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NATIONAL SUMMIT ON CUBA

SUMMIT HOST COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

America's largest grassroots farm organization with over 5 million members in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

USA*ENGAGE

A broad-based coalition composed primarily of America's most recognizable corporations.

THE WORLD POLICY INSTITUTE

A New York research and education policy center.

AMERICANS FOR HUMANITARIAN TRADE WITH CUBA (AHTC)

A national organization of leaders who advocate lifting restrictions on food and medical trade with Cuba and the free travel necessary for such trade to occur. Advisory Council members follow:

Carla Anderson Hills
Hills & Company
Former U.S. Trade Rep

Dwayne Andreas
Archer Daniels Midland Company

Phil Baum
American Jewish Congress

Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr.
Former Treasury Secretary

Reginald K. Brack, Jr.
Chairman Emeritus, Time Inc.

Melinda Bush
Hospitality Resources Worldwide

Dr. Joan Brown Campbell
Chautauqua Institution

Frank C. Carlucci
The Carlyle Group
Former NSC Chief

A.W. Clausen
Former President World Bank

Alberto Coll
Pell Center for International
and Public Policy, Rhode Island

Francis Ford Coppola

Peter H. Coors
Coors Brewing Company

The Honorable Michael C. Dow
Mayor, Mobile, Alabama

Dr. Robert Edgar
National Council of Churches

Richard E. Feinberg
Former NSC Chief Latin America

Milton Friedman PhD
Hoover Institution

Craig L. Fuller [AHTC Co-Chair]
Former Chief of Staff, VP Bush

Sam M. Gibbons [AHTC Co-Chair]
Former 34-year Florida Congressman

Larry Gold, PhD
SomaLogic, Inc., Colorado

Mark O. Hatfield
Former U.S. Senator, Oregon

Grazell Howard
Coalition of 100 Black Women

David G. Kay
American Rice, Inc., Houston

Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Bob Odum
Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture

George Sturgis Pillsbury
Sargent Management Company

A.J. Pete Reixach
Port of Freeport, Texas

Julius B. Richmond, M.D
Former U.S. Surgeon General
Harvard University

Dennis Rivera
1199 National Health & Human Service
Employees Union

David Rockefeller
Rockefeller Center Properties, Inc.

James Rodney Schlesinger
Former CIA Director,
Defense Secretary

Kurt L. Schmoke
Former Mayor, Baltimore

General John J. Sheehan (retired),
Former Supreme Allied Commander,
Atlantic (NATO)

Mark Sanford
Former U.S. Rep. South Carolina

Oliver Stone

Paul A. Volcker
Former Chair U.S. Federal Reserve Board

Malcolm Wallop
Former U.S. Senator, Wyoming

John Whitehead
Former Deputy Secretary of State

Jim Winkler
United Methodist Church



SUMMIT HOST COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS, CONTINUED

- James L. Abernathy**, Abernathy MacGregor, Inc.
- Alfredo G. Duran**, Cuban Committee for Democracy
- Delvis Fernandez**, Cuban American Alliance and Education Fund
- Dan O’Flaherty**, National Foreign Trade Council
- Joan Goldsmith**, Management Consultant
- Alan Sagner**, The Sagner Companies
- Stephen Schlesinger**, World Policy Institute
- Silvia Wilhelm**, Puentes Cubanos
- Robert J. Wilmers**, Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company

HOSTS FOR SUMMIT ‘FREEDOM TO FLY’ RECEPTION

- Daniel Aruca**, Marazul Charters, Inc. (New Jersey)
- Joe Perez**, Cuba Travel Services, Inc. (California)
- Tessie Aral**, ABC Charters (Miami)

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS FOR OVERALL SUMMIT EVENTS

Latin America Working Group - Washington Office on Latin America - Center for International Policy - Cambio Cubano - Cuban American Alliance Education Fund - Cuban Committee for Democracy - Puentes Cubanos - The U.S./Cuba Legal Forum - The Dante Fascell Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution - Fundación Amistad - Cuban American Democratic Council - Pan American Coalition - Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy

SUMMIT STAFF

- Lissa Weinmann**, Summit Coordinator
- John Loggia**, Assistant Summit and Communications Coordinator
- Michelle Wojcik**, Assistant Summit Coordinator
- Brown Lloyd James**, Public Relations
- Radiah Dove & Harpreet Anand**, Interns

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Kirby Jones, Alamar Associates - Katie Donahue - Jordan Press and Mavis Anderson - H.P. Goldfield - Cliff Stammerman, Rep. Delahunt - Brent Gibadlo, formerly with Rep. Flake - Dana McGilton, formerly with Rep. Emerson - Mary Kay Thatcher, Farm Bureau - The Christopher Reynolds Foundation - Brian Moran, Senator Dorgan - The Arca Foundation - Bobbie Salazar - Pablo Narvaez - singer Candi Sosa - Yasuo San for invite/button design - John Loggia for logo design and video - Winnie Lerner - Cecil Eversley - K Video

The National Summit on Cuba Overview of the Event and the New National Consensus on Cuba

Cuba is a meaningful issue to a surprising cross-section of mainstream America. The National Summit on Cuba was launched to give voice to the various facets of that growing public who seek a new approach to Cuba as a matter of true interest to themselves, their communities, their businesses, their families and their personal ideals about how our country should lead in a changing world.

The National Summit on Cuba was launched on September 17 and 18, 2002. The historic two day event brought together more than 500 Americans from across the country to examine the various ways the U.S. unilateral economic embargo on Cuba undermines American national interest. Participants explored how other policy options could enhance our national interest and national security. The Cuban American community played a key role in the days' events.

Summit logistics were handled by the World Policy Institute's Cuba Education Project. The American Farm Bureau Federation, the USA Engage Coalition of more than 650 U.S. corporations and Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba, a national coalition of prominent Americans working to normalize food and medical trade with Cuba and the free travel necessary for such trade to occur, joined with the Cuba Education Project as the principle cosponsors of the Summit launch.

National Summit on Cuba Day One: The National Summit on Cuba Conference at the National Press Club Ballroom, Washington DC brought together an audience of 380 American leaders, with delegations from 28 states, to hear presentations from 44 speakers on how specific changes in U.S. policy toward Cuba would better serve local and national interests in a variety of areas such as homeland security, strengthening the U.S. economy, human rights in Cuba, the Constitutional right to free travel, the evolving Miami Cuban American community, moral and international leadership and other areas. Elected officials from California, Alabama, Texas, Florida and elsewhere spoke and attended as members of state delegations.

Testimony from former U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker, U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohue, John Ashcroft (then Senator from Missouri), Cubans on the island and others were presented as part of the *Voices on Cuba* video produced for the Summit. Key representatives from the corporate community such as The Coca-Cola Company, the Boeing Company, Archer Daniels Midland, Cargill, Louis Dreyfus, among others, participated. M&T Bank, the 23rd largest bank in the U.S., was a cosponsor of the Summit.

National Summit on Cuba Day Two: Cuban-American Led Cuba Education and Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill: Almost 400 Cuban-Americans gathered on Capitol Hill on the second day of the Summit (September 18th), with 200 of these arriving that day on a charter plane from Miami. They came to support specific changes to the U.S. embargo which they believe will help the people of Cuba while promoting broader American national interests. Prominent Cuban American leaders representing 16 different groups sponsored House and Senate panels to present their personal points of view. They also held a historic meeting with members of the Florida Congressional delegation to examine how openings to Cuba would positively impact the state of Florida.

The leaders shared various polling data that definitively shows that a majority of the South Florida Cuban American community supports: removing the remaining barriers to normal humanitarian trade; lifting travel U.S. restrictions on travel to Cuba for all Americans; lifting all limits on financial remittances to the Cuban people, and other changes that reflect the new consensus within that community.

The Cuban Americans sponsored a spirited rally and press conference on the steps of the Cannon House Office Building. Cuban American leaders spoke out in favor of a new approach toward Cuba. U.S. representatives Jeff Flake (R-AZ), William Delahunt (D-MS) and JoAnn Emerson (R-MO), all members of the House Cuba Working Group spoke. Members of the new generation of Cuban Americans who want to participate in building a new relationship with Cuba unveiled the *Yo Si Voy* (Yes I Go) campaign, a Miami-based initiative fighting for the right of all Americans to travel freely to Cuba.

In sum, 70% of those Cuban Americans attending the National Summit on Cuba rally came from South Florida. They represented a cross-section of age groups. The remaining 30% of Cuban Americans came from across the U.S. A small group of pro-embargo protestors who gathered across the street from the rally reflected a much older demographic with most coming from New Jersey. The Summit concluded with closing statements on the steps of the Supreme Court.

Bush Administration Participation: The Bush Administration sent Dan Fisk, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, to speak at the Summit. During his Summit presentation, Mr. Fisk accused Cuba of providing false leads in the fight against terrorism. Fisk's allegation provoked numerous headlines in major national newspapers, unfortunately diverting the media spotlight from the Summit event itself. U.S. Representative JoAnn Emerson moderated a question and answer session with Fisk following his address. Key officials from various government agencies attended the Summit as observers.

Freedom to Fly Reception: A consortium of licensed Cuba charter airline companies from California, New Jersey and Miami sponsored a gala reception on the roof of the Hotel Washington on the evening of September 17. More than 400 people attended the event, including several members of Congress. A band led by Cuban American singer Candi Sosa (a woman who until very recently supported the embargo) provided the entertainment. The Freedom to Fly reception was held just across the street from the Department of Treasury, the agency not only in charge of tracking down terrorists but which, according to Congressional testimony, spends approximately 15% to 20% of personnel's time tracking Americans traveling illegally to Cuba.

JOIN US

The stunning demonstration of the new national consensus on Cuba at the September event was just the tip of the iceberg. Summit organizers have created a national database of community leaders from every sector interested -- as a matter of our national interest and our national security -- in a new approach to Cuba. Those who wish to learn of legislative efforts to ease the embargo and promote new cooperation between our two nations as well as information about upcoming National Summit on Cuba events, can visit the National Summit on Cuba website at www.nationalsummitoncuba.org. You can contact us at info@ahtc.org or by calling Lissa Weinmann, Director of the World Policy Institute Cuba Education Project and Executive Director of Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba at (718) 416-1653.

SUMMIT INTRODUCTION

Lissa Weinmann
Coordinator, National Summit on Cuba
Director, Cuba Education Project,
World Policy Institute, New York
Executive Director,
Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba

“We are all here because each of us believes, from our own unique point of view, that a change in U.S. policy toward Cuba is in the best interests of the United States.”

Cuba is a meaningful issue to a surprising cross-section of mainstream America. The National Summit on Cuba was launched to give voice to the various facets of that growing public who seek a new approach to Cuba as a matter of true interest to themselves, their communities, their businesses, their families and their personal ideals about how our country should lead.

Look around: we have 380 participants with us here today representing 28 states. You are physicians, elected officials, businessmen, port officials, farmers, religious leaders, retired military officers and environmentalists. Many of you are Cuban Americans with family members remaining in Cuba. You are here because you have a personal stake in changing U.S. policy.

We are all here because each of us believes, from our own unique point of view, that a change in U.S. policy toward Cuba is in the best interests of the United States. The ballroom is filled to capacity, but for everyone sitting here today there are two others who would have liked to attend and who have sent us their information to keep them informed. Tomorrow 200 Cuban Americans will arrive on a chartered plane from Miami to amplify our voices on Capitol Hill. We welcome you and thank you for your commitment to this issue. If there was ever any doubt, let it be known once and for all: The time is now for a new approach toward Cuba.

Sam Gibbons
Co-Chair, National Summit on Cuba
Former 34-year U.S. Representative from Tampa,
Co-Chair (with Craig Fuller, former Chief of Staff to Vice President Bush) of
Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba

“Never has it been more important for the United States to look at Cuba in a different light than it is right now.”

Today we are witnessing a historic event. It is truly inspiring to see how many of you important people have come here today to show your support for a new approach to Cuba. Never has it been more important for the United States to look at Cuba in a different light than it is right now. The President is trying to rally the country and the world to take care of a problem, to rise up against what he believes is a specter of danger. We are going to the Hill tomorrow to convince Congress to open trade and travel with Cuba. This begs the question, why Cuba, and why now?

Our Declaration of Independence called upon us to have a decent respect for the opinions of mankind. For ten years running, the United Nations by increasing margins has called for an end to the embargo. Now only two countries join the U.S. in supporting the policy. That is the opinion of mankind. If our country wants the respect of mankind, we have got to listen to the opinions of mankind. In no time in American history, has it been more important to listen to that voice.

Others have been voting with their feet. They have begun humanitarian trade with Cuba. In Tampa and through Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba, we have been working for change because we believe the embargo is a cruel policy that hurts the people of Cuba in any number of ways. It is also a failed policy that has not achieved, and in fact has undermined, its stated goals. Today we will be hearing about how and why change could enhance our national security, help local economies, improve our environmental security, improve the prospects for reconciliation in the divided Cuban family, expand our medical horizons, improve our relations with international allies and improve the prospects of a better tomorrow for the people of Cuba.

Bob Stallman
Co-Chair, National Summit on Cuba
President, American Farm Bureau Federation
(former President, Texas Farm Bureau)

“With more traditional trading relations, we will move more than just product, we will move America’s ideas and ideals. We will open markets and we will open minds.”

America’s farm and ranch families have long supported a normalization of trade relations with one of our closest neighbors, Cuba. We have long called for an end to all embargoes of our agricultural exports. They are wrong philosophically, morally, and economically. Embargoes punish America’s farmers and citizens—not foreign governments. Embargoes tarnish America’s reputation because potential customers view us as unreliable sources, at best. We are considered arrogant bullies for using food as a weapon.

Farm bureau workers look forward to the opening of trade and travel to Cuba. We expect Cuba to buy over \$100 million in agricultural products this year. That’s just a start. We need to recapture the 75% to 80% of Cuba’s agricultural imports that we enjoyed four decades and nine presidents ago. Our embargo has not diminished Cuba’s need to import \$1 billion worth of food. Nor does it stop our friends from trading and investing.

Cuba now imports rice from Asia instead of Arkansas, dairy products from Australia instead of Vermont. Joint ventures of all commercial varieties exist with investment coming from Israel, Mexico, Europe, Canada and others. Only money and people from the United States are missing. With sounder policies guiding our relationship with Cuba, we see a rapidly developing market for our value-added, more profitable products.

The American Farm Bureau and various state bureaus have visited Cuba over recent years and have come away with a sense of optimism for an improved partnership between our peoples. In fact, we are taking another group there in November to continue our efforts to build new relationships. Anytime we can open a market, America’s farmers are better off. With more traditional trading relations, we will move more than just product, we move America’s ideas and ideals. We will open markets and we will open minds. Just as the trumpets of trade blew down the Berlin Wall, trade can build a 100- mile bridge to understanding and peace with Cuba. It’s just a matter of time, just a matter of doing what is right.

Congressman Jeff Flake
U.S. Representative (R-Arizona)
Member of the House Cuba Working Group

“I am a conservative Republican and I am very much in support of the President and his foreign policy. However, the case of Cuba has always been a glaring inconsistency.”

This is an incredible group to look at. If anyone does not believe that the tide has turned, they only need look at this group to realize that the momentum is with us. I commend all of you for coming. We are often asked the question on Capitol Hill: what does the Cuban-American community think? Prior to this year, the other side has had the monopoly on that argument. The importance of this Summit is to demonstrate that the Cuban-American community is not just one voice. Those in Washington haven't known it. But, after today they will.

My district is not a farming district. For me this is an issue of freedom. I am a conservative Republican and I am very much in support of the President and his foreign policy. However, the case of Cuba has always been a glaring inconsistency. Dick Arme is now coming out in support of lifting the embargo—this is a watershed moment to have such a leader in the Republican Party on our side.

We believe as Republicans, that political change follows economic change. And if we can win the hearts of minds and trade with people and show them the American values and culture, we have faith that they will come around politically. We employ that philosophy elsewhere in the world—China, North Korea, Vietnam. To some extent, we've seen a lot of progress in those countries, and more will come. This is a policy that works.

But, in Cuba we say that it is not going to work there. There is no reason to think that the invisible hand works in one hemisphere, but not in another. So, it is a matter of consistency of foreign policy. In one of the best speeches ever, delivered by Ronald Reagan for Barry Goldwater, Reagan said, “The issue of this election is freedom. Whether we believe in our capacity for self-government or whether we confess that an intellectual elite in a far-distant capitol can plan our lives for us better than we can ourselves.” To me Cuba policy represents an elite intellectual group in Washington that plans our lives.

I am perfectly capable of making a decision whether or not I want to travel to Cuba, where I should be spending my money and where others should as well. I shouldn't be told that. And to me, if our government is going to take the extraordinary step in curtailing our travel, they ought to have a compelling reason. In the case of Cuba, they simply do not. It is an issue of freedom.

The tide is turning for a number of reasons. First of all, you all are here. For the past year, we've had a very effective group working on this issue—the Cuba Working Group. This group includes an equal number of 46 Democrats and Republicans. We come together frequently to

discuss policy and discuss strategy. This year, it made a huge difference on the floor of the House of Representatives. Last year, we passed the Flake Amendment to lift the travel ban by a vote of 242 to 187. It had passed the prior year when it was sponsored by Congressman Mark Sanford by 232 votes in favor. We increased by 10 votes. What we weren't prepared for was the strategy of the opposing side.

They came up with the Goss Amendment that was centered on the issue of terrorism. The amendment stated that the travel ban could not be lifted until the President certified that Fidel Castro was not participating in bio-weapons development, and other forms of terrorist activity. The debates on the floor of the House of Representatives were highly charged and very much paid attention to because most of the members of the Cuba Working Group were making their arguments.

The terror argument is an interesting argument and I would argue that it is one of our most powerful ones. We are engaged in a war on terrorism now. The one part of the war on terrorism where we haven't been as effective is shutting down the financial terrorist network. I would submit that part of the reason that we haven't been as effective there is because the same office responsible for prosecuting the war on financial terrorist networks, the Office of Foreign Assets Control, is also responsible for enforcing the Cuba travel ban. Between 10 to 20% of employees at the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control are permanently assigned to tracking Cuba violations. Instead of working on the war on terror, we are spending time and taxpayer dollars chasing down grandmothers from Iowa going on senior's bike trips to Cuba. We know that these fines are being stepped up. There have been over 700 fines levied this year. Many of these people are going for humanitarian purposes, such as the man who went to spread his father's ashes in Cuba. We aren't forwarding the war on terrorism by chasing these people down.

