

Interviewee: Alex Azan Chaviano
Interviewer: Miguel Gonzalez-Pando
Date: March 1997
FIU Number: 523

AAC = Alex Azan Chaviano

MGP= Manuel Gonzalez Pando

MGP= You were going to say something.

AAC= Yeah, I was going to say that it would be an unforgettable day in my life that day that I left. No, not just because of the day that I left Cuba and I never been back. But because of the human agony. That I saw was beyond belief. Watching young, young children, nine, ten that were being separated from their parents. I remember one little girl who had a hand on one side of the glass and the mother on the other side of the glass, and they were going like this [mimicking girl holding her hands up to mother's hands through glass pane]. I will never, until the day that I die, forget those hands not being able to touch, by moving together, an incredible thing. Sisters and brothers hanging on to one another, not want to separate. Mothers having to let go of the kids, little girls too because there were a lot of little girls that came in that movement. Incredible human agony. It was numbing, numbing. I mean it was something that gets to the point when you see so much suffering that... it's almost like you become, becomes like a movie. Everything comes like a movie, because you begin to detach because if you get caught up in it, you cease to function. You see still here and all you do is just see. So it was an incredible thing. Then, they get on the plane, we got on the plane and we took off, and everybody was... you can hear kids crying, all this, and then like they used to do in every flight they would say, the pilot would say, now we're leaving Cuban territory, whatever and everybody began to clap [clapping] and to sing. Some people sang the national hymn. The Coca-Colas came out, I drank a Coca Cola for the first time in about two or two and a half years. Incredible emotional upheaval. Incredible. Then we landed.

MGP=What thoughts went in your mind when you were...

AAC= I came in the morning flight. There was a ten o'clock 10:00 AM and 1:00 or 2:00 PM, I came in the morning, and when I was in the plane, all that I could do was to stick my head in the window because I wanted to see Cuba. I didn't want to let go and I remember, when finally the distance you begin just to see that you are going to lose it in the horizon, I remember saying to myself when will I ever see this again? Those thoughts were coming to my mind, when will I ever see this again? How long I'm going to be... over here.

MGP= You finally get to Miami.

AAC= We get to the International Airport. My visa was a waiver visa, the Pedro Pan they knew what to do. They were familiar. Immigration was familiar with that. They told me to sit on my suitcase. I sat there because the gentleman who would pick us up. His name was

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George. He had a van and he would come and see if any children came unaccompanied, and he would take them to the camps according to the age, or if there were brother and sister, or there were little girls, would only come in the afternoon. So I had to wait for the second flight to come in and whomever got off the flight and then he came. The van came and the van was full, I would say anything between six and eight. It was fun, it was a lot of fun. We stop for a Coke. Maybe took us to the camps in whatever camps will be designated to go through. We got to the camp very late at night. It was October so it would get dark early. For me was Matecumbe. I remember getting to the camp and writing my first letter that night. Having cookies and milk. Then going to the dorm... and that was hell. That was hell. Let me tell you, it's incredible. It's incredible the number of kids that were crying in there. There were bunks. It was incredible. It was very very very bad scene. And you know how they calm everybody down? You know what they used to do? at least in that cabin, and I'm sure if anybody hears this that they would remember. You know what tactic they use to calm everybody down? See how smart somebody was, really, really smart. They play records of Blanca Rosa Gil, and... what is the other name of this other great Cuban singer female? Olga Gillot! Olga Gillot. Records of Olga Gillot and Blanca Rosa Gil, and everything came down, and by the end of the two records, everybody was asleep. The sound of a woman's voice singing, it was like like a... valium or haldol for a psychotic person, the effect was... [moving hands to simulate slowing down effect]... Everybody was asleep and they should do it at night. Isn't that incredible? I find that fascinating to remember... how smart, a woman's voice, Blanca Rosa Gil or Olga Gillot. If Olga Gillot [inaudible 06:10] what the records would be used for?

