

Memphis Press-Sci

WEATHER FORECAST: Scattered showers, thundershowers, low tonight 70, little temperature change Wednesday

YEAR

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The New Family Next Door

Prefer Poverty in Memphis To Life in Castro's Cuba

Once-Wealthy Businessman Seeks Job

By MIMI SAXON

Press-Scimitar Staff Writer

Suppose you were a wealthy businessman, president of a large company. You, your wife and five young children live in a large house in the capital city of your country. You have three or four servants and a place of influence in your community.

Would you leave everything and take your family to a strange country to escape a false ideology? Would you trade wealth for intellectual freedom?

This is not a story about pilgrims. This story is still unfolding, today in Memphis.

Enrolling in School

Rene de la Cova, his wife, Nancy, and their five children have been living at 846 S. Cooper since they came from Cuba in July. Next month the three oldest children will enroll at Immaculate Conception School.

Mr. de la Cova has no job. His children have no winter coats and no shoes to wear to school. They receive \$5 a week from Travelers Aid. Neighbors have given them food and the few pieces of furniture in their duplex apartment. They have only one pillow, two cotton blankets. Some relatives in New York sent them money for rent last month.

"But we are so very happy," says Mrs. de la Cova. "We have escaped Communism."

Any Kind of Job

Mr. de la Cova was not home yesterday. He was making his daily round of employment offices, by bus and foot. In Havana he owned a large pharmaceutical firm with offices in Argentina, Brazil and Europe. "He will do anything, any kind of work to have money for food," Mrs. de la Cova said.

She and her husband and the oldest child, Rene Jr., 11, speak English fairly well.

Mrs. de la Cova was a supervisor in the Havana public school system, in charge of 35 schools and some 150 teachers. She holds a doctorate in education from the University of Havana. Her father, Alberto G. Abreu, was for many years Cuban consul in St. Louis and lived there from 1933 until his death last year.

Business Seized

"Castro's government will take over our house if we do not return in six months. He took over my husband's business as soon as we left," Mrs. de la Cova said.

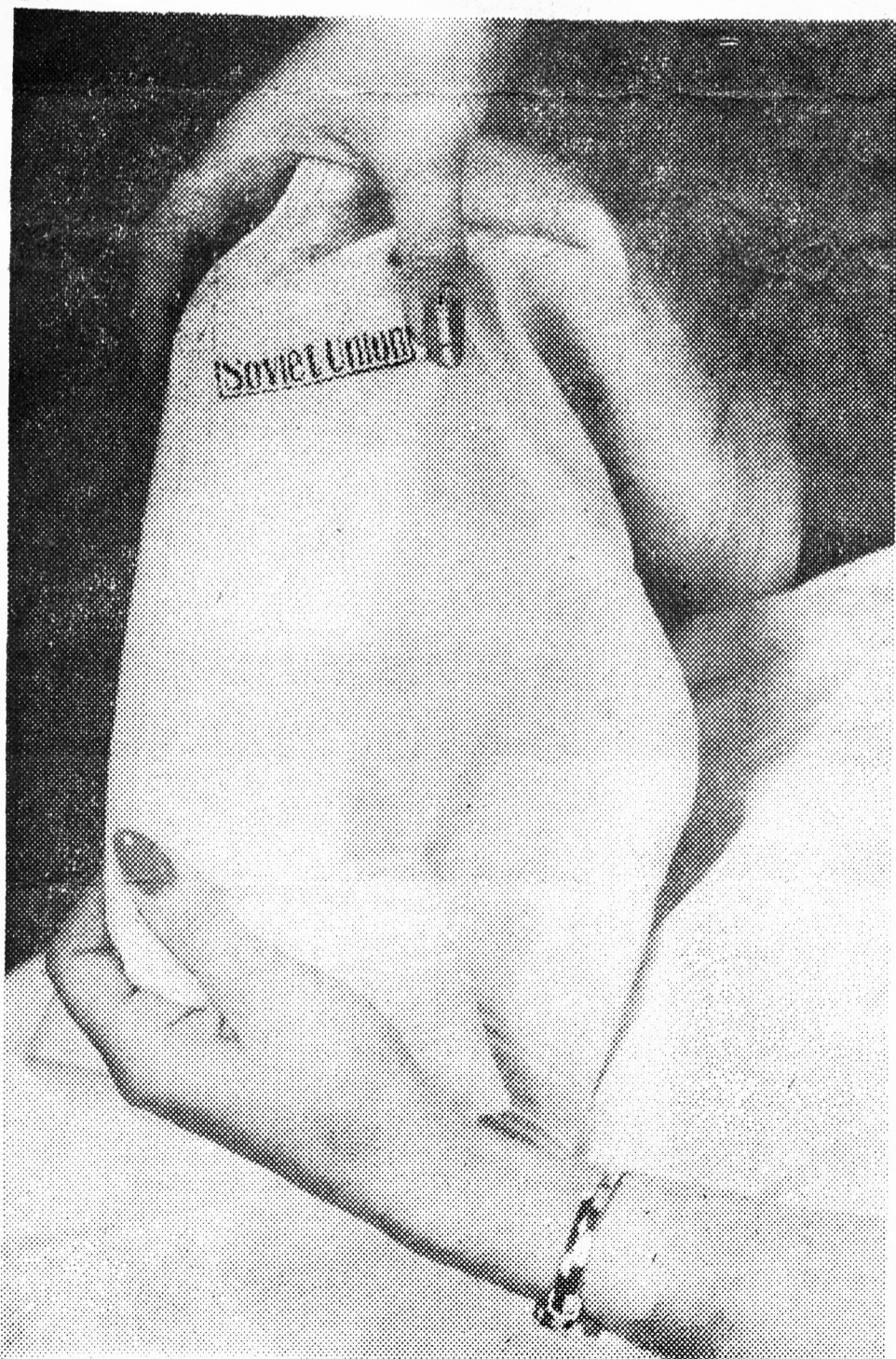
Last year the Cuban government required all school supervisors to take a course in Communism. The supervisors were to instruct the schoolteachers, who in turn were to teach the course to the students, Mrs. de la Cova said.

"That is why we left. I would not teach Communism. I would not let my children be forced to learn it in school. When you have lost the free-



—Press-Scimitar Staff Photos

TO LIVE IN FREEDOM the de la Cova family traded wealth in Castro's Cuba for uncertainty and poverty in America. They are pictured at their apartment at 846 S. Cooper. The boys, left to right: George, 8, Rene Jr., 11, and Tony, 10. Mr. de la Cova is holding Ana Maria, 4. Mrs. de la Cova is holding Lourdes, 2.



THIS LABEL, "Soviet Union," appears on much merchandise sold today in Cuban stores, Mrs. de la Cova said. Pictured is a dish towel she bought in Havana the day before the family came to America.

dom to think, nothing else is worthwhile," she said.

As she spoke, her five children romped noisily thru in

the yard. "They are very happy. The neighbors have been very kind to them," Mrs. de la Cova said.