There are other arguments that are working quite well. Lifting the embargo completely, the Rangel Amendment received more votes than it ever has--only 20 votes shy of passing in the House of Representatives. I think that is remarkable. It speaks well of your efforts.

Although my issue is travel, I would lift in the embargo in a heartbeat. To the extent that Castro wants to take advantage of lifting the embargo, the Cuban government will have to institute measures that will undermine the existing system. If investment is going to flow to Cuba, than they will have to have some semblance of private property rights. You are going to have some due process, and rights to contract. Those very things are inconsistent with socialism. To the extent that they want to take advantage of lifting the embargo, they will simply undermine their own system. That would be the best of both worlds.

THE FLAG FOLLOWS TRADE: BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES ON CUBA

William Reinsch

President, National Foreign Trade Council

Chairman, USA Engage, a coalition of more than 600 U.S. corporations

Former Undersecretary for Export Administration, U.S. Commerce Department

“Cuba is an important effort for us and it is really gratifying to see so many interesting people here taking the same position we are.”

USA Engage has for more than five years waged an often-lonely battle against unilateral economic sanctions. Not only with respect to Cuba, but with respect to the 30 plus other countries that are subject to such sanctions, particularly with respect to the 84 or so sanctions that either Congress, or the last or the current administration, has implemented in the last several years. Cuba is an important effort for us and it is really gratifying to see so many interesting people here taking the same position as we are. I was going to make some extended remarks on the inequities of the embargo, but the previous speakers have done a much better job than I could

have done. We are going to talk about the impact of food sales on farmers in the United States. Then our final panelists will talk about the implications of the Helms Burton and the embargo on current investment in Cuba.

David Frey
Administrator, Kansas Wheat Commission

“For Kansas farmers, trade with Cuba is not controversial... A lot of the farmers out West are planting in hopes that come harvest next June, they will be able to sell to their natural markets, including our long-denied market, Cuba.”

Today about 30,000 Kansas Wheat farmers are participating in an annual act of hope and faith as they plant their wheat. They are planting wheat in very dry ground due to the fires out West. We've had record high temperatures and record low precipitation. The federal government is considering drought assistance at this time. A lot of the farmers out West are planting in hopes that come harvest next June, they will be able to sell to their natural markets, including our long-denied market, Cuba.

Agriculture depends on exports about twice as much as the rest of the economy. Wheat depends on exports twice as much as does agriculture in general. Of the major wheat markets, off-limits to the American farmers, which include Iran and Iraq, one bright spot for Kansas farmers this year has been Cuba.

In the wake of Hurricane Michelle last November, and to meet humanitarian needs in Cuba, the U.S. government offered wheat as food aid. Even though there was an obvious and tremendous need and even though wheat was offered as a donation, Cuba insisted that they pay for the wheat on commercial terms. The U.S. government allowed this to happen and in January of this year Cuba purchased 70,000 tons of hard red winter wheat and 10,000 tons of flour. They were the first wheat sales to Cuba in over 40 years. But it was not the first time in recent years that needy Cubans were allowed to eat bread made from U.S. wheat.

The commercial sales followed two donations of flour made by Kansas wheat farmers in 1999 and 2000. The flour was provided to CARITAS, the Catholic relief organization in Cuba, and made into bread and distributed to the needy of Cuba. Still, Cuban millers had no experience milling Kansas wheat since 1960. So when the first shipload of wheat arrived into Havana from Galveston, Texas, the Kansas Wheat Commission, in cooperation with U.S. Wheat Associates, provided flour-milling experts to show the Cubans how to best utilize hard wheat. They greatly appreciated that guidance and the wheat provided ideal for the production of Cuban bread.

Since January, Cuba has come back into the U.S. market and has become a very important cash customer of U.S. wheat this year. They bought more than 150,000 million metric tons—that is 2.6 million bushels. That's great, but Cuba's wheat import averages 1.1 million tons per year. Canada dominated the trade in the early 80's and early 90's, but in the last 10 years, Europe has been dominating the Cuba wheat trade. The only reason France, Italy and Spain are competitive is because of export subsidies. The U.S. advantages in the Cuban market are much stronger. We have much better wheat for Cuban bread. We have shorter shipping times and lower freight costs.

Notwithstanding the recent purchases, current U.S. government rules and regulations on Cuba are extremely restrictive. The current legislation has three components that make it virtually impossible to treat Cubans as we would any other customer in the world. Those restrictions are on travel, licensing, and restrictions on our ability to use government development and market funds. Future prospects to U.S. wheat sales to Cuba are slim unless those restrictions are eliminated.

My understanding is that bread in Cuba is rationed. How can we not sell them wheat for bread that they need? It is difficult for farmers in Kansas to understand this. For Kansas farmers, trade with Cuba is not controversial. Cuban people like our wheat, and we have the wheat to sell. Today in Kansas, farmers are planting wheat in hope of rain and in hope that they are going to be able to provide the staff of life to the people of Cuba.

Gary La Grange
Director, Port of New Orleans
President, Gulf Coast Ports Association of the Americas

“Increased trade with Cuba is good for Louisiana and all of the U.S. gulf ports.... There are seven ports in Cuba and we are just dying to do business with them.”

Port directors across the country think in geographic terms and in terms of economics. Cuba, from the Port of New Orleans, is only 700 nautical miles and 44 hours away. That is a very, very short trip.

In 1959, Cuba was the Port of New Orleans' number one trading partner. In imports, we were number one and in exports Cuba was number seven. Accounting for, on the import side, 1.2 million tons of cargo. On the export side, 269,000 tons of cargo--from sugar, to molasses, to vegetable fibers, fruit, pigments, paints, varnishes, flour, chemicals, grain, vegetables, animal feed and lumber. As of December 14, 2001, the first direct food shipment was shipped through the Port of New Orleans to Cuba. 25,000 tons of corn was shipped following Hurricane Michelle. Today your total export from the U.S. comes in the lines of poultry, turkey, butter,

margarine, eggs, cereal, apples, grapes, and pears and medical supplies. All comes in to us from the mid-Western part of the United States—Louisiana, Mississippi and as far away as California and Washington, so there's a long line of people who stand to benefit along the way. We all see a lot potential for the future with Cuba, all in the same areas as the past.

Since, 1994 to 2001 we've seen U.S. business representatives visiting Cuba go from 500 in 1994 to 2,000 in 1997 to 3,700 in 2001. The U.S. Food and Agri Business Exhibition is less than 10 days away--September 26th to September 30th in Havana. 234 U.S. companies will be participating, including the Port of New Orleans in concert with New Orleans Coal Storage Facility. Indeed, trade with Cuba is a reality today. There are seven ports in Cuba and we are just dying to do business with them. Trade since Hurricane Michelle has amounted to \$122 million to date with and estimated \$165 million by the end of 2002. That is nothing, but it's the beginning of the 1,000-mile journey.

Aside from our business interests, I'd like to make a more personal observance. Last week we hosted an international conference in New Orleans. One of our visitors noted a marker on the side of one of our buildings. That marker is of the Cuban flag and says that it was first flown in 1850 from that site from the home of the Daily Delta newspaper (52 years before Cuba became an independent Republic). It was the Lions Club of Cuba. The liberating expedition of Cuba under General Narcisco Lopez with hundreds of soldiers from Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi carried the Cuban flag to Cuba for the first time in history. They left from New Orleans on May 11, 1850 on board the U.S. steamer Creole and triumphantly hoisted the flag in Cuba on May 19, 1850. That is to say that beyond simply trade, we have a long, close historic and cultural relationship with Cuba that was cut-off because of the embargo, and that is a real shame.

Kirby Jones
President, Alamar Associates
America's largest Cuba business consultancy

“The future for potential sales is limited by the restrictions that remain on financing and travel.... Medium and small-sized companies have problems accessing the Cuban market mostly due to the travel restrictions.”

My first trip to Cuba was in 1974. After so many years, it is a fantastic view to see all of you here from so many states. To see what's happened over the past two years since the Trade Sanctions Reform Act was passed and to see the momentum with which things have been happening over the past 10 months. I have taken approximately 250 companies to Cuba this year and have participated in 12-13 different negotiations with Cuban officials. I have a few conclusions about this process over the past 10 months--some of it good, some of it not so good.

Even given the restrictions and limitations, the process on both sides has worked. The officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture should be commended on how they have dealt with Cuban officials and this system and made it work. From the Cuban side, clearly there is interest in buying. They have seen that they get quality products at very good prices. The contracts have been simplified.

There are still problems related to veterinary and sanitary regulations concerning products and there have been delays. Many of the problems come back to travel—whether the U.S. officials do or do not grant visas for the Cuban officials to travel and work out these issues with Department of Agricultural officials. But, little by little as those certifications are made and the list of products sold grows, interest has grown and the system basically has worked.

The breadth of the American business sector involved in these sales is very interesting. Dozens of companies from over 30 states are involved. The degree of products purchased has been extensive--from apples from Washington, eggs from New England, to onions and poultry and grains from a number of states and poultry from all over the country. This is not without design. The Cubans have looked at this exercise from many sides—both from a business and political point of view.

The Cubans are quick to say that they have learned their lessons about putting all their eggs in one basket. The one basket was the United States until 1959 and then the Soviet Union until 1990. They have taken that lesson and they have diversified their suppliers, which opens up a wider source of products and obviously achieves a greater political impact around this entire political debate. What this has sparked is an increase in awareness of what the potential is.

The future for the potential sales is limited by the restrictions that remain on financing and travel. On the negative side, the medium and small-sized companies have difficulty accessing the Cuban market mostly due to the travel restrictions. Cuba likes to deal with people that they know. With the travel restrictions, it is difficult for companies to get known. So, the first sales were from a larger company. Some sales have resulted from visits from the various state farm bureaus. But there is a hurdle for small and medium-sized companies to get into the action. If the travel restrictions are lifted, it would greatly help the small and medium-sized businesses.

Finally, there is the issue of medical sales. There have been no medical sales. The medical sales carry a fine-print caveat that does not apply to agricultural products. U.S. suppliers have to certify who the end users are of every pill and machine that they sell. This is impossible. No

U.S. company wants to do it. The Cubans have said that as a matter of principle, if we buy the product we have a right to use it. There is still much work to be done on the medical side and on the travel side.

The current legislation on the 2002 Treasury Appropriations bill does not legalize travel. It solely doesn't allow Treasury department funds to enforce the travel ban for one year. We already have the votes to lift the whole travel ban in the Senate. With more legislative changes, there is tremendous potential in Cuba. Both sides have worked well. It's up to us to continue this fight. It is no longer a question of if, now it's a question of when.

William C. Lane
Washington Director for Government Affairs
Caterpillar Corporation, Illinois

“We believe it's prudent to lift travel restrictions to Cuba now. We would like to start building the human infrastructure needed to be the dominant supplier to Cuba. We would like to meet and train the people that are going to buy, sell and service our equipment. That takes interaction -- people to people contact -- that the current rules don't allow.”

From a historical perspective, if you go back to pre-1960, Havana was more modern than Miami or New Orleans. The size of the Cuban market for the type of products that we produce was similar to the size of Puerto Rico. Our competitors were all American companies. After the communists came to power, the size of the market shrank dramatically regardless of who the supplier was. The supply shrank by approximately 95%. At first we were replaced by Russian equipment and later by Japanese and European equipment.

If you go down to Cuba, you will quickly recognize why we are so focused on this market. Cuba doesn't need to rebuild its infrastructure. Cuba needs to build an infrastructure. Forty years of failed policies have taken their toll on that market. In spite of this overwhelming need for our products--whether for mining or highways or rebuilding the powergrid -- if the embargo was lifted today, we would see only demand for our products. Until Cuba is on a firm track to promote democracy and embrace free market reforms, we do not believe that we are going to get the type of massive foreign investment that can erase 40 years of failed policies.

As a next step though, we believe it's prudent to lift the travel restrictions to Cuba now. We would like to start building the human infrastructure needed to be the dominant supplier to Cuba. We would like to meet and train the people that are going to buy, sell and service our equipment. That takes interaction--people to people contact -- that the current rules don't allow.

Once it becomes clear that that Cuba is starting to change, there is going to be dramatic investment in Cuba. We expect immediately sales will surpass what we are currently selling to the Dominican Republic. Within a relatively short period of time, sales will be much larger than Puerto Rico. The demand will be overwhelming.

Is the business demand for American products compelling enough to change current policy? Perhaps not. What is compelling is to change the policy so that we promote a positive environment that will move the Cubans to embrace free market reforms and embrace democracy. That is compelling. When that takes place, the massive foreign investment will make it a compelling business issue.

The obvious conclusion is that the current policy isn't working. It is failing on all accounts. The logical next step is to lift travel restrictions. It should be done right away. By doing so, we will set in motion a chain of events that is going to greatly spark positive change. We look forward to that

positive change. We want to be part of it. We are strongly encouraging members of Congress with whom we have constituency relations to support the lifting of the travel restrictions.

Mark Entwistle

International Trade and Government Relations Consultant

Former Canadian Ambassador to Cuba (1993 to 1997)

“You can count on the fingers of one hand the countries that don’t maintain normal diplomatic relations with Cuba.”

I was the Ambassador of Canada in Cuba for four years, from 1993 to 1997. It was a very interesting time. I continue going to Cuba often for both business and humanitarian reasons. Today there is little time to cover even a small part of the many facets of the Cuba issue. So, I will offer four core observations about international engagement in Cuba, with a special focus on business.

First, regardless of widespread international ill at ease about the lack of multiparty elections, Cuba is not an isolated pariah state. There are approximately 120 foreign embassies and all of the major specialized agencies of the United Nations system in Cuba. You can count on the fingers of one hand the countries that don’t maintain normal diplomatic relations with Cuba. In fact, the diplomatic premises of the United States are still housed in the pre-Revolutionary building on the seaside promenade called the Malecon. Home to dozens of Cuban diplomats, it was recently renovated at the cost of tens of millions of dollars. At the same time, the U.S. trade and investment embargo is probably the only truly unilateral trade action based on politics in existence.

Second, after a burst of investment in the mid 1990’s, international commercial activity has slowed significantly over the past few years due to a combination of political retrenchment on the Cuban side and concern about return on investments on the foreign side. Existing commitments on the flagship deals involving nickel, oil, gas, cigar, tobacco products, and rum with companies such as Sherritt International, Telecom Italia, etc. continue apace. But there is little new dispersed investment of significance.

Thirdly, outside the flagship deals, foreign investors in Cuba tend to fall into two principle profiles. They are either wealthy private venture-oriented investors from Latin America or Europe, less from Canada, who are attracted to the emerging market dimension of the Cuba financing story. Or they are medium-sized entrepreneurial companies with no or minimal commercial exposure in the United States. Hence, they are fundamentally Helms-Burton-proofed. The net effect of the embargo on foreign business activity has been to chill the involvement of the large global corporate players, especially the retail and investment banks and major investment firms.

Fourth, the Cuban economy is again under extra serious cashflow pressure with echoes of conditions in the early 1990’s following the collapse of the former Soviet Union. There are a number of reasons for this, including interruptions to the supply of Venezuelan oil after the recent coup, shrinking tourism flows in the budget category which characterizes the Cuban tourism industry outside of Havana, both because of the impact of September 11th and global trends in general. The complete elimination of the 4th largest source of Cuban tourism due to the economic crisis in Argentina, loss of annual rent revenue in the hundreds of millions of dollars from the former Russian intelligence installation at Lourdes and low commodity prices against rising oil prices, and even more expensive prices on the stock market, etc.

I think the Cubans have done a remarkable job in keeping open every possible avenue of credit. They are seeking credit from any friend in the world—even from those who aren't friends. But the short-term money is becoming very expensive, as available options diminish. Lastly, I will be as bold to make a prediction. Under this fiscal pressure, we might see the Cubans move back into the international financial market to try to raise financing perhaps in innovative ways and to take new initiatives in its own economy to attract new money, including future internal investment on the island—Cuban to Cuban—never been done before. Much like the legalization of the U.S. dollar in 1994, this kind of decision could serve to tap into the American dollars still stashed in the mattresses of the embryonic Cuban middle class.

Paul A. Volcker
Former Chair, U.S. Federal Reserve
Advisory Council member,
Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba

Mr. Volcker offered remarks to the Summit as part of the Voices on Cuba video

“U.S. policy toward Cuba does more damage to our trade and political relationships with our friends than any value it might or might not have in terms of Cuba.”

It's been our experience, in fact, it has been our policy with other closed societies, that opening up and permitting Americans to trade and travel, along with others, will increase the chances that those societies will reform themselves from within in a peaceful way. Engagement has led to change in directions that we favor in other societies, I don't see why we should not apply those principles, that policy to Cuba, right here on our doorstep. Changes are already occurring in Cuba and a policy of engagement might promote these changes occur more rapidly.

In general, Americans ought to have the right to travel where they want to travel unless there are very serious arguments on the other side, such as physical danger, which doesn't apply to Cuba in any way I've heard about. I think the case is overwhelming in the case of Cuba that is helps American interests, it doesn't hurt American interests, to allow Americans to travel there.

A particular problem in pursuing this policy and its extension through the Helms Burton law is that it attempts to compel the behavior of foreign companies. The policy directly contravenes principles of international trade and, really, international political harmony while serving no effective purpose. The policy does more damage to our trade and political relationships with our friends than any value it might or might not have in terms of Cuba.

I think there are humanitarian questions here that need to be addressed. The easier it is to provide medicine, medical assistance and food to Cuba, the better. I understand Cuba has some developments in the medical area that could be of use to us here. We should be facilitating such exchange, not hampering it.

To put it simply, it's been 40 years of a policy that has obviously failed.

DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC IMPETUS FOR FREE TRAVEL

**Congressman William Delahunt
U.S. Representative (D-MA)
Member, House Cuba Working Group**

“This year, those who support the embargo and restrictions on travel did not even call for a vote when Jerry Moran (R-KS) put forth his amendment on removing all restrictions on private financing for food sales. They didn’t even challenge that vote. That is significant and shows how the other side has moved.”