MGP= You get up the next morning

AAC= Get up the next morning. We have to get ready to know what you're going to do, what classes you were going to do. Terrible, terrible, first day for me. My mother had spent months. You could only bring, when you came over, three of everything. Three shirts, three pairs of pants, three pairs of socks, three underwear, whatever in threes and my mother had spent a lot of time doing my name. Sawing my name on the shirts and the pants and everything, and then they were all stolen. First thing [laugh]. I got back to the dorm that night and, I want to tell you something, there was a lot of diversity of kids that came in. A lot of variety of kids and they stole everything. Everything. They did not care that my name was on it. They stole everything. That was a terrible, terrible thing. Shoes everything. So there were kids in there who were rough, rough kids in there. So they gave me some clothing... the following day, big clothing. I was going to have a very difficult time adjusting to Matecumbe. Fortunately, one of my friends who had come on September thirteenth. Remember I told you that I on September thirteenth, two of my closest friends came together. They came together in the same flight, was it in the Kendall camp, for boys, he had seen my name on the list of new arrivals and were a lot of

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Marista Brothers in the Kendall camp. So he went to the Brothers and say look we have another one, another one of us came in, and he saved my life. I don't know because, let me tell you, Matecumbe would have been for me very rough to deal with. Very rough to deal with. Kendall was incredibly nice. By the way, Kendall is still there. I mean it's not far from here. I mean it's 107th Ave. They have something for delinquent kids or kids would problems, emotional problems. It's right there, about 10 minutes from here. And that was much better, because they were instead of being. I mean I had a bed, no bank, you know and it was much, much nicer. It was much nicer.

[Break in recording, 09:02-09:14)

MGP= The staff, did they speak Spanish, Walsh? Describe me. How long were you in the camp?

AAC=I was at the camp... well I... spent less than a year. The choice that I was given. Actually I was very fortunate, and I don't know why, but I was given a choice, actually, of three places. I don't know how to this date. I don't know why that happened, because I know that people were going wherever they were going to go. I don't know if it was because it was the end and they had a lot of people still... The program was very successful because all these kids, most of, like 90 percent were dispersed all over the United States. I guess I [inaudible 10:17] because I came just before the blockade. There must have been a lot of people have asked for children, but I was given a choice of three places. Des Moines, Iowa; Pittsburgh, PA and Southampton, Massachusetts. I remember very clearly, the way I am talking to you now, thinking. Des Moines, Iowa, that's in the middle of the United States. I am used to the ocean. I am used to the beach. All they have in there is corn and cows. I don't want to go there, I don't want to go. Pittsburgh, PA. The idea of a big city with fun. I like the idea of Pittsburgh, but I don't know if you remember, one of the last Life magazines that came to Cuba was a 1960 magazine and they showed Pittsburgh at night. It was, I guess, at the beginning of the Environmental Movement, whatever, well at that time Pittsburgh at night looked like Venus, because you could see the sky with sulfur, all that sulfur in the air. I swear I remember saying to myself, I am going to be very homesick because I'm not going to be able to see the stars at night. So what do I have left? Southampton, Massachusetts. I was a product of a very good educational system, as you recall that we had. I remembered Paul Revere's writing. And I said, well, This is Massachusetts, is not Boston, but it's Massachusetts. Maybe I'll get a chance to see Boston if I go there. Let me go to Southampton, Massachusetts. I have to tell you something very interesting. The family that took me in, she was she was a Daughter of the American Revolution. I am going to show you a couple of pictures of the front of the house facing the road, was made of the round smooth river stones. The house was almost 200 years old, that part of the house, and it had a huge fireplace. We had two fireplace, but it had one right there. When I flew, when they took me over and I got off the airport, it was very cold. We had to get off on the tarmac. I almost freezing, so they spent the

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whole trip from the airport to the house, trying to warm me up [rubbing his arms imitating action of warming up]. I remember getting to the house, and the fireplace was going and they told me go over there to warm up. As I approached the fireplace, there was this beautiful silver plate on top of the fireplace, was something like this [describe item dimensions with hands], round silver. Very beautiful. I get close to it. You don't see you look at it. And low and behold, what do you think I read in the silver plate? Paul Revere. You know he was a silversmith, so that was a fire family item that has been passed through the generations in that family. When I saw that thing that said Paul Revere, I said to myself, I hit the jackpot. This is the omen that I needed to know that my decision was right and it was. It really was.

