in The Herald over a period of 30 months. When Arco changed his colors and threw in with the pro-dialogue forces, he was mentioned 54 times in just 18 months. Similarly, violent acts against pro-dialogue dissidents receive far greater play in The Herald than violence against those opposed to speaking with Castro.

Despite the existence of the pro-dialogue forces, and despite the impression given in the pages of The Herald, the fervent anti-Castro stance of Cuban Americans in Miami remains unabated. Thus, one can imagine the shock of Miami's Cuban community when they awakened on the morning of November 15, 1991 to read this headline in their morning Herald: "Poll: Exiles favor U.S.-Cuba Negotiations." The headline was based upon the result of a poll designed by a Florida International University sociology professor that ostensibly determined that 66 percent of the exiles questioned said they would endorse negotiations with Cuba to "facilitate peaceful democratic change through elections." However, that same poll showed that 54 percent of the 604 exiles polled favored invading Cuba to violently facilitate change (another poll taken seven months earlier placed the pro-invasion figure at 63 percent). Since both figures represent a majority, and are in direct conflict, a deeper explanation of the results is warranted.
The poll further found that 88 percent of the exiles favored tightening the already stringent U.S. trade embargo of Cuba.

Analyzing this data, one could conclude that far from softening in their hatred of Castro, the exiles simply respond favorably to any question that results in the despised dictator's removal from power -- either by violence or vote. Plus, one must remember that in many Central, South America and Caribbean countries, voting out a dictator invariably leads to that person's death. In Castro's case, the first act of any new democratic government would be to try the deposed dictator for myriad human rights atrocities.

The poll headline followed in the wake of two Herald travel articles in July and September that espoused the wonders of touring Cuba. This, despite a United States government travel ban to the island of everyone except journalists, authorized Cuban exiles visiting their families, researchers, government officials and those whose expenses are fully paid by Cuba. The articles were particularly insensitive considering the fierce posture taken by the majority of Miami's exile community against lining Fidel Castro's pockets with tourist dollars. Angry Cubans compared the tourism stories to a newspaper with a large black readership publishing glowing promotions on the wonders of South Africa.

The Herald's differences with the Cuban American National Foundation itself have resulted in accusations of downplaying the group's newsworthy activities, or not covering them at all. Meetings between CANF members and democratic reformers in the former Soviet Union received proportionately less coverage and play in the local paper than in distant publications. One critical meeting between prominent Cuban Americans, including Jorge Mas Canosa, and Russia's emerging new leaders resulted in assurances given to Cubans that Russia would withdraw its financial support of Castro's regime. The Herald wrote that the U.S. State Department had "no information on the matter." The Associated Press, on the same day, quoted an unnamed State Department official as terming the assurance "significant."

As the fall of Soviet communism became front-page news around the world, U.S. newspapers scrambled to localize the event by citing links between Boris Yeltsin and various American organizations. Interestingly, The Miami Herald stood almost silent about the dramatic link to history that could be found among the Cuban immigrants in its own backyard.

Similarly, when a group of influential Cuban business leaders and Cuban American National Foundation officials met with the presidents of six Central American countries, the unprecedented event was ignored by The Herald -- the businessmen's hometown newspaper.

In contrast, it appears The Herald spares no ink, space or effort in chronicling negative comments about CANF. Whenever
a renegade, disfavored or disgruntled member airs a grievance, however baseless or contrived, he or she is afforded ample coverage. Seemingly, when The Herald wants to wield a hammer over the Foundation, it harvests the centuries-old field of male-dominated Latin culture to upbraid the exile organization for not having the proper number of female members on its board of directors. While the percentage is indeed low, The Herald's chastisement is inappropriate. The same "sexism" charges could be lodged against most U.S. corporations, including Knight-Ridder, the Herald's parent publishing company.

Although objectivity is the most basic tenet of American journalism, The Herald's coverage of Cuban issues often seems purposefully slanted in order to irritate its Latin readership. Stories reporting changes and developments in Cuba invariably quote American analysts and experts who promote liberal views critical of America's political and economic isolation of Cuba. These sources not only conflict sharply with the feelings of Cuban exiles in Miami, they evoke anger.