This National Summit on Cuba is a very exciting event because it is all too rare when individuals can truly play a part in an historical moment. Nudge history along, if you will. Let me suggest that you are doing this today and tomorrow, as my Republican colleague Jeff Flake indicated. Last March, Jeff and I were invited to a similar conference called “The Time is Now” at the Biltmore in Miami. I anticipated a group of 40 or 50 Cuban-Americans. We were stunned to discover 400-500 Cuban-Americans that shared our view of Cuba policy. I think at some point in time when history is written, that day in March and this day in September will be considered watershed events.

I knew what we were doing when we created the Cuba Working Group because up until recently, while many derided the policy, there was not a coordinated strategic mechanism to really impact the institution itself. Clearly that has changed. As others have indicated, it’s obviously a failed policy, an anachronism of the cold war. It is inevitable that this policy will be cast into the dustbin of oblivion where it belongs.

It was truly this community, those of you in this room -- clearly the business community has played a significant role -- that has led us to the victories that you heard Rep. Flake recite. I think he failed to mention that this year on the floor in January those who are adherent to the embargo and to the restrictions on travel did not even call for a vote when Jerry Moran (R-KS) put forth his amendment on removing the restrictions on private financing for food sales. They didn’t even challenge that vote. That is significant and shows how the other side has moved.

In addition, we had a debate on lifting the caps on remittances that Cuban Americans and other Americans can send to their family and friends in Cuba. That too, resulted in an overwhelming vote in favor of lifting that cap. I don’t think Jeff mentioned what the final vote was on the amendment to restrict funding to impose the travel. That was 262 votes in favor. Two years ago it was 231. We can see in what direction we are going.

I will make one observation. Clearly, we are the remaining great power. This travel ban opens us up to charges not only of inconsistency, but of hypocrisy. I love to make the debate on the floor that while we can’t travel to Cuba without either lying or going through a third country, we can go to North Korea and Iran. By my calculation that represents two-thirds of the axis of evil. It does hurt us in many regions of the world when U.S. foreign policy is label as hypocritical. This November before the General Assembly there will be another vote, for all intents and purposes, condemning the embargo. I think last year it was 167 to 3. We were joined only by Israel and the Marianas. We have to look at that and recognize the time is long overdue for change.

Dorothy Robyn, PhD
The Brattle Group, Washington DC
Discusses a 2002 study on how lifting travel
restrictions to Cuba would impact U.S. economy

“Lifting OFAC enforcement of the travel ban might allow Americans to travel to Cuba but would not allow U.S. companies to transport them there. So, the economic benefits to the U.S. would be far more limited than the benefits we found if travel restrictions were lifted outright.”

Last spring the Center for International Policy asked us if we would look at the economic impact on the U.S. of lifting the travel ban on Cuba. We found that the total impact on the U.S. economy of unrestricted travel to Cuba would be an expansion of annual output that would range from \$1.18 billion to \$1.61 billion per year and somewhere between 17,000 and 23,000 jobs.

We looked separately at Cuban Americans and at American tourists. Cuban Americans can travel to Cuba now once every 12 months under certain circumstances. So there were some people who said that they weren't sure that we would see a significant increase in the number of Cuban American who would go back absent the restrictions.

In an effort to try to quantify what the marginal impact would be, we looked at other Caribbean groups, in particular Dominican Americans. Dominican Americans go back in a very high rate—40-45%. We assumed a lower number for Cuban Americans about 33%. Even so you get an increase of 289,000 annual visits for a total 400,000 annual visits.

In terms of trying to measure the number of American tourists would go to Cuba, there are a number of ways to look at it. We looked at a group who are comparable to Americans except for their ability to travel to Cuba, Canadians. If Americans were to travel to Cuba for recreation at the same rate, 2.8 million Americans would visit Cuba in the long run—that's 2.7 million more Americans than currently visit not counting Cuban Americans. We estimate that over time, 3.2 million people altogether will visit Cuba per year.

What does that mean in terms of the economy? We estimate that tourists would fly there on U.S. airlines. The impact on the U.S. airline industry we estimate will range between \$250 million and \$415 million per year. From talking to U.S. airlines, my sense is that they would love to serve Cuba.

Significant benefits would be to the U.S.-based cruise ship industry. It would add approximately half a billion dollars per year to the U.S. economy if you were to include the broader impact in U.S. air travel.

I'm not an economist and my colleagues designed the methodology for this project. But, I spent a lot of time talking to people on the phone to Caribbean scholars, airlines and others to try to ground this and to be comfortable with the numbers. I think we were very conservative. In particular we were conservative with the issue of diverted travel. Whenever you are trying to determine the impact of a new market, you have to exclude all travelers who would otherwise go to other destinations. A lot of these Americans who would go to Cuba if the travel

ban were lifted, would otherwise go to Cancun or Jamaica or Barbados—you cannot count these people. We did not count these people. We counted only those who would purchase a plane ticket specifically to go to Cuba only if restrictions were lifted. Our numbers are net of diverted travel.

We were conservative in a number of other ways in order to keep our estimates credible. The legislation that the House passed in 2002 would not produce the benefits that I've just described to you due to the fact that I don't believe that U.S. airlines would feel comfortable serving Cuba based on a one-year ban on OFAC enforcement of the travel ban. My sense is that they would need more in order to go there. Lifting OFAC enforcement of the travel ban might allow Americans to travel to Cuba, but would not allow U.S. companies to transport them there. So, the economic benefits to the U.S. would be far more limited than the benefits we found if travel restrictions were lifted outright.

A couple of weeks after releasing this study, I got the opportunity to travel to Cuba on a delegation with three members of Congress and Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture in the Clinton Administration. Nothing I experienced there led me to believe that the numbers were too high. I am not a Cuba expert, I am a transportation expert. I approached this neutrally, and that is what we found.

Daniel Aruca

Executive Vice President, Charter Operations, Marazul Travel, the largest licensed Cuba travel service provider, based in New Jersey and Miami, member of the new generation of Cuban Americans

“While we agree 100% with the right to travel freely, current U.S. restrictions will only continue to leave U.S. businesses out of the picture and create additional headaches for the Treasury Department, which will have to use more resources to track the fisherman or bicyclist who may have traveled to Cuba illegally. Given today’s global environment, I think we can all agree that these funds can be used in a more useful manner.”

Since 1979, Marazul has been responsible for sending over 300,000 licensed passengers to Cuba and is today the largest licensed service provider in the United States. This year alone we will send over 35,000 licensed travelers to the island and are projecting gross revenue of over \$36 million for the year. We all know that Marazul’s success is only a fraction of the opportunity that exists for U.S. businesses in Cuba.

Within the travel industry alone, the American Society of Travel Agents is projecting approximately 1 million Americans will travel to the island. Once the restrictions have been eliminated, projections are approximately \$1 billion revenue for U.S. travel businesses. It is clear that Cuba will be the next jewel of the Caribbean not just for its tropical waters and white sand beaches, but also for its mystique. Cuba is one of the few countries within the Caribbean with several major cities that are rich and artistic in cultural life. If you haven't been there I do recommend obtaining a license and discovering it for yourself.

I want to give you a little background on the current picture within the Cuba travel market and where we see it going. There is currently one charter flight from New York and Los Angeles to Havana per week. There are 22 weekly flights from Miami where licensed passengers can travel to such destinations as Havana, Holguin, Santiago, Camaguey and Cienfuegos. Today you will find major U.S. carriers such as Continental, American Eagle and United providing the aircrafts for these carriers in order to better position themselves for when normalization does take place.

Over 140,000 licensed passengers will travel to Cuba from those three authorized ports. That is an increase of 9% from last year. However, until changes are made in the travel restrictions, we

do not see this figure significantly increasing. In fact, what we do foresee is more Americans with the belief that it is their constitutional right to travel abroad continuing to challenge the law by traveling illegally through third countries.

While we agree 100% with the right to travel freely, current U.S. restrictions will only continue to leave U.S. businesses out of the picture and create additional headaches for the Treasury Department, which will have to use more resources to track the fisherman or bicyclist who may have traveled to Cuba illegally. Given today's global environment, I think we can all agree that these funds can be used in a more useful manner.

New U.S. firms looking to conduct business in Cuba must understand that you will not be dealing directly with private buyers and investors but with individuals and institutions who not only feel that they represent Cuba, but by Cuban law they do. Now, I am not a politician. My personal conviction is that if you carry-out your business in an ethical, professional and transparent manner, it will be mutually beneficial for both parties. As members of the business community, I feel we are contributing to progress in Cuba. We are creating an environment that facilitates choices.

During the past three years, I have been impressed with our Cuban-counterparts' display of professionalism, the expertise they have shown within the industry, their openness to new business approaches, and the steps they are taking today to prepare for a massive U.S. market. In addition to Congressman Delahunt, I would also like to recognize Congressman Flake who spoke earlier and Senator Dorgan for their efforts to eliminate funding on the enforcement of the travel restrictions, and Congressman Moran who successfully introduced an amendment to end the ban on private financing for US farm sales to Cuba.

Congressman Charles Rangel, although he didn't get quite enough votes, has been consistent year after year on introducing legislation to abolish the embargo altogether. I hope that more of our elected officials will follow the lead of these legislators. While we may have been the David in the David and Goliath match 15, 10, and even five years ago, our representatives need to recognize that the majority of Americans no longer see the need for the embargo. With the mass of interest displayed here today, it is clear that we are no longer the voice of David.

Ian Vásquez
Cato Institute

“Americans can send remittances to Cuba, but are prevented from spending that money in person in Cuba. The administration is proposing that U.S. tax dollars be used to support pro-democracy groups in Cuba rather than allowing Americans to use their own money voluntarily to achieve the same purpose in a more effective way.”

It is fitting that we speak about Cuba and U.S. policy toward Cuba today since it is Constitution Day, the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, which is the foundation of our democratic society. I think that a case can be made that travel restrictions on US citizens to Cuba are unconstitutional.

It is very difficult to imagine that the signers of the US Constitution would give the government the right and ability to prevent Americans from traveling to a country that does not pose a security threat. And it is that recognition of the right to travel by U.S. citizens that has led tens of thousands of Americans to go to Cuba illegally at a rate of 180,000 per year. As we just heard, many more would go if they were not legally prevented from doing so. That recognition of the

right to travel has been the major impetus for an increasing number in Congress to vote for lifting the travel ban. So, there is broad popular and political support to end the travel ban.

As it is, this law is imposed in an arbitrary manner. As mentioned, we can go to North Korea and Iran—two axis of evil countries, but we are prevented from going to Cuba. Americans can send remittances to Cuba, but are prevented from spending that money in person in Cuba. Instead, the administration is proposing that U.S. tax dollars be used to support pro-democracy groups rather than allowing Americans to use their own money voluntarily to achieve the same purpose, in a more effective way.

There is a second important reason to support an end to the travel embargo. Not only is it our right as American citizens to travel where we want, but ending the travel part of the embargo would be the single most important measure in bringing about positive change in Cuba.

Let me be clear: I am in favor of ending all aspects of the embargo—trade and investment as well. But I do not think that ending the trade embargo will bring about as significant a change. Capital flows and sustained economic growth are not going to occur in Cuba unless there are domestic policy changes. That is just the way it is and Cuba is no different than any other country in that regard. Travel is different.

Travel offers the opportunity for thousands of Americans to come into direct contact with Cubans, and in that way transmit the values of a free society to ordinary citizens. As we've just heard, ending the travel embargo would lead to an increase of hundreds of thousands if not up to one million American citizens going to Cuba each year. That would make a palpable difference in Cuba in that regard.

When Americans travel to Cuba, they spend their money by giving it to ordinary Cubans in the form of tips, fees and salaries and other types of reimbursements that help to make ordinary Cuban citizens more independent of the state. In fact, if you've been to Cuba you will see that there is a large and growing informal economy, much of it is dollarized, just as much as the formal economy is dollarized. That alone attests to the power of engagement. In this case, one that has undermined the Cuban government's absolute control over the country's currency. This is very important in terms of the basic liberties of Cuban citizens. It has now been recognized and legalized by the Cuban state and legalized.

The increased contact with ordinary citizens, the increased size of the informal economy and the undermining of the system shows that travel to Cuba is in fact consistent with the U.S. policy goals of promoting civil society and democratic values abroad.

Some object that if we allow this to happen, some of the money may support an unsavory regime that is not democratic and practices human rights violations. This may be true, but we already allow certain amounts of money to reach the government through remittances and telephone fees etc., on the calculation that those transactions, on balance, favor the promotion of freedom. We should have more of that, not less.

It is ironic to me that those who most favor the embargo and believe that some free trade and free travel will somehow save Communism from itself are leftist communists and hardline conservatives. Castro may be a brilliant political manipulator but he is a dismal economic strategist. He is wrong if he believes that an end to the embargo will rescue his experiment there. The U.S. should show Castro that he is wrong by lifting the travel restrictions on Americans citizens. Free travel will allow the establishment of relationships among Americans and Cubans citizens—relationships with the next generation of Cubans, the post-Castro generation. In that way we start today the smooth transition to democracy in Cuba today.

Burton J. Rubin
General Counsel, American Society of Travel Agents
The largest travel agents' organization in the U.S.
with 18,000 domestic members, 26,000 worldwide.

"I can't say for sure that lifting the travel ban will move Cuba toward democracy. What I can say is that lifting the travel ban will move the United States further to democracy. And that alone ought be more than sufficient reason for doing it."

There is a very old joke about a conference between a teacher and a parent of a child who disrupts the class. And finally the parent says to the teacher, "Look if my kid acts up again, just smack the kid next to him." I submit to you that that is a pretty good description of the rationale for wanting to punish Americans who go to Cuba.

We have some very serious issues with the Cuban government centered around treatment of the Cuban people--human rights abuses including the denial of freedom of expression and the freedom of movement. So, we have retaliated by restricting the freedom of travel of our own people.

Contrary to what some may tell you, the regime of travel restrictions has in fact been a stunning success in bringing about societal change. But instead of changing the objectionable aspects of Cuban society so that they more resemble the more admirable aspects of our own, travel restrictions have had precisely the opposite effect, changing the admirable aspects of our society to resemble the more objectionable aspects of Cuban society. Let me show you exactly what I mean.

A group of officials of the American Society of Travel Agents visited Cuba last April. Although this particular trip was absolutely legal, on his return, the head of the delegation received a so-called requirement to furnish information to the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. OFAC wanted to know who he went with, what their addresses were, where they went and what they did. These are not the sort of questions that Americans feel that they are accountable to their government to answer. My favorite is this one, I will read it to you: "You were quoted by the news media as stating the following, "We are developing a destination specialist course to train and educate U.S. travel agents to sell Cuba. Please provide a description of the content and purpose of this course."

OFAC has slipped seamlessly and untroubled from being the agency that enforces the ban on travel to Cuba to being an agency that now monitors and censors what people write about travel to Cuba. This should alarm everybody, but shouldn't surprise anybody. All infringements of personal liberties are malignant. None are benign. Left unchecked, they inevitably will spread. If you let your government be in the business of banning travel to Cuba, you will find that in order to do that job efficiently it has to go into the business of censoring what people write and even teach about travel to Cuba. That is exactly what has happened here. This is no small thing and this would be a very grave mistake to treat OFAC's interpretation of the scope of its mission lightly because once freedom is lost, it is very hard to regain.

At the American Society of Travel Agents, we believe that the individual right to travel is among those things that the founding fathers of this country had in mind when they spoke of inalienable rights. As an inalienable right it is bestowed upon us not by our government, or even our constitution, but by our creator. As an inalienable right it cannot be sold, traded or given away

and it certainly should not be borrowed by our own government for use as an instrument of foreign policy.

A central issue in the debate on lifting the travel ban is whether tourism will in fact democratize Cuba. There are some who say, and I tend to agree with them, that the presence of thousands of Americans roaming around will inevitably subvert the government. Others say that tourism cannot be an effective agency of change in a totalitarian state that tightly controls expression and communication. I can't say for sure that lifting the travel ban will move Cuba toward democracy. What I can say is that lifting the travel ban will move the United States further to democracy. And that alone ought be more than sufficient reason for doing it.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND U.S. POLICY TOWARD CUBA

Jose Miguel Vivanco
Director, Americas Division
Human Rights Watch

“This is not a human rights policy. The embargo against Cuba is seeking just to overthrow the current government of Cuba. It is a political tool. Current and past administrations try to sell this policy as a human rights policy, but it certainly is not.”

I represent Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch is the largest human rights organization in the United States. We cover human rights conditions all over the world. We assess progress or setbacks on human rights and for respect and protection for human rights in the U.S. and the rest of the world. I am responsible for our work in the Americas.

Let me tell you about a couple of things: one, what is our assessment of human rights conditions in Cuba and, two, what is our position with regard to U.S. foreign policy, specifically the embargo on Cuba.

Human rights conditions in Cuba, from our viewpoint based on the research and information that we are able to obtain through human rights organizations in Cuba and some of the members of the dissident community, could be characterized as systematic and serious violations of fundamental civil and political rights in terms of freedom of speech and free press. Cuba is not an open society. There is a totalitarian regime. There is no freedom of movement; there is no freedom of association. There are no labor rights in Cuba as far as we understand labor rights. There are benefits, but everything is controlled by the government. There are no civil and political rights in terms of the right to elect freely and participate in free elections, to run for elections or to vote in competitive open elections. Everything is controlled by the Communist party. There are no judicial guarantees, as we understand fundamental principles of due process and the right to defend.

The courts are controlled by the government and today we are able to argue that there are at least 300 political prisoners. There is no evidence of disappearances of people in Cuba. There is no evidence of physical torture among political prisoners, however, there is evidence of psychological torture. The rules of the game are pretty clear. If you cross the line and try to say or do something, which is not allowed by the Communist party, you could be subject to repression and immediate arbitrary arrest, detention and finally quick prosecution. You can be sent to prison for several years with no chance of parole. The only hope is that some

international leader would request or beg Castro for the release of some political prisoners which is something that he does once or twice a year as a gesture. It has been extremely frustrating. We have not been able to certify substantive progress in human rights conditions there.

There has been one area of change. After the Pope's visit, we have seen some relaxation on religious freedoms. The churches and the Jewish community are able now to practice their religion with more freedom. Whether U.S. foreign policy on Cuba is working, or working to improve human rights in Cuba, obviously the answer is no.