MGP= How were you treated there? How was school?

AAC= School? I was the first Spanish-speaking person to set foot in that high school. They were very kind. I remember the first day in my English class, the teacher brought me up to the former class and she said, I'd like to introduce you to our new student Alex. He doesn't speak English, but I hope that you kids will be helpful to him and you will help him. I am getting a little ovation. By the way, let me tell you this. When I went on the plane, this is something that I... when I got together with my parents, I lost, to my chagrin, because I wanted that for my children, they put a little sticker in my pocket. This sticker read, My name is Alex Azan, I am a Cuban refugee child. If I seem loss is because I am, please contact Mrs. But in North Hampton, Massachusetts and the phone number. I went on the whole trip with the little thing here [top left side of shirt]. Unfortunately, in the excitement of getting things together and joining my family, in joining my parents, that I kept for a long, I wanted to keep it. I wanted to keep it. I lost it.

MGP= Let's go back to when... what was the first time, do you remember the first time you talk to your parents over the phone? You were at Kendall, at the camp?

AAC= No, I did not speak to them when I was at the camp. I can tell you the first day that I cried, it was a week exactly one week after. I came on a Friday, October 5, 1962. I believe it was a Friday and I remember laying on the ball field, looking up and seeing an airplane. Up there. That was the first time that I shed tears. I've been caught up with so much excitement and so much emotional turmoil, then I hadn't had a chance to react and to cry. It was the first time. I didn't get to talk to them over the phone until I was in Massachusetts, I believe. The phone calls were fewer in between maybe once a year, twice a year. Not because they didn't want me, but because of the communication was so difficult. The family that took me in were extremely kind to me. Now you have to realize that this is an Anglo Saxon, Daughter of the Revolution home, very proper, emotions very much in control. And here comes this thirteen year old, ball of fire, who everything he said was emotional. You can imagine the impact in the house or seeing somewhere it was something that never seen before. It was something... I mean it was, it was a very

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good match because it was a different, totally different style, Johnson Anderson. This Anglo Saxon Swedish background and here it comes this ball of fire. My foster mother, the only Spanish word that she learn all the time that I was there. The only one was “Alex luego” [laugh]. That was all I heard all the time, all the time.

MGP= Tell me that, but “luego” means

ACC= Later. Because I was always...

MGP= Tell me the whole phrase?

ACC= Alex, she would say “Alex luego.” She said how do you say “later, later Alex.” Luego. So she learned, that's the only Spanish word she learned, “luego” because I was always saying Louie let's go here, Louie let's go over here. Her name is Alice, but she said to me, call me whatever comes easy for you. 'cause my English was very, very poor. I say Louie comes easy for me. It's OK, call me Louie. And I never call her Alice. I always call her Louie. Louie let's go to the store, I need this, Louie, let's go over here and there and then she learned luego. She would see me coming and she would say luego. It was incredible, incredible. I come from... I was the youngest of five kids, and the Cuban style of brothers is a very physical one, very physical. Both expressing love and fighting, I mean very physical and in this home the youngest son that she had, she was a widow, by the way. She was a widow; she had become a widow very young. Her husband had died in his sleep, when he was only maybe fifty or even forty-eight, forty-nine. Anyhow, she had a youngest son; her youngest son was my age. Her oldest son was twenty four, huge, six foot five, blonde Viking. I mean huge. Richard, I called him Dick, Dicky. My style was... hugging [hugs himself]. That's the way I express my feelings. I remember getting in his bed in the morning and wrestling with him, and doing something that his own brother had never done in his life. Let me tell you, the day that I they took me back, they did... he was the one who drove me to the airport to meet my parents. He cried the whole trip like a baby, like a baby, and he was about twenty-five years old, on the way to the airport to leave to drop me off so I could meet my parents. Like a baby.