Sometimes, The Herald's seeming bias is exposed in its own pages. In December 1991, a presidential task force met to analyze TV Marti, the television equivalent of the Voice of America aimed at sending uncensored television news and entertainment programs into Cuba. TV Marti task force chairman John Hughes, citing some complaints received about the early morning time period in which TV Marti aired, was quoted as saying: "We think the U.S. government should change the rules of the game and broadcast it during prime-time, or scrap it." That quote led to this headline in The Herald: "TV Marti shutdown proposed by panel." However, a few sections away in the same Miami Herald, the Spanish-language El Nuevo Herald wrote this headline over the same story: "Special group says TV Marti should transmit at another hour."

The most recent venting of emotion, on both sides, was sparked, in part, by a Herald editorial on January 18, 1992 criticizing U.S. Rep. Robert Torricelli of New Jersey for pushing a bill that would tighten the economic embargo against Cuba. (Torricelli is the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs.) It was the left-wing rhetoric in the editorial, more than anything, that incited the exiles.

"... Making the embargo air-tight will not promote democracy or liberty in Cuba, but it could promote chaos and catastrophic violence. Perhaps Mr. Torricelli believes that after the end of lavish Soviet subsidies to Cuba, closing the few air holes left to the island's terminally ill economy will unleash massive disturbances, food riots, or an anti-Castro military coup."

If that is Rep. Torricelli's aim, it is not necessarily wrong. Few countries on this planet are in need of "massive
disturbances, food riots, or an anti-Castro military coup" more than the repressive, inhuman, and decaying island nation. The Herald did not praise Rep. Torricelli's tactics.

"... Tightening the embargo would do nothing of the sort. It could conceivably worsen the Cuban people's deteriorating living conditions while offering Mr. Castro rhetorical ammunition for harsher repressive measures and for his denunciations of U.S. 'conspiracies' against his regime. At best, the legislation may win Cuban-American political support for the ambitious Mr. Torricelli."

When a country's people are starving, and those who speak out against the strangling regime suffer torture, imprisonment and death, what difference does it make if a crazed, murderous dictator makes yet another "denunciation of U.S. 'conspiracies'?" And why is such outdated liberal ideology still being sold?

It's not just Miami's Cuban Americans who would like answers to these questions.

"The last curse of communism is about to fall 90 miles from our shore," Rep. Torricelli said at a lively rally in Miami following The Herald's editorial. "A good and generous God has let you live to see the dawn of a new day in Cuba."

**Long History of Animosity**

It's hard to put a finger on when and why the problems developed between The Herald's editors and the Cuban community. Part of it may be attributed to residual racism left over from the days when Miami's former dominant majority, white Southerners, railed against losing their city to the waves of Spanish-speaking immigrants. Today, that sentiment is fruitless. Miami has long become a city infused with Hispanic language, tradition and culture. From nearly every perspective, the transformation has been positive. A brief history of the Cuban immigration to Miami, and The Herald's reaction, proves illuminating.

In 1960, Miami was a town of 291,688 with Dade County numbering 935,047. The first wave of Cubans had recently found their way across the 90 miles of the Florida Straits that separates Key West from the island Fidel Castro controls. The Freedom Flights of 1960 and 1973 pushed the Cuban refugee migration to an estimated 342,000 and forever changed the lives of Miami and Dade County residents. By 1978, Time magazine was reporting that the American melting pot was bubbling once again: "American residents of Spanish origin... have increased by 14.3 percent in the past five years alone. Now the country's fastest growing minority, they are bidding to become an increasingly influential one."

In 1979, U.S. News and World Report called Miami a new Hispanic power base in the United States: "From Little Havana to affluent suburbs, a major metropolis is undergoing
reincarnation, with an inflow of Spanish-speaking people and their culture that has made it the 'foreign capital' of Latin America."

In late April and early May 1980, the Mariel boatlift sent an estimated 125,000 Cubans to the Miami area, swelling the refugee migration and speeding up the transformation.

In 1990, Hispanics in Miami represented an estimated 45 percent of Dade County's population and will become a majority in the 1990s, with Cubans as the largest group. White non-Hispanics or "Anglos" total 35 percent, and blacks 20 percent to round out the ethnic mix.

Unlike other cities where Hispanic concentrations are generally poorer than average, Miami's Cubans are solidly middle-class, with average household incomes in the $25,000 to $30,000 range. They have come to dominate the tropical city economically, politically, socially, and culturally -- everywhere except in the pages of the local daily newspaper. Thus, the growth of the Cuban community in South Florida coincided with the birth of powerful, non-profit watchdog organizations such as the Cuban American National Foundation. According to its mission statement, the Foundation: "Supports the concept of a free and independent Cuba based on the best democratic traditions... The goals... are to inform public opinion on problems of Cuban concern, to fight bigotry, to protect human rights, and to promote legitimate Cuban cultural interests."