Human Rights Watch believes that the embargo is a policy that is counterproductive. Human Rights Watch is not against sanctions per se, not against isolation of a government that violates human rights abuses. I don't know if the language of the law is clear in your minds. How can you expect that a policy that is essentially seeking the overthrow of the government of Cuba could work when the embargo is to remain in place until a transitional government which "does not include Fidel or Raul Castro" takes control in Havana?

It is completely absurd to imagine that it would be in the interest of the Cuban government to take any steps for the relaxation of human rights abuses when U.S. policy establishes clearly that the only way to lift the embargo is to have a transition which cannot include the current government there. So, this is not a human rights policy. The embargo against Cuba is seeking just to overthrow the current government of Cuba. It's a political tool. The current and past administrations are trying to sell this policy as a human rights policy, but it certainly is not.

Secondly, U.S. policy is indiscriminate. There is no effort to establish any calibrated, targeted policy to push, to press the government to move in the right direction. This is absolutely an indiscriminate policy. We have real trouble to find a similar case of a policy that is so blunt and broad without real efforts to establish concrete targets and goals here.

Third, it is very important to note that this policy ends up alienating Washington's potential allies on the case of Cuba. The European Union, Latin America, Africa, Asia, any place in the world you name it, there is a unanimous condemnation of this policy. Every year at the United Nations we are the only country with Israel voting to enforce this policy. There is an unequivocal and unanimous international condemnation of this policy. This is a policy that has been unequivocally condemned also by the Pope and every leader on this issue. The only one alone trying to enforce this policy is essentially the U.S.

Obviously the embargo is not working and it is not working from our viewpoint partly because this is a domestic affair. This has become a domestic question linked to the electoral problems in Florida for many years; this is not a recent problem, it has been like this for decades. What is regrettable is that so far we haven't seen any serious U.S. interest in improving human rights conditions in Cuba.

If you are interested in improving human rights conditions in Cuba, you must lift this policy—you have to change this policy. If you are interested in just satisfying the electoral population in Florida, then continue with this policy. This embargo is not achieving any goals or results in Cuba.

We are not abrogating or pursuing a full engagement with Cuba with no conditions--we believe in conditions. We believe that when you have a government that engages in systematic and massive human rights violations -- which is the case of Cuba, don't make any mistake about it -- the policy must be carefully targeted to achieve the goal. Foreign policy is a tool, an instrument to achieve a purpose, a goal. But it is not a goal in itself. That is something that needs to be

understood: It is an instrument to be used to improve human rights conditions—to bring democracy and rule of law in Cuba. Otherwise the Cubans essentially are going to be suffering under the current regime that has no respect or interest in promoting human rights internally in Cuba.

OUR NATIONAL INTEREST, OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

Anya Landau, moderator
Cuba Project Associate,
Center for International Policy, Washington DC

“While addressing Congress in June 2002, the Assistant Secretary of Intelligence and Research said that he ‘is not up nights worried about the Cuban threat.’”

I have recently focused my research on Cuba and terrorism, and in conjunction with Dr. Wayne Smith, have published several papers on the topic. If anything positive has come out of 9/11, perhaps it could be the worldwide awakening to the reality that we need to cooperate with each other in order to secure our borders.

The question really is: Is Cuba a threat to us? And if Cuba is a threat, what are we doing as a nation, with our policy, to deter that threat? In speaking to Congress in June, the Assistant Secretary of Intelligence and Research said that he is “not up nights worried about the Cuban threat.” He in fact described the Cubans as afraid of a U.S. first strike. Senator Lincoln Chaffee has asked, what are we doing to assure the Cubans that this is not the case?

Phillip Peters
Vice President, Lexington Institute
U.S. State Department official in Reagan
and first Bush administrations

“The administration’s claims about Cuba being a security threat obviously lack strength and evidence. If the threat was serious, there would be follow-up and diplomatic action, but there is not.”

It is good to see so many of you coming from far and wide to be here today. The biggest proof of the headway you are making is the press conference down the hall here at the Press Club, where the other side is reacting to us. They usually dismiss us as a small group, holdovers from the 60s, or the puppets of a few agri-giants. This is mainstream, Main Street America and we welcome you here.

Sitting outside of government, which we do, and not having access to intelligence information, which we don’t, what are we to make of the allegations made by the administration against Cuba. In these cases, I think it is important to watch what the administration does more than what it says.

In some cases, there is a bit of a credibility problem with the administration and its discourse on Cuba. When it comes to the travel issue, for instance, the State Department says that travelers to Cuba only stay only in government designated hotels way out on the beach and have no contact with ordinary Cubans. Well, you only have to be in Cuba 10 minutes to know that is not true.

Another case is the terrorism designation. The government has designated Cuba as a 'state sponsor of terrorism.' But if you look at the State Department's report on state sponsors of terrorism, there are what I say no action verbs there, it doesn't even allege Cuba is involved in terrorism, That is in sharp contrast to the entries for the other six countries listed in the report.

And it doesn't provide any evidence to support the designation. There are former ETA terrorists from Spain living in Cuba, as well as Columbia insurgents, yet their presence draws no complaints from past or present governments of Spain or Columbia, they have not sought their extradition.

Bio-weapons. The fact is that there really is no evidence of bio-weapons development in Cuba. In a speech to the Heritage Foundation, Undersecretary John Bolton accused Cuba of bio-weapons proliferation. The next day Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was asked about it and he said he had not seen any evidence relating to this charge. The following week Secretary of State Colin Powell said Cuba has the capacity to develop such weapons but that we have seen no evidence that they are developing such weapons. We must question why there was a gap between what Bolton alleged and what his superiors said and why the bio-weapons allegation did not appear in the State Department terrorist report which was issued at approximately the same time.

Yes, Cuba has the capability to build bio-weapons, but that does not mean that they have developed a weapons program. We need to be aware of the fact that these charges have been made by the administration, but they have not done anything about them.

Let us compare this to the case of North Korea, a country with ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, a world-class security threat. A real problem country. We engage with North Korea and even assisted them in obtaining a nuclear reactor. We have not used food as a weapon against North Korea. Russia, Pakistan, China are all countries on the top of the list for weapons proliferation in this dangerous world. We complain, and argue and engage with those countries and we try to solve these problems. But we don't do that with Cuba.

We don't set about trying to deal with what we say are security problems with Cuba which indicates to me that the decision makers in our government do not see Cuba as an issue. The reality is that the government does not see a real problem with Cuba.

Can we engage with Cuba? We have a migration agreement with Cuba and a solid arrangement to cooperate in counter narcotics and they both work. If we were really concerned about other issues relating to Cuba, don't we pay the State Department to go there and work the problem? Cuba made an offer to hold open-ended talks on security issues which was rejected by the United States. Now I don't know if the Cuban offer was a good offer or not. But is it not the role of the State Department to turn lousy offers from states into good offers and arrangements that we can live with?

As a Republican, I don't like to say that the Administration plays politics with national security. But when you look to the lack of follow-up, it is obvious that the administration's claims about Cuba being a security threat lack strength and evidence. If the threat was serious, there would be follow-up and diplomatic action, but there is not. The only logical explanation is that politics is coloring the treatment of this issue.

Larry C. Johnson
CEO and co-founder, BERG Associates, LLC, Virginia
Former Deputy Director, Office of Counter Terrorism,
U.S. Department of State, former CIA official

“Having participated in the internal discussions relating to the terrorist lists in the past, I’m sorry to say that domestic political pressures end up intruding on what I view should be an objective assessment of the threats we face.”

After 34 years of experience working on counter-terrorism, for me the issue is black and white. During the 1980s, there was no doubt about Cuba’s role as a state sponsor, or perhaps better said, a state facilitator of terrorism. Cuba is not using terrorism as an extension of its larger policy objectives the way they did 20 years ago.

But nobody should fool themselves that the terrorist list is purely objective, it is not. If it was purely objective there are several countries that should have been on the list for a long time, the governments of Greece and Pakistan, to name just two. Having participated in the internal discussion relating to the terrorist lists in the past, I’m sorry to say that domestic political pressures end up intruding on what I view should be an objective assessment of the threats we face.

If I were back in my CIA days and had to give an objective assessment of Cuba today as a terrorist threat, I would say that, on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being Iran (where the government there is clearly aiding and abetting terrorism) then Cuba is a two on its way to a being a one.

I think it was the issue of some IRA members living in Cuba that got Cuba on the list. Certainly there are former terrorists living in Cuba. However, it should not be portrayed that IRA members arrested living in Havana were being masterminded to be sent into Columbia. However, if the criteria is you cannot have terrorists living in your country, then many countries would be on the list. In that case, the U.S would have to consider France, England, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium state sponsors of terrorism. This is unlikely to happen.

If Cuba wants to get itself off of the terrorist list, they should consider not allowing such people to live in Cuba. Cuba must be more Catholic than the Pope on this issue if it wants to get off the list. In the past, treatment of terrorist groups in the U.S. is unequal. If you were a radical Muslim, it’s bad. But you can openly fundraise as an Irish Catholic IRA supporter.

So what does it take to get off of the terrorist list? In moments of candor, State Department officials will tell you it is easy to get on the list but they have never come up with a formula for what it takes to get off the list. The issue is that there is no president who wants to take a state off of the list for fear of future actions that might be tied to that state. It’s political cowardice. Nobody wants to get up front and say Cuba is not the bad boy it was years ago, that today it is a completely different camp.

Sam Dryden
Managing Director
Emergent Genetics

Larry Gold
CEO and Chairman
SomaLogic

(The two speakers, both experts in biotechnology from Boulder, Colorado, presented a written presentation as they could not physically participate in the Summit.)

“In our opinion, the Cuban biotechnology program is developing health care products, including modern drugs targeting critical health care needs of their country. We have seen a serious dedication to novel health products and have observed nothing to the contrary.”

We have been visiting Cuba for over a decade as guests of the Cuban Government. The primary purpose has been to monitor and discuss the Cuban biotechnology program and its product focus. As part of this interaction, we have visited the major research and production facilities throughout the country and met with its research administrators and senior research managers. We are impressed with the Cuban capabilities. It is very sophisticated with modern facilities and very smart, well-trained researchers, many of whom have studied extensively in the best academic and clinical laboratories in Europe.

In our opinion, the Cuban biotechnology program is developing health care products, including modern drugs targeting critical health care needs of their country. We are impressed with the product focus and quality assurance underlying these products. In some cases the products are also being developed for international markets. We have seen a serious dedication to novel health products and have observed nothing to the contrary.

We can be quite specific with three examples of opportunities for Cuba’s biotechnology enterprise to participate with the international biotechnology community. Cuba has developed state of the art modern fermentation and protein production facilities that could be used by firms in need of manufacturing capabilities. This is important and timely because at the present time, there is a worldwide shortage of production capacity and many companies are seeking facilities to produce their products.

Cuba has also developed a vigorous program in the isolation and production of monoclonal antibodies at a time when such antibodies are finding new applications as therapeutics and diagnostics in the medical and research communities. Consequently, Cuba is in a position to join the growth in developing and producing these new protein reagents and therapeutics.

Finally, Cuba has developed a strong center for pre-clinical testing of drugs. This is partly an outgrowth of their long history in the animal health and agricultural fields. Many new drugs have been developed worldwide in biotechnology laboratories in recent years and now are awaiting preclinical testing data before they can gain approval for testing in humans. The Cuban expertise and animal facilities offer a rich opportunity for accelerating the development of these drug candidates.

We feel that the U.S. biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries could significantly benefit from more open and direct interactions with the Cuban programs. We have provided three examples where such cooperative interactions could be beneficial, but many more can be identified, such as in vaccine development, agronomy and discovery research.

(Ret) General Charles Wilhelm
Former Chief Commander U.S. Southern Command

“I have spent all of my adult life doing one thing and that’s tending to the security needs of this country. I’m convinced that a pragmatic relationship with Cuba will further the national security interests of the U.S. Everything else is secondary.”

You are all here because you care and want to play a constructive role in the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba. Significant change in Cuba is inevitable. The question is, what role, if any, is the U.S. going to play in the nature of that change and transformation in Cuba? We can’t do it with a wall between us. So, I think the time for an expanded dialogue is here.

As Commander and Chief of the U.S. Southern Command from September 1997-2000, my duties were planning, conducting and overseeing all of the military operations in the Caribbean and Central and South America. I was also responsible for military to military contacts which spanned 32 countries.

There were two countries which occupied most of my attention: Colombia and Cuba. I could not visit Cuba at all because of policy restraints, and Colombia I went to twice a week. This begs the question: Are you comfortable with a 47, 000 square mile blind spot in our security rear view mirror, 90 miles south of Key West? If you aren’t, you should be.

I would like to offer some summary observations regarding Cuba as a threat and ways that we can engage Cuba and promote the security of our nation. My interest in Cuba is simple. I have spent all of my adult life doing one thing and that’s tending to the security needs of this country. I’m convinced that a pragmatic relationship with Cuba will further the national security interests of the U.S. Everything else is secondary.

Cuba as a threat to the United States? I would suggest to you that those days have come and gone. In the heyday of the Soviet Union in the 1970-1980s, Cuba had a formidable modern and military force which bares no resemblance to what exists today. In fact, the Cuban military is an anemic force that is far more focused on farming than it is on fighting. Cuba’s armed forces are not capable of projecting themselves in a meaningful way and presenting conventional threats.

During my three years as Commander and Chief of the U.S. Southern Command, I found no conclusive evidence that led me to the conclusion that Cuba was producing chemical or biological weapons.

Words are important. We must examine accusations made by the State Department. Although Cuba has the capability of developing a chemical or biological weapons program, it is an associated ability that goes with having a pharmaceutical industry. It is a stretch to read anything more into that.

On the issue of Cuba and the drug trade, I have found absolutely no convincing evidence that Cuba is trafficking drugs. The Cubans are just as strongly opposed to narcotics traffic as we are.

Furthermore, there is no compelling evidence that Cuba is a state sponsor of terrorism. However, a number of friends could make that list.

What are our prospects for security cooperation with Cuba? We reviewed in some detail some recommendations produced by the Cuba Working group. I've suggested to Fidel and Raul Castro that we are two countries joined together by geography and pulled apart by politics.

The first thing we need is expanded communications. Cuba has given us more than we have given them. Significant information given to us by Cubans has led to significant drug busts in Florida straits. Cuba is prepared to cooperate with us fully on exchanging information to prevent terrorist activities in the Western Hemisphere.

With humanitarian relief activities, Cuba beats us there with medical brigades. Partnering with them on these activities would be a fruitful first step to build relationships of cooperation. We should partner with Cuba on search and rescue operations in international joint training activities. Currently we have 20 bilateral maritime agreements. Cuba is a good candidate for the 21st agreement.

Although we find little common ground on politics with the Cubans, I strongly support the repeal or modification of our current policy toward Cuba in the interest of our nation. Certainly, such a change would profoundly benefit the United States in the security arena.

CHANGED POLITICAL EQUATION: CUBAN AMERICANS SEEK NEW APPROACH

Silvia Wilhelm

Executive Director and Founder, Puentes Cubanos, Miami
Puentes Cubanos facilitates exchanges between
Cubans and Cuban Americans

"This policy exists because it has been kidnapped by a small minority, a minority unable to move-on with the realities of the time in which we live. I know where they are coming from. I know what they're like because I used to be one of them."

In March of this year a group of Cuban Americans from Miami held the first anti-embargo conference in Miami. Miami has never been the same since.

Tomorrow a charter flight will arrive with more than 200 Cuban Americans from Miami. They will join the couple of hundred Cuban Americans who are already here to participate in day two of the Summit, the Cuba Education and Advocacy Day. We could have chartered another flight from Miami, the wait list was so long. While here, they will support the kinds of policy changes which were overwhelmingly passed by the House of Representatives this summer.

Groups of us will give briefings to staffers on the House and Senate side to tell them why a change of policy is important to the Cuban American community and how we have changed. We have to thank Florida Senator Nelson for agreeing to address the group at a meeting with the Florida Congressional delegation tomorrow. We will begin with a breakfast hosted by Senator Dorgan.

I've been listening to the politicians, the business community, military experts. And it seems to me that beyond the politics and polls, we need to remember that it is the human being--his and

her welfare -- that should count. That is our focus as Cuban Americans; that is why we are here. Trade and travel restrictions on Cuba hurt the Cuban people and Cuban family and that is why the Cuban American community opposes them.

U.S. policy has been condemned by all churches of all dominations inside and outside Cuba. The policy has been condemned by the Cuban people. I travel to Cuba a minimum of four times a year. I have yet to speak to one Cuban in Cuba who supports the embargo. The embargo has even been condemned by dissidents within Cuba. It is repeatedly condemned by the family of nations as represented by the United Nations. I think that tells you all you need to hear about such a policy and why we need to chart a new course now.

So, without the support of the Cuban American community, the people of Cuba, the American public and the whole world, why is this policy still in place and who benefits?

This policy exists because it has been kidnapped by a small minority, a minority unable to move on with the realities of the time in which we live. I know where they are coming from. I know what they are like because I used to be one of them. But the time comes to move on with life and put behind the hurt, the sorrows and realize that the well-being of a nation -- of a people -- must take precedence over one's own personal welfare, sorrow -- or greed.

Poll after poll shows that we are the majority. We are here today to raise our voices as the majority in order to rescue this policy toward Cuba.

Alfredo Duran
Attorney, Miami
Former founder and president of
the Bay of Pigs Veterans Association
President, Cuban Committee for Democracy

“The embargo has served as a Berlin wall around the island of Cuba, keeping it from being contaminated by progressive ideas in economics, politics and social action. It is a policy that needs to be put to rest.”

The question posed is whether the Cuban community has changed and the answer is yes. There are simple reasons and there are more profound reasons as well. The simple reason is that U.S. policy towards Cuba is a failed policy and the Cuban community is becoming aware of it. It is a policy that has not worked in 40 years, is not working now and won't work in the future.

The policy has failed in its alleged stated purpose to creating a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. In fact, the embargo has served as a Berlin wall around the island of Cuba, keeping it from being contaminated by progressive ideas in economics, politics and social action. It is a policy that needs to be put to rest.