MGP= How many years did you spend with your foster family?

AAC= By three and a half.

MGP= Mis preguntas no salen, tienes que darle...

AAC= I spent about three and a half years... with them from freshman year to the end of the... ninth, tenth, not, it's almost three years because it was at the end of my junior year when my parents came in [19]62.

MGP= How? In the meantime, did you ever feel that you may never see your parents again?

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AAC= There were times... I received which I still have. I have them in a box, which is something that I will leave my family, my children. All the letters of my father and my mother wrote. I have a box, like this way and this big [describe box dimensions with hands] of letters. I will get, my father fired about two letters a week, sometimes three letters, and some of the letters have big holes in it because it was a time when they would read correspondence and they would cut out any anything that they felt was, you know, sometimes they would cut something out for just to tear something out. In some of the letters have holes and my father would send me, write me a letter like with a questionnaire because I didn't write a lot. And he would say, are you fine? Yes or no. Are you eating well? yes or no. Are you having fun? Yes or no. Are you playing sports? Yes or no. It was like this and then I will send it back. Do something like that so that way they would know more. I wouldn't write. I wouldn't write. I got very lazy, writing. There were times when... I thought that I was not going to meet with them, see them again. Time was moving, and then I became very acculturized. My acculturation was very quick. I picked up the language very quick. It is interesting because I have an accent right now, but when I came from Massachusetts to meet with them here in Miami, the people in the high schools in here thought that I was a transfer student from Massachusetts and not a Cuban kid.

MGP= How was that reunion with your parent, here in Miami?

AAC= ... I look back and think about these things, and the hardest adjustment for me, by far and away was reunited with my parents again. Because for them the clock froze the moment that I left Cuba and it began to tick again, the moment they saw me. Meantime, they put a little, they put a child in a plane and adult got off the plane here. Because I lost my adolescence, even though I had a wonderful foster family, it was still not my home. I lost my, I feel that I lost my adolescence. Sometimes when I walk by a motorcycle, I have this urge to jump on it and ride it. I was telling my wife... the other day I was driving with my wife and my children -my girl is fifteen and my boy is ten- and I tell my wife, Sonia, we live so close to the University maybe I can get a motorcycle and I can drive it to school, and I hear from the back don't even dream about it. I said what's the matter with you guys? I mean, my wife doesn't tell me anything and the people in the back, my children, are telling me, don't you even dream about it, but I don't think don't you even dream about it, you know? I know those urges are from an unfulfilled adolescence. I had to be so aware of my actions. Because I knew that they treated me very well. I was doing very well, but I knew that you are not from the family an if you mess up, If you goof up, they could always make a phone call and that's all it took for me to be someplace else, and I was really in a panic of being moved from that home.

MGP= Where you a good student, sports?

AAC= I was very good sport

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MGP= I want to be able to use some of your pictures of you in school

