



CLOSED IN PROTEST — Emiliano Prats, secretary of the Cuban exile organization, Liceo Cubano of South Jersey, locks his Landis ave. furniture store this morning to protest an expected decision by the Organization of American States to re-establish economic relations with Communist Cuba. Prats, who fled the regime of Prime Minister Fidel Castro, said economic relations with the United States would not benefit the Cuban people. *(Times Journal photo)*

Exiled Cuban Businessmen Here Protest Impending OAS Action

By **DEBORAH WAJDA**

Nine Cuban-owned businesses in Vineland were closed today in protest of the anticipated decision by the Organization of American States to lift its 10-year-old diplomatic and economic embargo against Communist Cuba.

The businessmen, all affiliated with the

Liceo Cubano, a South Jersey organization of Cuban exiles, joined with other large Cuban-American communities in Miami, New York City and North Jersey in the one-day protest. Liceo Cubano members were expected to distribute anti-Castro leaflets here this morning before attend-

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ing a large rally in Union City this afternoon, according to the president, Jesus Nunez.

Emiliano Prats, whose Landis ave. furniture store was locked today, said U.S. economic relations with Cuba "only would lengthen Castro's stay in power and increase the agony of the people."

"The people will not benefit from these relations," he said. "It hasn't happened in any other Communist country and it won't happen in Cuba." He said other industrial countries sell goods to Cuba but they don't reach the people.

"With the price of sugar what it is on the world market, you'd expect every Cuban to be driving a Rolls Royce," Prats continued, yet he said relatives on the tiny island 90 miles off Florida do not even have envelopes and ink to write letters.

He also said Spain recently sold fishing boats to Cuba but, he claimed, the people there have no fish to eat. "Castro only is interested in exporting revolution to Latin America," Prats charged.

The Liceo Cubano already has sent a telegram to President Ford urging the U.S. to vote no at the meeting of the 21-nation OAS which convened this week in Ecuador.

The United States has taken a "wait and see" stance in the debate which is expected to end tonight with a two-thirds majority voting in favor of lifting the ban.

A draft resolution presented by Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica calls for the lifting of the sanctions and includes a key clause "reaffirming the principle of non-intervention into the affairs of other states."

Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay have said they will vote against ending the sanctions. Nicaragua has said it is abstaining, and diplomatic sources said Haiti, which

first was in favor of lifting the ban, now may abstain. The U.S., Brazil and Bolivia are still uncommitted.

The sanctions were imposed against the Cuban regime in 1964 after Prime Minister Fidel Castro was accused of fomenting revolution in Venequela.

In recent years, the economic sanctions have been largely ignored. Five OAS members now have diplomatic relations with Cuba and Mexico never broke ties.