We are in the process of bringing about small changes which will obviously culminate in the dismantling of the embargo. I do not believe that it will happen overnight, it is a very complex and complicated problem. But it will happen.

What is most important is that, especially after today, one can no longer use the excuse that the Cuban American community is in favor of the embargo, for it is not.

Polling data is showing that there is a marked demographic and generational change on attitudes toward the embargo. Those coming from Cuba now have a completely different perspective from those coming from Cuba in the 1960s, 70s and early 80s. These people do not have the same view of Cuba because their perspectives reflect the Cuba of today, not the Cuba of the past. We must examine the important social and historical reasons for that difference of opinion.

One factor is confiscated property. The Cuban Americans hardliners believe that at some point down the line, the U.S. government will help them get that property back. I don't believe that is going to happen, but they do. They believe the embargo is the only tool they have to hurt the Castro government. The trouble is everyone else can see how the embargo is hurting the Cuban people, not the government.

Those who support the embargo have not been able to overcome their hate. It is about time we see Cuba with an eye to the future. The Cuban people need our help.

Cuban Americans who are against the embargo, who are coming here today and tomorrow, are an impressive group of people. They have lost their fear of the Cuban American right. We have summoned the courage to come here to Washington to state our minds with a message of love for the future.

Max Castro, PhD
Senior Research Associate,
Dante B. Fascell North-South Center
University of Miami

“Already in the year 2000, we found that more than 50% of Miami Cuban-Americans supported unrestricted food and medical sales and unrestricted travel...All subsequent polls conducted by groups such as the Cuba Study Group have shown the same majority support using even more conservative methodologies.”

During the Elian Gonzalez affair the Miami community realized that there were leaders emerging that were representing us, portraying us in a very unfortunate way to the rest of the nation. We sat around in dismay and despair and asked ourselves, is this really the face of our community? So we decided to do a study to explore this question.

We conducted a survey and focus groups of Cuban-Americans, Afro-Cuban Americans and also other Americans in Miami and a national sample of Americans at large asking them about their views on U.S. - Cuba policy.

The results were that Afro-Cubans were the most opposed to U.S. policy. It was revealed that they are most concerned because black Cubans tend to live fully in the Cuban economy—i.e., they are not receiving remittances and a life-line from the outside. Also some of them were concerned that the lily white Cuban American leaders in this country were not representing their views or their interests fully.

Recent arrivals from Cuba are generally against the embargo, but those Cuban Americans who arrived just 5-10 years earlier, especially in they are involved in the more conservative Cuban American organizations, had the narrative down as to why they should support the embargo. It

was interesting to see how they would attempt to educate the new arrivals in our focus groups about why they should support the embargo even if it hurts people in Cuba. This is how these

groups already established with power were able to recruit supporters and psychologically educate the new arrivals. However, we also found that their strategy did not always work.

Our national survey found that by the year 2000 most Americans were against the embargo, and, by very large numbers, were against the restrictions on sale of food and medicine and travel. We were not surprised at these findings as they reflect basically what has been found in other polls.

We were surprised to find that Americans not of Cuban descent in Miami were much more supportive than Americans at large for ending the embargo. Nationally, 63% of Americans want unrestricted travel. But among Americans living in Miami (non-Cuban) -- those who are more exposed to the different arguments, are more educated on the issue -- 75% are in favor of unrestricted travel. So when militant Cuban Americans say that Americans don't support the embargo because they don't understand the arguments, they are wrong. It appears that Americans who know the case better are rejecting their arguments for the embargo more strongly.

But the most surprising finding for us was the changing views of the Cuban American community in Miami. There was a decline in support for the overall embargo, the community was nearly split there although the majority favored a continuation of the policy. But already in the year 2000, we found that more than 50% of Miami Cubans supported unrestricted food and medical sales and unrestricted travel.

All subsequent polls conducted by groups such as the Cuba Study Group have shown the same majority support using even more conservative methodologies.

So, how has this policy been maintained for the last two years without even the last bastion of support, with no visible means of support in any majority, not Americans at large or even Cuban Americans in Miami?

On free travel, among Cuban Americans 39% only of those who came from 1959 to 1975 said they wanted unrestricted travel. For those who came after 1984, 74.3% said they wanted free travel.

We know the power of strong lobbies, like the tobacco lobby, can maintain policies for a long time against public opinion. The lobby that supports the embargo is an entrenched, diminishing group of people. They happen to be the most empowered group -- more likely to be citizens and more likely to have money to contribute to campaigns -- but the fact is that they are a shrinking minority.

It was said here earlier that allowing free travel would make this country more democratic. We can conclude that a change in U.S. policy that includes unrestricted travel and unrestricted sales of food and medical products would indeed make the United States more democratic by better reflecting the views of Cuban-Americans and the entire nation.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE)
(introduced by H.P. Goldfield,
former Assistant Secretary of Commerce
under President Reagan)**

“I do not understand why we would hold to an irrelevant, unrealistic, unworkable policy such as the Cuba embargo that in fact helps no one. It penalizes our efforts, our role in the world, our enhancement of our relationships, our positioning in the world, our reaching-out to others -- especially the next generation of mankind -- around the world.”

After 40 years, we know that U.S. - Cuba policy does not work. We are playing for the next generation of Cubans and America's role in the world. Trade, transparency and engagement is not just productive, but the essence of stability and future relationships.

We are living in a new historic time full of uncertainty and danger, but also full of great opportunities and possibilities. We, the United States, must enhance our relationships with other states, with other peoples. We must understand the limitations of our unprecedented power.

If there is to be stability, security, peace and prosperity in the world, it can't be just in certain pockets of the world. We learned that very clearly on September 11th. One thing we learned is that we are not insulated or inoculated from terrorist attacks. We are subject to that threat. We are now like other nations and are accessible to that terror. If we want to deal with that in the long term, we need to get underneath some of the issues that drive people to do these things. It is not just hunger, poverty, desperation, and the lack of hope that drives people to this. But these are the breeding grounds for those who wish to harness and use that discontent and hatred against us.

Cuba is one of the many examples of how we have the opportunity to, in fact, engage a nation and play for a positive long-term relationship. The forces that are propelling Cuba today beyond Castro's grip will take Cuba out of the orbit of communism. That is happening now and we should be part of it.

I think of the relationships this country has and had with China and Vietnam and how we have applied a different standard to them. They don't acknowledge human rights. We just signed a trade treaty with Vietnam last year. We did that because we felt strongly that that an agreement for engagement and commerce was in the best interest for our country. We have used commerce as a strategy to unlock Vietnam from communism. We apply the same strategy to China.

Our policy with Cuba is not relevant to what our objective is in Cuba. If we want regime change in Cuba, clearly unilateral sanctions don't work. I do not understand why we would hold to an irrelevant, unrealistic, unworkable policy such as the Cuba embargo that in fact helps no one. It penalizes our efforts, our role in the world, our enhancement of our relationships, our positioning in the world, our reaching out to others, especially the next generation of mankind, around the world.

Some think Cuba is irrelevant. But a \$100 million a month market for wheat is a big deal to this farm boy. But this is not just an economic issue; it is far larger and more important. We must consider that all of Latin American and the Caribbean are connected. We are in a lot of trouble because we aren't paying much attention. We better pay attention. We are going to need friends and to deepen those relationships.

MESSAGE FROM THE CUBAN PEOPLE

Reinero Arce

President of the Cuban Council of Churches, Havana

Introduced by Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ of the USA and a former U.S. Representative, PA

“The victims of the embargo are the sick, old and children who suffer because of the lack of medicine, clean water and other things the embargo touches... I appeal to you in the name of the Cuban people to put an end to the embargo.”

Our commitment to US-Cuba policy change is premised on a Christian principle of approximately 500 years ago: “He that takes away the neighbor’s living, slaughters him.” The defense of life is a basic, ethical, and Christian principle. The embargo undermines that defense of life.

The growth of the church in Cuba over the past 15 years is remarkable. We don't take sides but will not condone the use of economic sanctions as a means of political pressure because it is the people who suffer the consequences. Always the most innocent and defenseless of the society suffer the most under an embargo, and Cuba is no exception.

The victims of the embargo are the sick, old and children who suffer because of the lack of medicine, clean water and other things the embargo touches. For three decades, both the National Council of Churches and the Cuban Council of Churches have renewed the demand to lift the blockade on Cuba to the United States government. I appeal to the decision makers in Washington in the name of the children, the elderly and those who suffer as a direct result of the embargo. I appeal to you in the name of the Cuban people to put an end to the embargo.

For many years, the United States and Cuban churches have functioned as bridges of unity between our two countries and we will continue to do so. We want to promote peace, love, solidarity and mutual respect. We want to begin to learn to live respecting our differences and diversity, so that all of us can live—regardless of gender, race, religion, and nationality—in a world of peace and justice for human beings.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S POINT OF VIEW

Dan Fisk

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Western Hemisphere

U.S. Department of State

Introduced by U.S. Representative JoAnn Emerson (R-MO) who moderated a question and answer session with the audience following Mr. Fisk's presentation

"Despite his disinformation campaign to portray himself as cooperating in the fight against terrorism, the Castro regime's words and deeds reflect its true motives. He knows what side he is on and it is not ours."

I am here today as a dissenting voice. Let us be thankful that we can have that freedom in this country, unlike in Cuba where dissenting voices are silenced. It must first be noted that the Castro regime is bankrupt, dictatorial and anachronistic. The Cuban people should have the right to choose freely who and how they will be governed. The United States wants to aid Cuba's transition to democracy. The argument then is: "How best to help the Cuban's accomplish this goal?"

President Bush announced his new program for Cuba, the Initiative for a New Cuba, in May 2002 in which he stated that political and economic reforms by the United States would not happen until independent trade unions, and free and fair elections for the National Assembly take place next year. Without reforms that would end discriminatory practices in Cuba, unrestricted trade and travel would only benefit the Castro regime at the expense of the Cuban people and long-term American interest in a free and democratic Cuba.

I know that many of the speakers at this event have argued that America could help tear down the Castro dictatorship by permitting thousands of American tourists to fill Mr. Castro's hotel rooms, rooms built to generate revenue for the Castro regime and by financing the regime's purchases of U.S. goods. In the case of tourism, most of the revenues go to the regime, including the Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces which oversees many ventures including a large number in the tourist sector. In the case of (allowing) financing it would relieve pressure to concede further market reforms thus helping to prolong the regime's command economy and in no case would tourism or commerce change Mr. Castro's behavior. Constructive engagement by others including Canada and members of the EU has not changed the regime's behavior.

Then there's the argument for treating Cuba like China. I think this argument is superficial. The Chinese have been following an economic reform model involving decentralization and the emergence of an entrepreneurial class. China has worked to create a legal and administrative framework conducive to foreign trade and investment, albeit a framework the international community would like to see expanded. One result of these Chinese reforms is that independent entrepreneurs now account for half of China's non-agricultural production. To date Mr. Castro has rejected the Chinese economic reform model.

Financing / Cuban Debt

As for foreign trade and investment, the Castro regime has devised a framework that raises costs and obstacles to foreign businesses, reserves the benefits of such interactions to itself and carefully controls any impact on the general Cuban population. Joint ventures are not the product of joint financing – foreign firms finance most if not all of the projects.

Furthermore, the regime does not always pay its obligations – Mr. Castro has effectively defaulted on payments to any number of creditors be they governments or businessmen in Russia, France, Italy, South Africa and Chile. The regime owes international creditors somewhere in the range of \$16-20 billion in addition to the \$20+ billion it owes Russia for Soviet-era credits and aid.

Now although some are in a rush to give Mr. Castro the opportunity, he has not yet stiffed U.S. farmers, namely because he is required to pay cash or use financing from third countries. Further, with the average monthly wage of a Cuban at \$20, it is difficult to imagine them buying a flood of U.S. products. Confirming this is anecdotal evidence that the \$100 million in agricultural commodities purchased by the regime since the end of last year has largely ended up feeding regime elite or going to tourist hotels or dollar stores thus doing nothing for two-thirds of the Cuban population. It's not at all clear to me how feeding foreigners and the regime's elite support a democratic opening or the development of a market economy in Cuba.

Human Rights

Generally those who oppose current U.S. policy preface their remarks with an obligatory reference to Castro as either a thug, dictator or tyrant, the rest of their remarks then tend to gloss over what this means – how such a system seeks to destroy a person's dignity and turn people against each other. This is a dictatorship we are discussing, the most basic freedoms are subject to limitations, the freedoms of speech, expression and assembly are severely curtailed as are fundamental rights of privacy. Those who attempt to exercise their fundamental rights can be subjected to harassment or detention. Even daring to express the belief that Cuba belongs to all Cubans not just Mr. Castro can result and has resulted in prison terms.

Now I admit, Mr. Castro is a Machiavellian tyrant, he understands the political environment he is operating in, his dictatorship is agile and intelligent and he appreciates political threats, including those emanating from human rights monitoring organizations. Accordingly, the tactics of Castro's secret police have evolved. They have moved away from the 1960s style tactics of visible repression such as routinely throwing dissidents into jail for thirty years, such measures just attract the attention of many international organizations committed to detecting and ending such abuses. Today state security picks up and intimidates regime opponents then releases them before too much heat can be generated internationally.

Fortunately, not everyone is fooled by Mr. Castro's behavior. Amnesty International recently observed, "Detained, threatened, evicted from their homes or prevented from leaving the country, dissidents in Cuba are increasingly being subjected to a range of putative measures other than long term imprisonment, short detentions and various forms of harassment are increasingly common; the measures applied to stifle dissent may be changing but the fact remains that the freedom to express opinions, organize meetings or form organizations conflicting with government policies is still seriously curtailed in Cuba."

Cuba's Latin American neighbors, along with others, have made note of the lack of freedom in Cuba, I'm happy to report. In April of this year for the first time, Latin American countries sponsored a resolution in the UNCHR calling upon the Castro regime to improve its respect for human rights. This effort was led by Uruguay which itself suffered a period of military rule before emerging as a vibrant democratic society. Uruguay was joined by Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Costa Rica, Chile and Guatemala in an act of solidarity with the Cuban people which declares that Cubans are no less deserving of freedom than others in the hemisphere.

National Security

When confronted with the political, economic and human reality of Castro's Cuba, critics then usually fall-back on the line that "at least the Castro regime is no longer a threat to the U.S." More recently we've heard that Castro has shown his willingness to cooperate with us in our efforts to combat terrorism and should be rewarded. I would submit this is a hollow argument.

For example, Mr. Castro has reaffirmed his solidarity with Iraq and continues to give Saddam Hussein political support. In May of last year, Mr. Castro is reported to have expressed interest in working with the country of Iran to bring the U.S. to its knees. Mr. Castro recently compared our president to Hitler and he equates our efforts against terrorism with the methods of the Nazis. He continues to harbor fugitives from American justice.

Last year in the wake of September 11th at the UN General Assembly, Mr. Castro's foreign minister essentially accused us of engaging in war crimes, alleging that our campaign to root out the Taliban involved a bombing campaign against the Afghan people. On September 21st of last year, the FBI arrested the senior defense intelligence agency analyst (Ana Belen Montes) responsible for Cuba on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage against the U.S. on behalf of Cuba, she pled guilty in March of this year.

And most recently, as my colleagues at the State Department have pointed out and we have concluded, Cuba has, at least, a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort. Now I would submit that the list I just enumerated is itself sufficient to demonstrate Mr. Castro's abiding hostility towards the US. But there is more – Mr. Castro and his government are actually impeding our efforts to defeat the threat of terrorism.

In the days following September 11th, the U.S. put out a call to the countries of the world for any information they might have on Al Qaeda or other groups that might represent a terrorist threat to the civilized world. I will acknowledge that the Castro regime responded, responded with decades-old information, but it chose to even be misleading about that; the frankness and openness with which our requests were received in some unexpected quarters were completely absent when it came to Mr. Castro's response. In short, Mr. Castro provided the U.S. with nothing of any value.

Now if the story stopped there, I suppose that at best we could say that Cuba had determined not to cooperate in the global effort against terrorism, I am here to report that there is more, however, to this. The Castro regime has actively and intentionally worked through human or electronic means to distract attention and resources from our on-going counter-terrorist efforts. It has attempted to set-up our intelligence and international law enforcement agencies with at least one walk-in a month since September 11th purporting to offer information about pending terrorist attacks against the US or other western interests.

Even on the very day of the bombings, September 11, 2001, within hours of the attacks on New York and Washington, Mr. Castro sent an agent to us with the first such false lead. As the Castro regime was piously noting its horror over the attacks and its willingness to provide medical support to us, it was seeking to misdirect the investigation. This was only the beginning of a steady stream of what has turned out to be wild goose chases intentionally initiated by the Castro regime.

While our agencies have detected this pattern, due diligence requires them to follow up on each and every lead or walk-in in order to determine fully whether there is information of value. Now frankly, there are some that might be willing to dismiss some intrigues as essentially harmless, something out of Mad magazine. I would submit, however, that in the post-September 11th world, diverting counter-terrorism resources from legitimate targets to pursue false leads fabricated by Castro's intelligence apparatus diminishes our ability to respond to real threat information.

This is not harmless game-playing it is a dangerous and unjustifiable action that damages our ability to assess real threats. This regime behavior does not evidence a lack of cooperation, this is obstructionism and I think we should all be concerned that it could one day cost innocent people their lives. Despite his disinformation campaign to portray himself as cooperating in the fight against terrorism, the Castro regime's words and deeds reflect its true motives. He knows what side he is on and it is not ours.

The Castro regime represents a dark chapter in Cuba's history. It remains the oppressor of the Cuban people and maintains its hostility towards the U.S. This is why the President believes that we must hold the course on denying the Castro regime the wherewithal to repress Cubans and to threaten us. And is why we must continue to reach out to the Cuban people to encourage and promote the creation of a democratic, independent civil society.

Current policies provide for NGO and private citizens with humanitarian, family, educational or cultural reasons to engage with the Cuban people. Despite the critics' mantra about a travel ban, Americans can travel to Cuba to promote our values and better the lives of the average Cuban. Private donations of food and medicine are permitted and the agricultural sale of commodities is allowed.