Recognizing the market for a Spanish-language publication, The Miami Herald introduced El Herald in March 1976. It was the only Spanish-language sister publication of a major U.S. metropolitan daily. Almost from the outset, the insert was seen by many Cubans as reflecting the same insensitivity that The Herald had been accused of displaying in its English-language version. In April 1976, one month after the debut of El Herald, a group of former political prisoners staged a hunger strike, chaining themselves to the doors of the six-story Miami Herald building. They were protesting the treatment of prisoners in Cuba and the newspaper's failure to report on the situation just 90 miles from its doors. The protesters kept their vigil 10 days before representatives from the newspaper spoke with them about their request. The protest ended when the newspaper's editors assured them they would investigate.

On May 23, 1976, The Herald began a two-part series headlined "Castro's jails: Still bulging 17 years later." However, the incident that sparked the paper's coverage was never mentioned, nor was it explained why The Herald's editors had for years lent a deaf ear to the cries of ex-political prisoners who had long escaped to Miami.

The more the Cubans pushed for news that was important to them, the more The Herald appeared to resent the interference. By the late 1970s, The Herald's stories began
to cast an increasingly negative shadow on Cuban Americans and helped to solidify what Newsweek once referred to as the "dead wrong" image of the stereotypical Miami Cuban portrayed as "a... paunchy Latino in a guayabera (a pleaded shirt) who sits around Calle Ocho (Eighth Street in Little Havana) drinking coffee from little paper cups while making impassioned speeches against Fidel Castro."

Yet even that didn't open any eyes at The Miami Herald. When the revamped El Nuevo Herald appeared November 1987 on Calle Ocho newsstands, The Herald promoted the occasion by playing right into Newsweek's stereotype. It gave away guayaberas and demitasse sets to its target audience. Such misguided attempts at a truce ended up doing nothing but intensifying the dislike and distrust on either side.

A May 8, 1987 editorial ("Bombing indefensible... even against Cuba"), highlighted the "terrorist" bombings of two Miami freighters that ship packages to Cuba. The explosions caused property damages but no injuries, and no one took credit for the action. Still, The Herald's editorial writers felt compelled to reprimand Miami's Cubans for "vigilantism" and pointed out that "The last thing Miami needs is a renewed wave of terrorism that menaces innocent, law-abiding people," creating the impression that Cuban exiles wanted something different.

A June 12, 1987 Living Today cover spoofed the Cuban-born then county manager. The writers suggested replacements for the official's 15 suits, which were impounded one week after the duplex where they were purchased was busted for dealing in stolen merchandise. Illustrations superimposed the manager's head on five different types of outfits: the "Miami Vice" look; a safari suit; running gear; a guayabera and a preppie jacket and pants.

Given the pre-existing perception that Miami Cubans hold of The Herald's cultural insensitivity, it is curious that it chose to run a story that singled out and ridiculed an individual who was accused of buying stolen merchandise while making scant mention of other community movers and shakers who were also involved.

Around the same time, The Herald had the opportunity to make a major staff change that could have helped to heal the wounds in the Cuban community. When the Living Today editor was promoted, the opportunity existed to change the direction of the highly popular section that monitors the social pulse of Miami. With the Cubans dominating Miami's social scene, common sense indicated that the new editor be, if not Cuban, then at least someone with a history of interacting with Cubans. Instead, The Herald brought in a white, Anglo male from the Midwest -- a man who, at best, was at a disadvantage in his grasp of Cuban issues.

The Herald's coverage of the events surrounding the Pan American Games played in Indianapolis in August 1987 frayed
the taut rope of emotions a few more strands. Members of the anti-Castro group Cuba Independiente y Democratice (CID) threw leaflets at Cuban baseball players near their Bush Stadium dugout before an August 9 Cuba-Netherlands Antilles game. An Indianapolis Star sports reporter noted, without bias or hysteria, that "a plane towing a banner urging Cuban athletes to defect reportedly flew over the stadium." In addition, other papers mentioned objectively that the Cuban American National Foundation was setting up space to handle any defectors during the two-week period of the Games.