AAC= I was incredibly fortunate, because I played sports and you know the jocks get a lot of attention. You know they the girls want to talk to you. I mean... and first of all, I had an accent that everybody laughed when I spoke, so it was fun to be with me. Second, I was fun to be with, because I was healthy. I was a healthy boy. Then, I play sports and I was good. So that was even better. I gotta tell you this little anecdote, please. The first day that I get to the cafeteria. I get in line like everybody else, and I get my lunch. I pay a quarter, lunches used to cost a quarter, with a little bottle of milk and everything. I am coming out and I see this table right there. I mean right there nobody's sitting on it, and the rest of the tables full of people and I say, why is this table empty? why? So you know. I mean, I am Cuba I am not from here. So I sit down in the table with empty chairs and I am eating and the table been filled up, and I look up and they were all senior jocks with the letters. The table was reserved for the big people, the heroes of the school, and here is this freshman sitting there who didn't speak English, sitting there. They all sat around me... are you new here? Of course, when I opened my mouth, it got them very curious. Needless to say, I was the only freshman in the school, the only freshman that sat in the table of the Senior jocks, the heroes of Easthampton High school. The guys who were walking around with the letters. I got privilege of sitting there. Then, they made it legit when I made the basketball team. They went berserk. I was really... I was like the mascot, like the pet, and we had a great time. We had a great time at the table. It was a wonderful experience. I was incredibly, let me tell you, incredibly fortunate, to have had the reception of the kids that received me in high school. Because adolescence in high school is a difficult period to begin with. So imagine what it would have been for me. Let's say if I would have sat in some of the table far away; or, if I had not played sports. I mean, when I made the team it was a very big thing for that table there because you know, gosh, you know. So I was the only the only freshman that sat on that table.

MGP= Did you ever feel any...? Was there any particular moment that you felt sadness or going through...

AAC= At night, none in high school. High school in Massachusetts was a lot of fun for me. I was liked by the teacher, that was fun. I was very, very extroverted. Very extroverted. I was a product... I was a 100 percent genuine proud of my culture. Very talkative, very loud telling joke, making fun of everything. The Cuban humor you get it from when you have very little you get trained on a very little so you're always having fun, everything, and the teachers liked it. Even, for example, I had no shame or giving up in front of the whole class and giving the presentation. I remember giving the presentation once of a human fetus, saying this, this fetus is, instead of saying eight months, six months old, I would say six months long or something like that and they would crack up. We would start laughing and they would laugh with me. I felt they laugh with me, not at me, but

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with me. In many presentations, you will look out the door, the glass door and there were people from other classes. Professor from other classes, teachers that would come out and see why was this class cracking up this way. What was going on in there, and I know that we're not laughing at me, they were laughing with me. They were enjoying me as I was enjoying them. So for me school is good. Very good. I knew to study. I was an excellent student, excellent student in the Maristas in Cuba. You had to be or you were out of the school. I didn't have that discipline because back in Cuba, my mother was on top of us for that and here it wasn't the same. I was emphasizing sports and being very social. So school for me was a good time, a very good time. I never got in trouble. I never went to detention, and everybody knew me. Every single person in that high school knew me. I got along well. I've never had a fight. Never had a single fight in high school, not one. I mean, that's something. But anyhow, sadness? At night. At night. I remember winter nights the first year, waking up at night and looking out the window and you come from a place where its green on top green on top of green, and all of the sudden, I would look out the window and I will see these huge trees without a single leaf. I said My God, where am I? What is this place? This is not Santa Clara. This is... where am I? Those are psychological fugues, [spells the word] F U G U E S, its like a dissociation. It is incredible, but I swear, I remember having those dissociations. Some nights I didn't know where I was. It is a very interesting thing when I say this, because the fugue stopped when -I recall this as I'm talking to you now- I remember saying to myself, what an ugly place this is, let me go back to sleep and wake up in Santa Clara. That was the last time, I don't know what happened in my head that "let me go back to sleep and wake up in Santa Clara" that I never had those fugues again, but they were states of dissociation that I didn't know where I was.

MGP= So you have to see your parents again. How did your relationship with them had changed?

AAC= Those first six months, they were horrible. Because I told you because the clock had stopped for them and restarted when they saw me, and I was not a child anymore. I was not a little boy anymore. I had very little patience with the kindness. I felt choked [choking himself with his hands] with so much love. I felt that I couldn't move, like molasses over you and it got me very angry. I was terribly, terribly angry. It was a very difficult time of readjustment. I have to tell you little anecdote...