Despite the repeated harassment by and threats from the regime, courageous Cubans continue to strive to create a society based on democratic values and respect for human rights. In May, in defiance of the Castro dictatorship, a grass-roots endeavor, Project Varela, garnered over 11,000 signatures on a petition requesting a referendum on political and economic rights. Its organizer, Oswaldo Paya, is a courageous and skillful individual who merits our applause. He has succeeded in growing this pro-democracy initiative from within the corrupt and bankrupt Communist system.

That the regime decided to permanently table this initiative was predictable; that Oswaldo Paya and the growing band of pro-democracy activists will continue to have their voices heard is inevitable. In recognition of his energy and his vision for democracy, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs will honor Mr. Paya with its W. Avril Harriman Democracy award on September 30th, the end of this month. Mr. Paya would very much like to travel to Washington to receive this honor but he refuses to consider leaving Cuba unless the authorities give him an assurance that they will let him return. Unfortunately, at this point, it appears that the regime will not give him that assurance. He has made clear that he will not leave to accept this recognition if he cannot return to his homeland. (*Editorial Note: Paya traveled to the U.S. and Europe in January to accept various prizes, met with Secretary of State Colin Powell and is now back in Cuba*)

The question before us, then, I believe, is not whether to lift the restrictions on trade and tourism but when and how. Does it make sense to hand a political victory and capital windfall to a hostile dictator in his final days who is the single biggest obstacle to genuine economic and political change? Or does it make more sense to retain the leverage we can use with the transition government to ensure deep and broad political and economic reform?

We must continue to signal our disapproval of Mr. Castro's rule and deny him the means of holding on to power. We also must continue be vigilant in recognizing that while he is an adept manipulator, Mr. Castro's malice towards the U.S. has not abated. And we must continue to do all we can to assist the Cuban people in their quest for a society respectful of their fundamental rights and dignity. This is at the core of what the U.S. seeks and it is at the heart of the President's Initiative for a New Cuba.

Audience Q&A with Dan Fisk

Moderated By U.S. Representative JoAnn Emerson (R-MO)

Q: “It’s very hard for me to reconcile – and I’m not going to mention China, I’m not going to mention Vietnam – but I will say this to you, today, as we stand here, Saudi Arabia does not even allow women to drive; Pakistan, who you have touted as this great ally in the war on terrorism is certainly no democracy and yet we keep close ties, diplomatic, trade and everything else with these countries, as we do with countries who condone stoning women for being unfaithful. It is very difficult to reconcile the hypocrisy of a policy that says, well we don’t like the way you’re acting so we’re not going to trade with you and we’re not going to have diplomatic ties with you but we will have diplomatic ties with all these other countries that engage in these acts.”

Fisk: “The U.S., I think, has made a clear opposition to those practices and we have I think pushed vigorously in various fora. Your point is well-taken and I understand the point very well (and thank you for not mentioning China and Vietnam) but I would argue that for the last 20 plus years, the U.S. with Latin America has worked to form a hemispheric consensus on what kinds of societies we want in this hemisphere. It was enshrined last year at the OAS in something called the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which sets up and says there is going to be a democratic threshold for how the countries of this hemisphere want to shape their societies. I think there is a Washington consensus on promoting human rights, democracy, good governance, fighting corruption in this hemisphere; we have fought to create something that is unique to the western hemisphere, I think that is where the political battles have been. I reject the notion that Cuba should be an exception to that consensus. So, that is my response to you without in any way denigrating or questioning the point that you make.”

JoAnn Emerson: “You didn’t really get to the heart of her question which is: How do we condone one relationship and not at least, how do I want to say this nicely, in other words, how can we actually do everything we do with Saudi Arabia when, quite frankly, women are treated a whole lot worse there than they are in Cuba on the one hand and then have this other policy? Is it simply because of the fact that Cuba is closer to us? Can you perhaps explain that more clearly to us?”

Fisk: “Congresswoman, with all due respect, I would say that U.S. relations with countries are shaped by historical dynamics, geographic dynamics, economic dynamics, political dynamics all those come into play in terms of the relationship and how we feel we can best advance the values that we represent. So, in that context, the way I approached the question, respectfully, is that there is an inter-American consensus that should drive the policy of how we respond to the nations of this hemisphere. That should be why we promote democracy and those kinds of institution and human rights in Haiti, the same institutions and respect for human rights in Colombia, why we dealt with Central America, why we promote free and fair elections in Mexico and why we continue to make that a criteria for Cuba.”

Q: “Do you think the Cuban government is dictatorial by denying its own people their right to travel freely to other countries?”

Fisk: “I think the Castro regime is dictatorial. Americans have the right to travel to Cuba but there are restrictions on how they spend their money. I appreciate the humor of the question, I don’t start from the same view of moral equivalency. Americans can travel to Cuba, yes, there are restrictions but I’m sorry but I just don’t accept the agreement. Americans are free to return, Mr. Paya if he leaves may not be able to return, I think that is a fundamental difference.”

Q: "I haven't heard you really answer the question – Why can we not send medicines to Cuba that are going to help young children recover from diseases and yet we can send them to other countries where the very same issues that you are concerned with about autocratic rule exist. So if you could really kind of get to the crux of that?"

Fisk: "I will say that frankly that's the first time I've had that question because most of the questions have been about why can't people provide medicines by donation. Frankly the U.S., the policy structure that has been established, has been trying to get as much aid to the Cuban people without going through the regime. The concern is that by selling things to the regime you allow it to manipulate the products in terms of its ability to manipulate the Cuban people. That's the answer."

Q: "If we're worried about diverting resources to the Cuban government, what about the Cuban government's record in terms of delivering services to its people? I'm referring to comments by people like Jim Wolfensohn, the head of the World Bank, who has commended Cuba for infant mortality rates and educational rates that are equal and sometimes superior to our own here in the U.S., is that the hallmark of a regime or a government that does not have a concern for its people? And how does the embargo and the prohibition on World Bank funding, on private investment insurance, on all of the different kinds of aid that are available through international agencies but have not been available to Cuba, how does that effect Cuba's ability to do that?"

Fisk: "There is much made of the regime's record on education and health. What I find interesting is that Cuba had one of the highest rates in terms of health at the time of, ironically, the Castro revolution. Statistically, it had very high rates, compared to the rest of Latin America. And that is correct, it still has high rates. Further, I'm struck in the case of infant mortality by the practice that we have seen, I just want to make a factual statement here, I'm not trying to make a moral judgment though some may wish to make one, in the number of forced abortions. If they find out that a fetus has problems, then in terms of the abortion rate in Cuba, that is one of the means by which they maintain a low infant mortality rate. This is also a point recently made in his visit to Washington by the President of Costa Rica, of all people, who is a psychiatrist and made this comment as well. So it is not that this is necessarily new in that regard. So I would say that a regime that continues to repress its people like Cuba does doesn't make up for it in the areas of health and education. I'm not going to take anything away from those areas but I still think there are issues of fundamental rights that go way beyond it."

Q: "Isn't the Cuba policy just a function of domestic American politics and not an issues of foreign policy?"

Fisk: "I disagree with that. The policy predates the emergence of a Cuban-American lobby, one way or another, in all candor. What Kennedy outlined, if you'll look at it, continues to be the basis of American policy today – in terms of the objectives we seek, in terms of Castro's regime on Cuba. Frankly, the other part of this is that I am not offended if there are ethnic lobbies or active lobbies in terms of the American political process. I wish the Cuban people had the same dynamic, had the same opportunity, the same vigorous debates. But in no way do I see this as simply a function of American domestic politics. Do politics come into play? They do. Ask the Congresswoman, ask any of us who worked on this issue. Very much so. But I think that's the way our system works."

OUTLINE OF THE 'INITIATIVE FOR A NEW CUBA' ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT BUSH IN MIAMI, MAY 20, 2002

The Initiative for a New Cuba was the result of a policy review conducted by the White House in an effort to bring Cuba into the Western Hemisphere's community of democracies.

The Initiative calls on the Cuban government to undertake political and economic reforms and conduct free and fair elections next year for the National Assembly.

The Initiative challenges the Cuban government to open its economy, allow independent trade unions, and end discriminatory practices against Cuban workers.

If the Cuban government takes these concrete steps toward democracy, President Bush will work with the United States Congress to ease the ban on trade and travel between the United States and Cuba.

With reform, trade can benefit the Cuban people and allow them to share in the progress of our time. Without major reform, trade with Cuba will only help the Castro regime, not the Cuban people.

The United States has long maintained that the Cuban government must move to a democratic system that fully respects the human rights of its people. This will remain the Administration's policy.

The Initiative for a New Cuba reaches out to the Cuban people immediately with the following new steps to make life better for people living under Castro's rule:

- facilitating meaningful humanitarian assistance to the Cuban people by American religious and other non-governmental groups;
- providing direct assistance to the Cuban people through non-governmental organizations;
- calling for the resumption of direct mail service to and from Cuba; and
- establishing scholarships in the United States for Cuban students and professionals trying to build independent civil institutions and for family members of political prisoners.

The Initiative for a New Cuba also states that the United States is not a threat to Cuban sovereignty.

Under the Initiative for a New Cuba, the Administration will continue to work to mitigate the suffering of the Cuban people. This Initiative is the beginning of an ongoing, flexible, and responsive campaign designed to generate rapid and peaceful change within Cuba.

THE CHANGED POLITICAL EQUATION: LOCAL LEADERS SPEAK OUT

Tommy Irwin
Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture

“We want to ship food down and bring those tourist dollars back. I don’t see anything wrong with that.”

This conference has put President Bush into what we down in the South call a political box. He’s trying to find a way to get out. I’ve been Commissioner of Agriculture 34 years. I’m the longest serving elected official in my state and the longest serving Commissioner of Agriculture in the nation. I made international trade and law a hallmark of my administration throughout the years so I’ve been involved in a lot of debate, a lot of programs and a lot of things to help bring markets to Georgia farmers, to American farmers, to agriculture throughout the nation.

I was the first elected agricultural chief to advocate years ago doing business within the Soviet Union. I used to run into some of the same jargon that you hear today about Cuba, but I used to tell the skeptics if we can get the Russian people needing Georgia agricultural products, we wouldn’t be sending rocket ships over to pick them off. I really believe that trade softened the relationship and allowed us to have the normalized relationship that we have today. And as all of you know Russia is one of our major food buyers in the world market place.

The Cuban people are friendly people, they’re anxious to get to know more about democracy, they’re anxious to get to know more about what goes on in the great country called America and I think we’re doing ourselves a disservice when we’re denying them an opportunity to have trade with us.

Georgia’s international marketing division has brought other trade groups into Cuba over the years, and we will be part of the large trade fair in Cuba later this month. We will be bringing a lot of exhibitors from Georgia offering the products that we grow for the marketplace. We think it will be a great success.

I’m going to make one prediction – I don’t think we’re going to have to wait two years to get some action from the President. I think that when the elections are through this fall, I think we’ll see a softening in the administration. I think we’ll keep the pressure on. We’ll get some congressional action. We’ll have open and fairer trade. We’ll have an opportunity for our visitors who want to go down there as tourists. We want to sell them food. We want to ship food down and bring those tourist dollars back. I don’t see anything wrong with that. We’re for trade, we’re for commerce, we’re for business. We think it will help all of agriculture throughout America to normalize relations with Cuba.

Kevin Murray
State Senator, California

“The California legislature, on a bipartisan basis, overwhelmingly asked the Congress and the President to open up Cuba for trade in a State Resolution we passed this year calling for a complete lifting of the embargo and normalization of relations with Cuba.”

The state of California is the fifth largest economy in the world. We export just about everything you can think of all over the world. The California legislature, on a bipartisan basis, overwhelmingly asked the Congress and the President to open up Cuba for trade in a State Resolution we passed this year calling for a complete lifting of the embargo and normalization of relations with Cuba. There is clearly bipartisan momentum going in that direction.

I wish I could give you a long statement about human rights in Cuba and how it's good for them and all of that, but in the final analysis the people in the legislature in the state of California want to do business in Cuba because it is in our best interest to do so. It would be good for our citizens and it would be good for our industries.

Current U.S. policy is based upon the assumption that if you just wait for Castro to go, then things will somehow change. And whether you think it's a repressive regime or not, in my travels and my contact with Cuban people and Cuban officials, I don't know anybody who believes that the mindset and regime within Cuba is going to change drastically once Castro is gone. The U.S. government has spent 40 years trying to get rid of Castro without success. We still want to wait until he's gone. But if the regime is not going to change once that happens, that argues for not necessarily impeding our right to do business with them in the short term.

An important point is that Black Cubans are better off under Castro than they were under the oppressive regime before him. They still do not have the equality that they should, but they are clearly better off than before Castro. In fact, the origins of the anti-Cuba lobby in Miami primarily and south Florida generally and expanding to other places, is significantly driven by people who were in the ruling class and most significantly contributed to repressing blacks in Cuba pre-Castro.

I believe that particularly for African-Americans who have some solidarity with people of African descent in other places, there is a significant reason for wanting to normalize relations with Cuba. Many of my peers, particularly professionals in California, are particularly interested in doing trade with Cuba for that very reason.

If you think about it, we never had a government ban on trade with South Africa, we never said don't trade with Mubutu, don't trade with Idi Amin, certainly we have kept dictators with oppressive regimes in power, Marcos and others in power for a very long time so it's very difficult to make that argument that that should block our trade because we "want to help the Cuban people."

You can list any number of regimes where they are much more oppressive towards all types of people than Cuba but we don't ban travel to them and we don't impose economic blockades on them. We are encouraging trade with China. Under the UN auspices, US companies are selling various products to Iraq. And frankly it should not be any surprise, as the Bush Administration representative pointed out today, that Mr. Castro's regime is not going to do anything to help us in our fight against terrorism when for 30 years we have been the most significant element in keeping his people down. The economic embargo has done great devastation there.

CALIFORNIA STATE JOINT RESOLUTION ON ENDING U.S. EMBARGO ON CUBA

Introduced by Senators Burton, Alpert, Figueroa, Karnette, and Murray
March 18, 2002 Senate Joint Resolution No. 39--Relative to trade with Cuba.

SJR 39, as introduced, Burton. Cuba: removal of restrictions. This measure urges the President and Congress of the United States to consider the removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions to Cuba.

WHEREAS, The relationship between the United States and Cuba has long been marked by tension and confrontation; and

WHEREAS, Further heightening this hostility is the 40-year-old United States trade embargo against the island nation that remains the longest-standing embargo in modern history; and

WHEREAS, Cuba imports nearly a billion dollars' worth of food every year, including approximately 1,100,000 tons of wheat, 420,000 tons of rice, 37,000 tons of poultry, and 60,000 tons of dairy products; and

WHEREAS, These amounts are expected to grow significantly in coming years as Cuba slowly recovers from the severe economic recession it has endured following the withdrawal of subsidies from the former Soviet Union in the last decade; and

WHEREAS, California is the top agricultural producer and exporter in the nation, a position it has held for 50 years, with an enormous variety of crops and great growing conditions; and

WHEREAS, California's production values are more than \$26 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, California is, therefore, ideally positioned to benefit from the market opportunities that free trade with Cuba would provide; and

WHEREAS, Rather than depriving Cuba of agricultural products, the United States embargo succeeds only in driving sales to competitors in other countries that have no such restrictions; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Cuba has developed important pharmaceutical products, namely, a new meningitis-B vaccine that has virtually eliminated the disease in Cuba; and

WHEREAS, These products have the potential to protect Americans against diseases that continue to threaten large populations around the world; and

WHEREAS, Cuba's potential oil reserves have attracted the interest of numerous other countries that have been helping Cuba develop its existing wells and search for new reserves, and Cuba's oil output has increased more than 400 percent over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, The United States' trade, financial, and travel restrictions against Cuba hinder California's exports of agricultural and food products and our ability to import critical energy products, the treatment of illnesses experienced by Californians, and the right of Californians to travel freely; now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, jointly,

That the Legislature of the State of California hereby respectfully urges the President and Congress of the United States to consider the removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions relating to Cuba; and be it further Resolved,

That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

Joe McLash
Commissioner, Manatee County, Florida

“Florida, the closest state to Cuba, stands to gain the most after the embargo is lifted and, consequently, stands to lose the most if the embargo is not lifted.”

I am a Republican from Florida and I'm here to say that all of Florida could benefit from increased contacts with the island of Cuba. The Florida Trade Center, in reviewing the impacts of lifting the Cuban embargo, said that in the long term Florida could enter an era of unprecedented prosperity as the center of trade as a result of such a change. Florida hasn't been as aggressive as other states in establishing contacts in Cuba and working for changes in U.S. policy. Florida can definitely be left behind and miss the opportunities that will emerge after the embargo is lifted.

Some of the immediate export opportunities to Cuba are construction materials, construction equipment, low-cost furniture, fertilizer, metal products, surplus equipment, citrus equipment, paper products, cars and trucks. Some of the services that are needed include: management, marketing, architectural, export, import, medical, agricultural, manufacturing and ferry operation, tourism, attractions, legal and construction.

The pre-embargo estimates prior to 1959 indicate that 40% of Miami's cargo went to Cuba, 85% of Cuba's export came to the U.S. Our Manatee County port was built in the 1960s after the embargo took effect. It is now the closest deep-water port to the island of Cuba. After the embargo is lifted you could expect that tourism would increase. Estimates indicate that the existing one million approximately visitors would increase to over two million more visitors per year. Cruise ships would have new destinations for overnight and regular cruise packages and certainly financial institutions would benefit as well as trade resumes

Why lift the embargo? The answer really isn't for the economic benefits, not in my opinion. It's out of fairness to the American and Cuban people. As Americans we should have the right and the freedom to travel to Cuba and the freedom to trade. The Cubans have the right to better living conditions that lifting the embargo will bring. Both countries can benefit by lifting the embargo.

In Cuba people are dying from simple infections and diseases, some surgeries are performed without anesthesia and basic infection prevention. As U.S. intelligence has stated, Cuba has no military force that threatens the U.S. My observation has been that Cuba has really focused on tourism, healthcare and education. Continuing the current policy is causing Cubans to die needlessly, to live in what we would consider poverty and deprivation of a better life. This is not humane.

Manatee County was the first and only government in Florida to proclaim support of the goals of the sister city concept we call the Manatee-Manatee initiative which promotes better relationships between the U.S. and Cuba through the people to people exchanges. The

Cuban province of Las Tunas is our sister city. It includes the towns of Manatee and Puerto Manatee reciprocated with a similar proclamation earlier this year in April.