The Indianapolis Star described an incident that occurred during the Games in which three Cuban boxers ran into the stands and beat CID members. An article in El Nuevo Herald said that "an investigation showed they (the boxers) acted without legal provocation." That same article also recounted another incident in which several baseball players from Cuba became angry at the crowd and charged the stands. The Miami Herald did not carry that article. Instead, the English-language coverage of the overall incidents once again painted the Cuban Americans in a negative light and generated an editorial which read, in part: "... the taunting of Cuban athletes and hooliganism in the stands made the demonstrators look like bullies..." The stories had many Cuban Americans wondering if they witnessed the same event. Missing was the point that the Cuban Americans had a constitutional right to express their views peacefully as they did.

The Herald coverage of Pope John Paul II's visit to Miami on September 12, 1987 included sidebar features designed to strike a more human chord with readers. One story ran under a reverse kicker reading "Special message" followed by "In pope's words, Cuban exiles find hope." In it, Miami Cubans interviewed were pleased that the Holy Father mentioned "the Mother of God, the patroness of Cuba." However, the article failed to mention or even refer to the fact that a controversy had erupted when the Pope chose not to meet with leaders of the heavily Catholic Cuban community, and instead proposed a visit to communist Cuba to meet with Castro. The only mention of this, along with the Pope's silence on Cuban exile issues, appeared in a September 13 article written by Tomas Regalado, which appeared only in the Spanish-language paper.

Another instance of skewed coverage occurred on November 14, 1987 in a front-page story about a United States human rights organization visiting Cuban prisons. The story's headline read: "U.S. group pays visit to Cuban jail" with the subhead, "Inmates described as looking healthy." The tour was conducted by Wayne Smith, a former U.S. diplomat assigned to Havana. Overlooked was the fact that Smith, who is regarded as sympathetic to Fidel Castro, did not himself visit Cuba. He was quoting members of the delegation who visited the island's most notorious prison -- Boniato. Similarly unmentioned was an item that included Cuba in the 1987 report of Amnesty International, the Nobel Prize-winning human rights group that condemns inhumane prisons under
regimes of several political persuasions. This missing
information was brought to light in a November 19, 1987,
commentary by a Cuban Miami Herald editorial board member,
whose column appeared on Page 35-A more than a week after the
front-page story appeared. This in no way can be construed
as balanced coverage of the issue.

Two striking examples of questionable coverage appeared in
story on bilingualism on the front of its Local News section.
The lead story was paired with the headline, "Metro: Let
voters decide bilingual issue." The story explained that
area commissioners agreed that voters, not the commissioners
themselves, should decide whether to repeal Dade County's
English-only law. The decision came after a dramatic
reversal by the Cuban commissioner who had proposed the
repeal. The decision was greeted by angry words on both
sides who felt the issue was too divisive to consider as a
referendum. The issue escalated, when in a story on the
front page of the Local News, headlined "Bilingualism debate
sparks calls, threats," a local talk-show host suggested that
the Cuban commissioner could be responsible for a "real
bloodbath... It's criminal." The reaction to the decision
ranged from death threats and a bomb scare to 1,800 phone
calls and bitter recrimination. The following day, the
editor of The Herald wrote a column calling for both sides to
"let sleeping perros (dogs) lie." It did not take to task
those who issued death threats or bomb scares against Miami's
Spanish-speaking community. Nor did it point out that a
segment of the Anglo community was using threats of violence
to oppose a democratic election to decide the issue.

Perhaps the clearest instance of what some researchers term
"strategic silence", occurred in a December 27, 1987,
editorial titled "Challenge to Cubans" in which the writer
failed to challenge a Mason-Dixon poll that found that 77
percent of non-Hispanic whites and 72 percent non-Hispanic
blacks polled said that "immigration from Cuba has, generally
speaking, hurt the quality of life in Florida." The piece
failed to mention that the poll was taken shortly after the
riots by Cuban detainees and hostage taking at the Oakdale,
Louisiana and Atlanta, Georgia federal prisons. Nor did it
account for the reason why 70 percent of the Hispanics
polled statewide responded that the Cuban presence had helped
Florida's quality of life. In essence, the editorial tends
to support the "majority" view that felons represent all
Cubans. The Herald's failure to challenge the timing of the
poll indicates a willingness to accept an opinion obviously
skewed by a crisis as emblematic of prevailing public
opinion. Thus, the post-riot poll itself functions as
evidence of Florida's general opinion about Cubans, while
ignoring the timing of the survey.