MGP= Now you are ... a trained professional. Is that anger...

AAC= It was not directed at them for having me come over without them. It was direct... I was very rebellious. I have become very, very acculturated. I was not a little Cuban boy anymore. I was -at that time- very Americanized. I don't want anyone in my room. These things... I imagine that for them it must have been even harder, because they must have thought that I was like an alien or something; or something had happened to me. It was a

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lot of explosions. A lot of fights. The first six months were terrible, then after six months, then things began to change a little bit, little by little, and things got much better. When my parents came, they knew that the woman who had taken me in was in decent financial for legal financial situation. They knew that she was politically connected. For example, one of the fourth of July's, a lot of big politicians used to come around and they found out, they knew that. So my father, when he came to Miami and talked to me over the phone, they wanted to know when are you coming. They thought that, they said it was up to me and said it was not up to me was after the agency to get the money and the fare, whatever, but my father thought it was up to me and they have been here for a week. I was still there. My father was, you know what he was doing. He was parking cars. Where Domino Park is today, that used to be the parking lot for the Tower Theater, where Domino Park is today. My father was parking cars for a dollar an hour. Parking the cars of the people who should go the Tower. My father would say to me on the phone, come down. I am making so much money is not even funny. I have lots of money here. Because he thought that I wasn't coming down. You cannot believe how much money I'm making. It would make it a dollar an hour. It was such a financial situation that the apartment was on Twenty Seventh Avenue and Eighth, and he would walk, not to spend money on the bus. He would walk all the way down to the Tower Theater to save money on the fare, for one buck an hour parking cars.

MGP= Basically he was afraid that you wanted to stay with the rich foster parent.

AAC= Yes, he was very afraid, because it had been a week that they have been here and I was still not here. He thought that it must be him that doesn't want to come down. And it wasn't. I remember him telling me I am making so much money its not even funny. Okay Papi, I am glad to hear that. And then we can [inaudible 35:45].

MGP= Looking back, you have two kids now about the age, about your age at the time you left.

AAC= My daughter at this age...

MGP= Think about it.

AAC= If I could do it?

MGP= If you could do it.

AAC= I talk to my wife about that. Can we send Millen and Daniel to another country with a foreign language, language not their own, different culture, not knowing when we were going to see them again. My wife says she cannot do it. My wife says she would not do it. I am not trying to evade the question. I don't know if I could do it, I don't... to be honest with you. I don't think that I could do it. I don't have... Maybe my parents had more strength then I do. I think the older generations are stronger. I think that the generations as we go along, are a little bit weaker. Perhaps I am weaker, and I think that I am. But I

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could not bear to put my two kids on the plane, and not knowing when to see them again. My daughter is fifteen and that's the age that I was there in my freshman year in high school. The picture that I showed you, I showed you earlier today. I don't know, I don't think... my wife, my wife has I told me I could not do it, period. I would not do it, period. I don't think, I don't think I could. I really don't think that I could. It is very selfish, very selfish, but I don't think that I could.

MGP= Alex now, you know... you are a trained professional in the mental health field. From that perspective now, tell me about it, from that perspective. You have done your dissertation. Now as a professional, how do you look at that whole experience? Do you think those kids, because a lot of them did well

AAC= A lot have done very well.

MGP= ... that process, some were traumatized. Like you said, adversity always either makes you grow stronger or breaks you, and both things happen with this population. Tell me a little bit of that

AAC=I think it is an unbelievable risk. What all these families took, all the incredible risk to put a generation in in a situation like that. Even though there was a lot of help over here and there was a lot of help over here, but it was not a question of, let's say these kids are going to Spain, or this kids are going to Costa Rica. These kids were coming to another culture, another language, another world. I think, honestly. I think that they knew what they were doing. I think they did it for love. They did it for the same reason my parents sent me over, but I don't think that they knew how tough it was going to be. I don't think they were aware of how psychologically damaging it was going to be and how much pain it was going to be. Because you have to remember that back then, as it is now, we'll be in Cuba next year. I am gonna tell you a very quickly - I do not know if this is appropriate - a very quick joke. They freeze, Bush...