My first visit to Cuba was in a sailing regatta from Tampa to Havana. My observations were the lack of crime, friendly people, love for the US and a lack of any military ships, aircraft or any military troops – you just don't see any when you're over there. On my visit Cuba extended everyone an open invitation to go anywhere, see anything, there is nothing to hide. That was my observation – it was totally open as far as wherever you wanted to go. People bicycling on the road, people driving rental cars, there were no checkpoints. The perception that people have is one that you're guarded and confined to tourist areas, and it's just not true.

My second visit this past April I toured an estate in Old Havana. Five years ago it was crumbling into decay, now it's a renovated tourist center – using tourist dollars, the jewel of the western hemisphere, it is almost renovated. Havana city historian, Eusebio Leal gained Cuba's approval to change laws in order to allow this very capitalistic approach to renovate Old Havana. I was impressed not only by his ability to figure out a way to renovate Old Havana but his concern for people that lived there prior to the renovations. In July of this year we denied Leal a visa to meet with the UN in our country. We've got to question whether this was a decision based on our national security or just some political power play.

Cuba has also used their tourist dollars to build a new airline terminal, build up tourist resorts and also their infrastructure. This is how I saw the tourist dollars being utilized in Cuba and would expect them to be utilized in the same way in the future. The renovated cruise terminal in Havana is one of the best I've seen in the Caribbean. Of course there's not a whole lot of traffic there right now. When we were there, there was an Italian cruise liner bought over by an American company and so therefore it prevented them from operating out of Cuba, that's what they have to deal with, that kind of situation. The commercial terminals we also toured were underutilized but have diverse capability; the railways and roads are adequate but definitely need modernization.

Cuba is also reducing the areas used for sugar production, as this occurs Cuba will need to find other crops to grow. These crops need not compete with Florida but may provide our farmers' another growing season due to Cuba's climate. Port Manatee is one of the largest importers of fruits and vegetables in Florida. Florida growers are diverse and have run operations in different growing areas of the US as well as Mexico. Cuba can be a part of the diversity our farmers need to remain profitable.

In summary, Florida, the closest state to Cuba, stands to gain the most after the embargo is lifted and, consequently, stands to lose the most if the embargo is not lifted. Another exodus of thousands of Cubans would cost the state to pay for the housing, education and medical needs of the new arrivals. Florida needs to be a voice of reason for sensible Cuban policy. It's time to extend, as a nation, a handshake across the water to our closest neighbor and bring what could be a policy of peace and prosperity and avoid the pitfalls of future confrontation.

Delia Perez
International Marketing Representative, Illinois Trade Office
On behalf of Governor George Ryan, Illinois

“I was born in Cuba.... I have 20 aunts and uncles all in Cuba so this is really close to my heart.”

Illinois and Governor Ryan have done some incredible things on behalf of normalizing relations with Cuba – trade and otherwise. In 1999 the House of Representatives of the state of Illinois voted to lift the embargo on Cuba and it would have passed the Senate but it got bumped off the schedule. I should tell you that that same year, Governor Ryan, a Republican, became the first sitting governor and highest ranking U.S. official to visit Cuba in more than four decades. The eyes of the nation, indeed the eyes of the world, looked to Cuba once again.

Governor Ryan went against the wishes of many in his party including the President this time around and visited Cuba a second time this year this time with Illinois pharmaceutical and medical firms that wanted to trade with Cuba. Trade is very important to the state of Illinois. Exports accounted for more than 14% of the gross state product growth in the past 10 years. One in seven Illinois jobs are dependent on international trade. Illinois exports generated \$1.5 billion in state tax revenue in 2001. Exports are important to us.

Interestingly enough, Illinois's top trading partners are also Cuba's trading partners. My clients are small and medium-sized Illinois firms who are looking to export their products to Central America and the Caribbean. They don't get the equation: they say, "Illinois and Canada, that's ok; Canada and Cuba, that's ok; but Illinois and Cuba, that's no good." To them, it does not make sense when your friends' friends are your enemies, as is the case of trade with Cuba.

The first company to sell agricultural products to Cuba in almost 40 years is headquartered in Illinois and there are 12 Illinois food and agri-business companies that are going to be exhibiting in the Illinois pavilion at the upcoming U.S. Food and Agri-Business Expo in Havana. There are countless and have been countless exchanges between Illinois universities, hospitals, organizations, artists, churches and their Cuban counterparts, so even if it wasn't legislated they're doing it – they're doing the meeting and people to people.

I'm Cuban. I was born in Cuba, I come from a huge Cuban family and only about five of them are here in the U.S. I have 20 aunts and uncles all in Cuba so this is really close to my heart. One of the things that I wanted to share was that when I was a little kid growing up in Rincon del Filipina about an hour from Guantanamo. I was part of a group that was participating in a literacy campaign then under the new Revolutionary government. My friends and their parents didn't quite like that because it was pro-Communist and that wasn't a good thing so they asked my mom, "Why are you letting her do that? You know we're against this government." My mom told them, "We live in this country, she is a citizen of this country and teaching people to read is the right thing to do and she is going to do it."

And now 30 some odd years later, I'm here and my mother lives in South Florida. Some of those same people are there too and they ask her: "Why is she talking about the embargo and all that?" And my mother says, "She's a U.S. citizen. Lifting the embargo on Cuba is the right thing to do. Traveling to Cuba should be a right of all Americans and saying so and acting on it is the right thing to do." So it is about rights, the right as an American to travel as we wish and the right of the Cuban people to figure out what they want to do in Cuba. And I just want to help.

Cynthia Thomas
TriDimension Strategies
Dallas, Texas

“In May 2001, Texas passed a bipartisan state resolution with co-authors from both parties, the first in the country, calling for an end to the embargo. We did it because our voices should be heard.”

The state of Texas, Mr. President, respectfully disagrees with this policy of embargoing U.S. citizens from their right to trade and interact freely with our neighbors and natural trading partners in Cuba. In May of 2001 Texas passed a bipartisan state resolution with co-authors from both parties, the first in the country calling for the end of the embargo. We did it because our voices should be heard. It was intended as a shot over the bow of our elected officials in Washington to understand that the power to make policy does not rest in Washington DC. It rests in our kitchens and our boardrooms and we have a right to change it.

The Bush Administration has said that this is about terrorism, that this is about the threat to this country. As average citizens we do not have right access to that classified information. But I figured out a way to at least measure it since I am a public policy analyst. I looked at the vote on the House floor in July of this year by Representative Goss, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. He got up and said “If you knew what I knew you would not vote for the Flake Amendment to lift funding to enforce the travel embargo on Cuba. Cuba is a terrorist country, they are a threat to our nation.”

I went in and I said ok, he’s got information that I don’t have. I went in and looked at the vote for the rest of his committee. He did not even carry the majority of the Republicans on his committee and in fact he did not carry the ranking three members – not one Democrat on that committee voted with him. Only five of the members voted with him. What does that tell you? To me that says that there is smoke and mirrors and it’s time for a change. Mr. President tear down the wall.

TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE'S RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF TRADE, FINANCIAL AND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS RELATING TO CUBA

Passed by both houses May 25, 2001

WHEREAS, The relationship between the United States and Cuba has long been marked by tension and confrontation; further heightening this hostility is the 40-year-old U.S. trade embargo against the island nation that remains the longest-standing embargo in modern history; and

WHEREAS, Cuba imports nearly a billion dollars' worth of food every year, including approximately 1,100,000 tons of wheat, 420,000 tons of rice, 37,000 tons of poultry, and 60,000 tons of dairy products; these amounts are expected to grow significantly in coming years as Cuba slowly recovers from the severe economic recession it has endured following the withdrawal of subsidies from the former Soviet Union in the last decade; and

WHEREAS, Agriculture is the second-largest industry in Texas, and this state ranks among the top five states in overall value of agricultural exports at more than \$3 billion annually; thus, Texas is ideally positioned to benefit from the market opportunities that free trade with Cuba would provide; rather than depriving Cuba of agricultural products, the U.S. embargo succeeds only in driving sales to competitors in other countries that have no such restrictions; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Cuba has developed important pharmaceutical products, namely, a new meningitis B vaccine that has virtually eliminated the disease in Cuba; such products have the potential to protect Americans against diseases that continue to threaten large populations around the world; and

WHEREAS, Cuba's potential oil reserves have attracted the interest of numerous other countries who have been helping Cuba develop its existing wells and search for new reserves; Cuba's oil output has increased more than 400 percent over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, The United States' trade, financial, and travel restrictions against Cuba hinder Texas' export of agricultural and food products, its ability to import critical energy products, the treatment of illnesses experienced by Texans, and the right of Texans to travel freely; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 77th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to consider the removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions relating to Cuba; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

Barry Clark
Oklahoma State Department of Commerce

“Everything said here today by Dan Fisk on behalf of the Bush Administration as to why we can’t trade with Cuba was also said by our government about Vietnam in 1991, just before we opened up trade to that country. And Mr. Fisk, you’re wrong -- you’re just dead wrong.”

I’m a free trader, a capitalist, an entrepreneur, a Republican and a businessman from the state of Oklahoma. I work with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to find new export markets for Oklahoma products.

Oklahoma’s agricultural secretary Dennis Howard would have liked to be here today. He told me to make sure you understand that America and Oklahoma have much to gain by modifying our stance on Cuban trade. Another prominent person from our state, Henry Joe van Tugland, Commissioner of U.S. Wheat Associates and the U.S. Wheat Commission told me to tell you, “We’ve denied ourselves the Cuban market for over 40 years. That means we have denied our farmers access to a million metric tons of market for red winter wheat. It’s time for that to change.”

I’ve only been to Cuba once, about a year and a half ago, for a week. I learned a lot and had a great experience. But I’d like to say a few words about a country I know more about, Vietnam. While there are differences, there are some real similarities between Communist Vietnam and Communist Cuba. And everything said here today by Dan Fisk on behalf of the Bush Administration our government also said about Vietnam in 1991, just prior to the opening up of trade to that country. And Mr. Fisk, if you’re here, you’re wrong, you’re just dead wrong.

In 1991 they lifted the travel embargo on Vietnam. I went in 1992 and fell in love with the country. I decided to move there in 1995 and lived there for three years. It is a Communist government, but that aside there have been dramatic changes in that country in the past ten years and dramatic changes for the health and the well-being and education of the people that live in Vietnam.

One of the things I heard in 1991 was that Vietnam was saying that it had one of the highest literacy rates in Asia and they had a great school system and people from the State Department and from our government were downplaying that, saying it wasn’t true, very similar to what the Administration said today about Cuba. Today, the state of Oklahoma is the second largest recipient of Vietnamese students to America. About 120 Vietnamese students attend the University of Oklahoma. For the last three years, out of 118 countries represented at the University, the Vietnamese students have been recognized as the highest academically performing students.

I want to reiterate an important point made by a Cuban American speaker earlier today. It’s not so much about trade. It’s not just about the trade and the military stuff and all those other things. It’s about helping people, about empowering people to have more control of their lives. That’s what this is about, and that’s the most important reason we are all seeking a change in policy toward Cuba.

ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND MEDICAL PERSPECTIVES

Michael Smith PhD
Conservation International

“We should be leveraging policy -- conservation policy and environmental policy -- inside Cuba’s waters for our direct domestic benefit.”

I’ve been asked to speak about the impact of the embargo on the environment. Cuba and the U.S.’s environmental interests are very highly connected.

My environmental experience is largely based originally in Vietnam doing inventories of fish in the Mekong Delta in 1974 and I’ll draw a lot on that as well and then 15 years doing the same thing in Cuba. And I want to talk to that community in the U.S. that’s aspiring about Cuba’s future because the way to reach out as a conservationist is to say that whoever aspires to share in Cuba’s future in anyway must desire that Cuba’s natural resources be delivered in tact to the future and that is the common ground really to talk about the environment.

Cuba has a treasure to deliver to the future. It is clearly the single most important country with respect to concentration of native species, endemic species, general species richness or biodiversity in the Caribbean basin and close to U.S. borders, upstream from us in fact.

To put that in context, Cuba has 40 times as many species of birds per square mile than the U.S., 30 times as many species of vascular plants per square mile. It has as many species as the U.S. east of the Rocky Mountains but concentrated in an area about the size of Pennsylvania – a true treasure for the future.

The problem is, we’re having a high rate of extinction on islands everywhere and Cuba is no exception. Every one of these extinctions is an irreplaceable loss of natural resources, future pharmaceuticals, the cure for AIDS or whatever – irreparable loss that will outlast any temporary diplomatic schism.

The way to connect this to the U.S. is to talk in terms of fisheries. The U.S. is connected to Cuba by way of the Gulfstream, which actually runs along the south side of Cuba. The richest U.S. marine biodiversity in all of our waters even including the Marianas islands and tropical paradises like American Samoa is the tip of Florida. In fact, the richest place in the Atlantic Ocean is shared by Florida, Bahamas and Cuba, a joint resource that should be administered jointly, but the lack of cooperation stands in the way of that.

In the 70s, Cuba sent out drift bubbles – they were trying to figure out how currents would carry spiny lobster larvae, their largest marine cash crop. Of the bubbles that got out of Cuban waters, more were deposited in south Florida in a belt from Key West to Indian River lagoon than anyplace else. It’s exactly the zone of highest richness of U.S. marine species.

What that means is that we should be leveraging policy – conservation policy and environmental policy – inside Cuba’s waters for our direct domestic benefit, not to mention the need to cooperate and protect ourselves should an environmental catastrophe occur. And we need a friendly relationship to do it.

Another way to look at these connections is to consider where U.S. marine jurisdiction is in the Caribbean – it’s much larger than most people realize. While many people do not think of the US as a Caribbean country, we are the largest Caribbean country in terms of our marine jurisdiction. The point about all this is that these marine jurisdictions are in a mosaic all over the Caribbean and Cuba is right in the center of them. If you tried to put together policy that maximizes our own benefits from marine environment you have to realize that Cuba is right there in the center of it all.

Meryl Marshall Daniels

Former President, National Academy of Television Arts

and Sciences and President, Two Oceans Entertainment, Hollywood, California

“Our inability to have access to the marvelous artists that live in Cuba, to collaborate with them on an economic basis, on a free basis, is absolutely critical to our freedom as citizens of America, as storytellers here to our American population and as those who tell stories that are seen throughout the world.”

Following September 11th the White House came to Hollywood and spoke to the storytellers there and said please, please help us make it clear to the world that we are a free people, that we are a kind people, that we are a generous people. Make sure they understand because clearly September 11th happened because they didn’t understand the value of our freedoms, they were jealous or angry at us for using our freedoms.

They didn’t even contemplate who they were talking to or what they were talking about. As people who tell stories, as artists and creative people, being restricted in our ability to travel, being required to answer questions about where we’re going and who we’re speaking to and what we’re going to speak to them about and what we’re going to do with them is in fact inhibiting, preventing, discouraging our ability to tell stories and particularly to tell the story of what it is to be a free person.

Our inability to have access to the marvelous artists that live in Cuba, to collaborate with them on an economic basis, on a free basis, is absolutely critical to our freedom as citizens of America, as storytellers here to our American population and as those who tell stories that are seen throughout the world.

It is absolutely critical to us that we drop the hypocrisy. For as people who want to tell stories and share the value of freedom throughout the world it is totally unfair and inappropriate to ask us to do so when we can’t hold those freedoms high with the way we behave with one of our closest neighbors here – Cuba.”

Whitney Addington, MD
President Emeritus, American College of Physicians

“The embargo violates the most basic human rights covenants and even the Geneva Conventions which forbid interfering with the free movement of humanitarian goods even during wartime. And this embargo does that, does that to the detriment of the health and well-being of the Cuban people.”

There is a lot of talk about how the rest of the world views us and it is policies like the Cuba embargo that damages our image abroad. The embargo violates the most basic human rights covenants and even the Geneva Conventions which, even in times of war, forbid interfering with the free movement of humanitarian goods, that is, food and medical supplies. And this embargo does that, does that to the detriment of the health and well-being of the Cuban people.

I went to Cuba with a delegation of former U.S. Surgeon Generals last year. What we saw in Cuba and what I’ve subsequently found out is that Cuba has a great deal to teach us as health workers. They have a superb primary care system that is far better than anything we have in this country. Their infant mortality rates are very low, their children are fully immunized, everyone gets prenatal care – it is a superb system.

Where their health system breaks down is in secondary and tertiary care and that’s largely because of the embargo. They don’t get the necessary drugs and equipment and one can quibble about the specific effects of the embargo on making drugs unavailable but the fact is that an embargo in any country, to quote from the College’s report, “economic sanctions are, at their core, a war against public health.” And Cuba is no exception.

There are other things Cuba can teach us. I was enormously moved – and actually we were at a meeting with the Dean of the University of Havana Medical School when 9/11 took place and he came in with tears in his eyes and reported what was going on in New York – I was tremendously impressed that central to the mission of this university was true altruism. They made no bones about it: they were unabashedly training physicians to go to the poorest areas of Africa and South America. I know of no medical school in the U.S. that has that as a mission.

We in the US have enormous inequities in healthcare, we have over 40 million people uninsured – no other country has such inequity in terms of access. And yet in Cuba, no one is uninsured because everyone has access to healthcare. I think they could teach us a great deal. I think we have missed the point in our approach to the delivery of healthcare in this country. We have a lot of unanswered questions in this country yet we choose not to confront the basic issue that is health care for every single citizen, full access to care and that is available in Cuba. This policy is wrong. It is wrong, it is failed and it is cruel. I have touched on some of the cruelties and our healthcare system in this country is cruel and it is unequal and I think we should work on that and let Cuba be free.

POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CHANGE

**Julia Sweig moderates
Council on Foreign Relations
Coordinator, Council on Foreign Relations Cuba Task Force**

**Janice O'Connell
Senate Foreign Relations Committee Professional Staff
for U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT)**

“There’s growing interest in changing our policy toward Cuba. The cost of the House leadership to blocking those changes gets higher and higher and at some point the cost will be so high they won’t be able to stop it.”