A separate instance, six weeks after the prison riots,
illustrated the same pattern of misrepresentation. The
Herald printed a UPI wire service story -- "Prisoners to
pitch in at Oakdale" -- in its January 12, 1988 edition. In
it, the writer highlighted the fact that no Cubans were among the inmates who volunteered to restore the shattered facility. Conspicuously absent from the report was that immediately following both crises, Cuban detainees were removed from Atlanta and Oakdale and placed in other federal prisons making it impossible for the inmates to assist in any cleanup effort.

All these examples were merely a precursor to the bitter verbal sniping and scattered acts of violence that exist today between the Cuban Americans and The Herald.

More than 30 years have passed since the first Cuban immigrant came to Miami to escape communism. It's long past time for The Miami Herald to shed its insensitivity and embrace that singular freedom seeker — along with his sons, daughters, and grandchildren, and the hundreds of thousands of compatriots and women who fled their island home to make a new life in America.
MEMORANDUM

A: JUNTÁ DIRECTIVA, COMITE CUBANO CONTRA LA DIFAMACION

De: XAVIER L. SUAREZ

FECHA: February 10, 1992

SOBRE: REUNION CON DAVID LAWRENCE et. al.

La reunión del Jueves pasado duró 3 1/4 horas.

Sin entrar en detalles, surgieron los siguientes planteamientos y posibles planes de acción.

1. Se esclareció los propósitos del Comite Cubano Contra la Difamación. Especificamente, quedó claro que no respondemos a ninguna persona o organización. (Vease carta de X. Suarez a Jim Batten sobre este tema.)

2. Se le entregó los documentos de prueba de la primera denuncia que hemos recibido, por parte de la Fundación Nacional Cubana Americana. El Herald no se comprometió a responder específicamente a estos documentos.

3. Luisa Garcia-Toledo enfocó el tema pidiendo a cada participante del Herald que definiera "El problema entre el Herald y los Cubanos."
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Después de mucho esfuerzo por parte de ellos, creo que salimos convencidos (el comité ejecutivo) que ellos no comprenden o no quieren admitir el problema.

4. David Lawrence le pidió a cada miembro del comité que dijera si el Herald ha mejorado o no en los últimos años. (Durante su plazo como "publisher.") En general estuvimos de acuerdo que había habido alguna mejoría, pero que el golfo de descomprensión era tan grande que el pequeño barco de entendimiento estaba a punto de naufragar.

5. Pepe Hernandez acusó al Nuevo Herald y su director (Carlos Verdecia) de promover una línea clara a favor del dialogo con Castro, usando 5 columnistas que tienen ese punto de vista. Los estudios de Fran Matera, Ph. D. tienden a comprobar esta tesis en relación con la cobertura de los disidentes en Cuba. Verdecia negó rotundamente este alegato y ofreció como prueba mas de 200 columnas escritas por el. Yo ofreci leerlas todas.

6. Otros alegatos específicos surgieron. Entre ellos:

   a) La publicación de alegatos sin fundamentos - en una demanda judicial, por ejemplo.
b) La publicación de alegatos anónimos. (Vease carta por X. Suarez a Doug Clifton y su respuesta.)

c) La prominencia otorgada a bancarrotas y fracasos de Cubanos prominentes.

d) La discrepancia entre valores propagados por el Herald y los valores tradicionales Cubanos. (Entre otros ejemplos, la columna de Liz Balmaseda sobre el "machismo" de los hombres Cubanos.)

e) Insultos a la comunidad Cubana por parte de columnistas como Andres Reynaldo, quien comparó a organizaciones revolucionarias del exilio con el propio Castro.

f) La publicación de investigaciones pendientes - como las de un gran jurado previo a un encausamiento.

g) El increíble daño que causan las tergiversaciones, errores en cobertura y falsos analíses, sobre todo en vista de que las enmiendas son minimas e inefectivas.

Creo que el comité debe escoger entre dichos problemas si se quiere continuar estas sesiones con funcionarios del Herald.
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También tenemos que hacer una decisión sobre la denuncia de la Fundación. Si el Herald no quiere responder, es posible que debamos determinar que existe un caso prima facie. También podemos invitar a Fran Matera y discutir a fondo con ella.