MGP= This is a tough story, so we need some jokes here, there.

AAC= OK, great thank you. The people are being... the theory goes like you can make them freeze you and wake you up later on in life. So they freeze Bush, and fifty years later they wake him up, and they are here. So what happened this last fifty years? before Perestroika, well we union back fifty years ago the Perestroika came along and Glasnot. Gosh, they threw communism away. Oh my God, that's really something. Germany? oh no, they broke down the wall, Germany became reunited. Germany became reunited? Germany became reunited. That's really wonderful... and Thatcher? Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister of England. And what about Fidel Castro? And they say, well, Cubans say that next year he is going to fall [Laugh].

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That was going on thirty-two years, thirty-five years ago when we got to camp. When I got to Kendall camp, I remember at night, just before we went to bed, they would give us cookie and milk, just before going to bed like at nine o'clock. I remember so vividly kids coming up to the Fathers, to the Brothers, to Brothers, because it was Maristas. Brother, when are we going back home, Brother? When are we going back to Cuba, Brother? How long are we going to be here? I remember the Brother saying, I swear to you, don't worry guys Christmas, Christmas in Cuba [laugh]. Without a doubt, we are going to be in Cuba in Christmas. It's been thirty five years and we still gonna be in Cuba in Christmas. That hope, I think, that's the reason why so many of these families, so many parents, send the children over. Because who could phantom, who could even believe, nobody could believe, nobody wanted to believe that that was going to last as it did. There was always the thought of all these parents; we will be reunited very quickly with the children, at most a few months, at most a few months. We will be with them, their thought was always for reunification. Family unification in the Cuban culture. That's a keyword, family unification. As it is today, back then they thought that it was going to be very short term. Everybody thought it was going to be short term. I don't really believe in my heart that if everybody had known what it was going to be like, I don't think that many parents would have done it. I don't think they would have tolerated that pain. So that was a sad realization, and then the Missile Crisis, of course, took place and everything was put on hold for years. And I just barely made it because I came October fifth and the crisis was the twenty third. So I barely made it.

MGP= Anything else that you feel relevant, but I haven't asked?

AAC= I think from a psychological perspective, as you asked for my professional perspective. What has happened to me as a professional is that you don't get attached to things anymore as you used to. Personally, if you want me to put it personally, I disengage quickly. Anything that's one of the prices, of look how many departures, the Cuban departure to Miami, the Miami departure to Massachusetts, the Massachusetts departures back to Miami, the Miami departure back up north because we went to leaving New Jersey. You learn not to, psychologically, you learn not to say this is mine and I am going to keep this. I don't feel like that, you know? A friend...

MGP= Except for your kids?

AAC= Except for the two of them, and I don't know, sometimes I feel like send them away [joking and laughing]. No, of course I am kidding, except the kids. But my friendships, my best friendships are from the Maristas. Believe it or not, we get together. People that we've known since first grade. We have lunch, lunches. We have dinners, we get together with the wives. Those are the friendships that I have kept. I know a lot of people, and I like people, really, and I have the great fortune of having good friends all through the years, but the emotional investment was not there, as I think they would have been under

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the normal circumstances. I think from a professional perspective that this happens to a lot of Pedro Pans. You don't like to have roots, you travel light, let's put it that way. You can travel very light, you have to pack up and you do it very quickly. That, I think, has affected my life, you know, in a way, because I see how cautious I am. It sounds really bad, a little paranoid. Maybe I am. It's the attachment process and friendship have been affected.

MGP= Ok. Gracias Alex...

[46:50-53:30, camera kept recording after interview ended]

[End of Interview]

Transcribed by: Ximena Valdivia, July 9, 2020.