NOTA ADICIONAL:

El Dr. Cereijo ha sugerido proponer un mediador de gran nombre, como Dr. Henry Kissinger.
SECOND DRAFT

It is war time. On one side of the channel, a country is occupied by totalitarian forces. On the other side, an exile leader clamors for attention and seeks the help of his English-speaking hosts in broadcasting to his suffering people, who speak a Latin tongue.

The exile leader is misunderstood, mistrusted by some of his own people, who suspect he wants merely to rule the country that is now enslaved, imposing a different kind of tyranny. They insist he does not speak for the oppressed people, that his style is too dictatorial. While resistance grows in the occupied country, with heroic deeds and mounting casualties, the battle in exile is ever control of the media, whose coverage will set the tone and define the characters of the future leadership of the occupied country across the channel.

The above description fits Charles De Gaulle in the early 40's and Jorge Mas Canosa in the early 90's. In the strictest legal terms, we (the U.S.) are at war with Cuba; commerce is forbidden - labelled "trading with the enemy." And like De Gaulle, the figure of Jorge Mas Canosa grows in stature even as it is surrounded by skepticism. The vultures are hungry for a Mas Canosa fall that might place them at the front of the exile movement. Their most virulent accusation: that Mas Canosa is itching to become President of Cuba, just as De Gaulle became President of the Fourth Republic.
To the English-speaking readers of the Herald, the battle of the exiles for the media is as incomprehensible as the fact that the Herald itself gets involved as a combatant. Why does Jorge Mas attack the Herald; and why does David Lawrence engage him in battle? What influence does the Herald have over Cuba's destiny, or over its future rulers?

I've been asked to wear many hats in my public career, including those of presidential observer at the first election of an emerging democracy (Panama), leader of a delegation seeking release of hostages from a federal prison (Atlanta), and first official eyewitness to the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War.

Here in Miami, I've tried to explain the rights of the homeless to the taxpaying homeowners, the peculiar perspectives of one minority group to the other, and of both to the former majority which now feels threatened in its minority status.

But the challenge of explaining Mas to Lawrence and Lawrence to Mas has been more difficult than all of the above.

It's not an issue of personalities: the fact that both Lawrence and Mas are headstrong, infinitely energetic, consumed by the importance of their respective causes. It's more an issue inherent in the causes themselves, which are of infinite value and compatible by definition, but not always compatible in the path needed to accomplish each.
Lawrence stands for freedom of the press, which many (most notably Alexis de Tocqueville) consider a right so important to the others as to be paramount among the fundamental freedoms. Mas Canosa is dedicated to the cause of liberty in Cuba, including freedom of the press. Both are mindful that the community can suffer from the excesses of a negative, sometimes slanted press and also from the worst of Cuban passions when they are allowed to disturb the serenity needed for democratic discourse.

Mas Canosa fires off many rounds of harsh criticism, some wide of the target. One of them, however, hits squarely on the target and destroys momentarily the argument that news and commentary in El Nuevo Herald is balanced. Lawrence pleads for patience as the Herald tries to cope with a changing community, which he admits is often baffling to his editors, reporters, columnists.

Countless hours are devoted by both sides to meetings, translations of articles, research, proposals for future dialogue to enhance understanding and reduce distortions in coverage.

Ultimately, the mechanism of dialogue used between the Herald and the NAACP is mentioned. It consists of periodic meetings in which systematic reviews of the Herald's coverage of African-American issues are carried out by both sides. The Cuban-American community would like to emulate that system.
April 2, 1992

For the moment, I have assurances from Jorge vas that he will not initiate any more campaigns to highlight perceived grievances. And I have every indication that the Herald will take to heart a confidential critique by the Cuban Committee Against Defamation.

While this may augur some end to the vigorous competition over newsprint and airwaves in the City which has become the exile capital. In fact, they promise to remain vigilant, and to attack if their noble causes are threatened. But they trust and understand each other a little more now.
VITA

Michelle Marie Cobas is a native of Miami, Florida, and is a second-generation Cuban-American. She attended St. Brendan High School in Southwest Miami-Dade County.

In 1993, she attended Florida State University, where she earned a bachelor of arts degree in theater and a bachelor of arts degree in communication studies with an emphasis on gender and race studies. She has worked for Ketchum Public Relations Worldwide and as a graduate assistant at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University. Currently, she serves as the communications coordinator for Chancellor Mark Emmert at Louisiana State University.