The climate in Congress for proposing legislation to change the focus of US policy has changed vastly in the past couple of years, and bills seeking in one way or another to weaken the embargo have proliferated. Senator Dodd has, over the years, introduced a number of bills, the latest is the Bridges to the Cuban People Act which ends the travel ban, further frees humanitarian trade including clothing, toys and other products for children, among other things. Dodd actually was the first member of either the House or the Senate to come up with the concept of lifting the restrictions on the sale of food and medicine to Cuba and with all due respect to my farm colleagues they later proudly took it on and did a better job than we did on getting it passed so we congratulate you and look forward to working with you in the future on issues of this kind.

I wish I could tell you that we’re going to be successful in modifying Cuba policy this year. I think we have a chance, a small chance of doing it. As you know, and I know other speakers have talked about this, the House has passed provisions as part of the Treasury Postal Appropriations bill that would prohibit the enforcement of certain restrictions with respect to travel, credit sales of food and remittances. The Senate has yet to take up that bill. My expectation is if we do take it up we are likely to debate some of the same amendments and based on recent experience my guess is that those amendments would pass. The dilemma we will face though is when we go to conference with the House whether the House leadership would attempt to hijack and prevent those bills from being sent to the President. We also have the added dimension that we did not have in the Clinton administration in that President Bush or at least some in his administration have indicated they’re prepared to veto the legislation.

Having said that I think that those who want to keep the policy the same are on the defensive and that’s a change, that’s a change certainly from three or four years ago when those of us who thought the policy was mistaken had to fight to prevent things from being made worse.

With respect to the new administration and how they’ve interpreted the regulations governing the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform Act, the administration has done nothing to make it easy for people to visit Cuba or for farmers to sell or for medicine to be sold. I think the enforcement of regulations has been quite arbitrary and whether or not that will persist after November (the 2002 elections) is hard to know. So, in the short term maybe we have a window for change. Over the longer term, there’s growing interest in changing our policy toward Cuba and the cost of the House leadership to blocking those changes gets higher and higher and at some point the cost will be so high they won’t be able to stop it.

**Robert Neal
Congressman George Nethercutt (R-WA)**

“In 2002, we’ve seen a repudiation of the linkage of Cuba to terrorism which was offered as an amendment by Mr. Goss on the House floor and was overwhelmingly defeated. I think that really shows strong opposition to this notion that we heard earlier by State Department about the linkages between Cuba and terrorist entities.”

“What a difference two years makes. The last time I was speaking here at the Press Club was two years ago immediately following passage and enactment of Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act -- TSRA -- the legislation that Congressman Nethercutt and Senator Ashcroft shepherded through the House and the Senate, which got successfully attached to the Fiscal 2000 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

At the time we were very much on the defensive and I was on the hot seat at that presentation, answering a lot of questions about the compromises we had been forced to make and whether the legislation that had been enacted was in fact meritorious and would in fact end up with sales and whether we would actually be able to benefit agriculturally and in terms of additional ties and a strengthened relationship with Cuba.

In particular the criticisms at the time focused on the prohibition on financing and on the codification of the travel ban. I think as we’ve seen now two years later the reality of the TSRA bill has been an enormous success with \$105 million in sales in the last six or eight months. I present that as a historical footnote recognizing that, irrespective of whatever happens in the next few months of Congress, we have made enormous progress and will continue to do so.

By way of quick background for many of us on the agricultural side, this is about more than Cuba. This is about the overall issue of unilateral food and medicine sanctions with Iran, North Korea, Libya and Sudan. Members of Congress pushed this forward on the agricultural side as a recognition of the \$7 billion in untapped markets that those markets represent.

We went through a number of iterations before TSRA was passed in 2000. In 1999, the House-Senate negotiation to resolve the differences between our Agriculture Appropriations bill was suspended. The House leadership weighed in and the Senate leadership agreed to suspend the discussions and considerations of that conference report which effectively forestayed any action in 1999.

In 2000 though, coming off that hijacked conference report, we were able to come back. These things have a way of backfiring. The anti-embargo groups’ unity and the interests they represent have a way of coming back stronger after that sort of hijacking.

I guess I would make a couple of quick points. We’ve got a number of issues on the plate with the Treasury Postal Appropriations bill – amendments that cut funding for the enforcement of travel, remittances and humanitarian sales financing restrictions.

In 2002, we’ve seen a repudiation of the linkage of Cuba to terrorism, which was offered as an amendment by Mr. Goss on the House floor and was overwhelmingly defeated. I think that really shows strong opposition to this notion that we heard earlier by State Department about the linkages between Cuba and terrorist entities.

There are other issues of interest coming up as well. There is language in the Senate Foreign Operations bill that would allow some funding to begin initial consultations with the government of Cuba on a formal basis on common counter-narcotics interests which clearly we have quite a bit of – 11% of the cocaine that flows to the US flows through the waters around Cuba.

Licensing Problems on Food Sales

We are seeing extraordinary delays by the agencies that are implementing the licenses for sales to Cuba and to the other countries I mentioned. TSRA provides for a nine-day turn around on licenses. This is regularly being extended, as the law permits, for an additional 30 days. Current reports suggest that on average licenses and license amendments were issued in 46.5 business days of application – that’s more than two months for sales of wholly unobjectionable food provisions. The notion that this should take two months is extraordinary and is something we are putting a lot of pressure on the State Dept particularly to try to explain to us as it appears that is where a lot of the delay is.

There is an emerging possibility of overreach on the part of regulations. After implementation of our legislation we had a year-long battle as to what those regulations would entail. At the end of the day the regulations came out much more favorably than most of us thought they would. They’re very fair – as we’ve seen they do allow a relatively expeditious flow of goods to Cuba -- but there are some emerging concerns with respect to financing.

State, Commerce and Treasury recently met to discuss the prohibition on private entity financing on sales to Cuba. Such financing is prohibited in the law but the agencies agreed to begin examining the issue of making companies prove they are not violating the law. Our concern is that this opens up a fishing expedition potentially for U.S. companies to have to prove that they are in compliance with the law. We understand the intents of the agencies here but I think the agencies need to be very overcautious about overreaching.

Plain and simple, the State Department does not have a law enforcement role and we would hope that any regulations rewrite or any proposals to Congress would not include that. And I think the agencies also need to be aware that any efforts to revisit the regulations and add additional burdens beyond the already extensive review process would be very unfavorably reviewed on the Hill.

Richard Stanley
The Stanley Foundation and President,
HON Industries
(a leading producer of office furniture), Iowa

“I think there is a general acceptance that what we are all working for is peaceful transition to a democratic free market in Cuba.”

We held a number of meetings at the Stanley Foundation with important figures involved in U.S. policy toward Cuba. We came up with a number of policy guidelines and policy recommendations.

The first of the three policy guidelines is that we need to work on developing more consensus within the U.S. I think there is a general acceptance that what we are all working for is peaceful transition to a democratic free market in Cuba but the kind of dialogue that you’re doing here at this National Summit on Cuba is an important step in that direction and that dialogue needs to continue.

The second guideline is that we need to look beyond Castro. There is a lot of personal animosity toward that particular man that feeds into this and whatever we're doing in policy needs to look beyond that.

And finally, we recommended that we need to engage Cuba at multiple levels. And most of the policy recommendations that came out really center around this last point of how do we engage?

The first of these six policy recommendations on how to engage is that we need to recognize the need to maintain regional stability. As we have greater engagement with Cuba in all sorts of issue areas – economic, diplomatic, military, people-to-people and so on – any thing that would increase likelihood of instability in Cuba works against us.

The second relates to immigration. The groups that met recommended that we maintain a commitment to U.S.-Cuba migration accords which balance the outflow of Cubans to the U.S.; expand Coast Guard coordination with Cuban authorities on interception and search and rescue; end the so-called wet-foot, dry-foot emigration policy which presently applies because this absolutely does encourage illegal migration and provides incentives for migrant smuggling.

The third engagement recommendation deals with democracy and human rights and that centers around expanding people-to-people exchanges including lifting of U.S. travel restrictions to Cuba, educational and cultural exchanges, outreach to alternate non-state political actors and overt promotion of political reform in Cuba. Open Cuba to Fulbright and other such scholarships and similar moves would increase the amount of exchange that takes place.

The fourth of these policy recommendations deals with narco-trafficking, international crime and terrorism. Here I think we've had discussion earlier today on how Cuba is kind of a blank spot in the Caribbean in terms of cooperation in a number of these areas which are certainly important concerns of U.S. policy. We ought to have a counter-narcotics agreement with Cuba. That is suggested by the success of similar arrangements that Cuba has with many other countries that apparently have been working well and Cuba has proven to be a reliable partner.

The group recommended that we should end restrictions on all sales of goods to Cuba, going beyond the farm goods that are currently permitted. We should work actively to arrive at a reasonable settlement of property claims for expropriated property claims and following that settlement promote import of Cuban goods into the U.S. and permit U.S. investment in Cuba. The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Export Administration restrictions on dual use goods should remain enforced – this deals with weapons of mass destruction and that is the agreement we have with many countries around the world.

The final recommendation deals with environmental protection. We need to expand military, Coast Guard and scientific cooperation on the development of protection and contingency plans to mitigate against environmental catastrophes, oil spills and all of the environment concerns that we have.

These are recommendations that reflect mainstream thinking. No one participant in our conference necessarily subscribes to all of them nor are these official policy positions of the Stanley Foundation. Because they came out of conference work involving a wide variety of viewpoints, I think they do merit some consideration as we move ahead to try to improve relationships between this country and Cuba.

With respect to veto-proof majorities, we are about 20 votes short of that on most issues in the House. And that becomes challenging as well, even looking at, what is a veto-proof majority if the Republicans aren't willing to override a veto. That is to say that a certain number of members may vote for policy proscription but in the end of the day may not be willing to override the President and I don't think we're very close to that.

CLOSING REMARKS

U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT)

“American policy has been for decades harming the cause of democracy in Cuba by weakening the will of the Cuban people and strengthening the power base of those opposed to freedom and democracy.”

I believe that what has made this National Summit on Cuba so critically important is the diverse bi-partisan nature of the people who have come together in support of the common objective – to help bring American foreign policy toward Cuba into the 21st century and to help bring about an American foreign policy towards Cuba that will truly benefit those who need it most – the 11 million people in Cuba.

Just the fact that this Summit has happened -- the fact that there's been such a diversity of representation here from across the spectrum of the U.S. -- speaks volumes about the success of what's happening and how exciting it is to see the sea change in public opinion on Cuba.

Let me just say at the very outset, something I think needs to be stated at the outset of any discussion about Cuba. I'm not here, nor are you, as an apologist for the Cuban government, nor are any of my Congressional colleagues who come to talk and testify at this Summit or other occasions. We all readily acknowledge that the government of Fidel Castro is an oppressive regime that does not serve the interests of the people of Cuba. Our debate is not about that, our debate is about U.S. foreign policy and how we can create change. I happen to be one who believes that we have done more to keep Fidel Castro in power than anything he's ever done for himself.

I know that many of you here today will be meeting with members of the Congress and the White House in the coming days, particularly tomorrow in a day of lobbying on behalf of the initiatives and policies we think will bring about the kind of changes – new bridges between the American people and the Cuban people and to spark a new dawn in Amer-Cuban relations.

For far too long America's embargo against Cuba has been a taboo issue, you couldn't even bring it up, you were called all sorts of names if you suggested this policy wasn't working. For far too long questioning America's embargo against Cuba was off-limits. But with your help we are finally beginning to expose the truth, the truth that the embargo has failed to bring about the changes in Cuba that all of us wish to see such as freedom, democracy and prosperity.

We have come together today to take America's head out of the sand and call American policy towards Cuba exactly what it is – a failed policy. The fact is our 40-year-old plus embargo has done nothing to improve the lives of ordinary Cubans and has done nothing to bring about a democratic Cuba.

Like many of you here today I have experienced first hand the effects of American policies on Cuba. In 1998 I visited Cuba for the first time in nearly 20 years. The city of Havana looked very much like it did back when I was there in the 1970s. Although the physical decay was clearly more evident, in many ways, Havana is a city that has remained frozen in the 1960s, just as U.S. policy has as well.

I believe that at its core our policy towards Cuba is one that severely limits the availability of medicine and medical supplies to the Cuban people. It is a policy that denies U.S. citizens the right to travel where they choose. It is a policy that prevents Cuban and American diplomats from establishing meaningful channels of communication to improve our relationships and prevent misunderstandings.

It is a policy that denies American companies and businesses access to important and potentially enormous new markets for America's goods, services and ideas. It is also a policy that prohibits a country 90 miles from our shores from being a partner in the global effort to thwart terrorism, to counter drug traffickers and to protect our overlapping ecosystems. In short, it's a policy that's completely inconsistent both with America's values and America's self-interest.

I share the common goal of everyone in this room, I believe and the common goal of the Cuban exile community to bring democracy to Cuba. I share the common goal of seeing to it that Cuba enters the community of nations and that the people of Cuba enjoy the blessings of political freedom and economic prosperity. But I believe that American policy has been for decades harming the cause of democracy in Cuba by weakening the will of the Cuban people and strengthening the power base of those opposed to freedom and democracy.

In Cuba today you will not find people inspired by our embargo aimed at the removal of Fidel Castro but rather you will find hungry families living in unnecessary poverty. In Cuba today you will not find a Fidel Castro weakened by a 40-year-old embargo but a Cuban leadership solidified by what can only be thought of as bullying tactic by the world's strongest superpower against one of the hemisphere's poorest nations. Most importantly the Summit today has exposed America's policy toward Cuba as profoundly hypocritical in the face of normalized trade relationships with Russia, China and even Vietnam.

The fact is free trade and economic development are the best routes to ensuring political freedom and democracy in all developing countries, including the nation of Cuba. The Summit today has also helped to expose the myth that a majority of Cuban-Americans favor maintaining a complete embargo. The fact is that most Americans in the Cuban exile community support, at the very least, an easing of the travel restrictions and lifting dollar limitations on the remittances that Cuban Americans can send to their loved ones on that island.

The more we try to prevent contacts between Cuba and America the more we are robbing ourselves of the benefit of our most powerful and influential ambassadors, our own people. Elsewhere in our hemisphere it has been such a person-to-person contact that has encouraged democracy and forged lasting connections between nations.

I believe that this Summit and other events like it are why I am optimistic that a new day is coming with respect to U.S.-Cuban policy. I predict to all of you gathered here today that in the not too distant future a new era of U.S.-Cuban relations will be upon us, an era when walls come crashing down and bridges are truly built in their place.

CUBA WORKING GROUP

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Republicans	Democrats
1. John Boozman (AR-03)	1. Neil Abercrombie (HI-01)
2. Kevin Brady (TX-08)	2. Tammy Baldwin (WI-02)
3. Dave Camp (MI-04)	3. Howard Berman (CA-26)
4. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08)	4. Marion Berry (AR-01)
5. Jeff Flake (AZ-01)	5. William Lacy Clay (MO-01)
6. Sam Graves (MO-06)	6. Peter DeFazio (OR-04)
7. Wally Herger (CA-02)	7. William Delahunt (MA-10)
8. Tim Johnson (IL-05)	8. Rosa DeLauro (CT-3)
9. Ray LaHood (IL-18)	9. Cal Dooley (CA-20)
10. Jim Leach (IA-01)	10. Sam Farr (CA-17)
11. Jerry Moran (KS-01)	11. Nick Lampson (TX-09)
12. George Nethercutt (WA-05)	12. Stephen Lynch (MA-09)
13. Tom Osborne (NE-03)	13. Jim McGovern (MA-03)
14. Butch Otter (ID-01)	14. Collin Peterson (MN-07)
15. Ron Paul (TX-14)	15. Charlie Rangel (NY-15)
16. Jim Ramstad (MN-03)	16. Tim Roemer (IN-03)
17. Dennis Rehberg (MT)	17. Mike Ross (AR-04)
18. Paul Ryan (WI-01)	18. Vic Snyder (AR-02)
19. Chris Shays (CT-04)	19. Hilda Solis (CA-31)
20. John Shimkus (IL-20)	20. Charlie Stenholm (TX-17)
21. Nick Smith (MI-07)	21. John Tanner (TN-08)
22. John Thune (SD-at large)	22. Mike Thompson (CA-01)
23. Pat Tiberi (OH-12)	23. Edolphus Towns (NY-10)

U.S. House of Representatives

Cuba Working Group : Legislative Focus Points

I. Repeal the travel ban - The Cuba travel ban is an unwarranted intrusion on the rights of American citizens; it criminalizes normal and constructive activity by American citizens, and it closes off a powerful source of American influence in Cuba.

II. Allow normal, unsubsidized exports of agricultural and medical products - Far from focusing attention on Cuba's failed domestic policies, U.S. restrictions send the signal that American wants to use economic deprivation as a tool for political change.

III. End restrictions on remittances - Remittances make a crucial difference in the well being of many thousands of Cuban families and help free them from dependence on the government. They also enable many Cubans to acquire the modest resources with which to start small enterprises, further expanding independent sectors of the Cuban economy.

IV. Sunset Helms-Burton in March 2003 - The Libertrad Act of 1996, also known as "Helms-Burton," was enacted on the premise that it would disrupt the Cuban economy and topple the Cuban government, by tightening aspects of the embargo. We support passage of legislation to sunset Helms-Burton seven years after enactment in March 2003, to allow a debate on the merits of reauthorization provisions of this law.

V. Repeal Section 211 - Section 211 constituted an improper intervention in a private trademark matter in favor of a foreign interest, the Bermuda-based Bacardi Corporation. It breaches U.S. obligations to honor Cuban trademarks under the Inter-American Convention on Trademarks and was judged by the WTO to be in violation of U.S. obligations to protect intellectual property under the TRIPS Agreement. As a result, it frees Cuba of its legal obligation to honor the more than 5,000 U.S.-owned trademarks registered in Cuba.

VI. TV/Radio Marti - The U.S. government has spent over \$400 million in taxpayer money on radio and television broadcasts directed at Cuban citizens. In principle, this is a worthy effort but in practice its record has been mixed. Radio Marti's audience has declined to five percent of the total population, according to the latest survey by the U.S. government's Broadcasting Board of Governors, and serious questions exist about the quality of its broadcasts and the administration of the station. TV Marti reaches no audience in Cuba and is therefore utterly without purpose.

VII. Scholarships - In place of the failed communication effort of TV Marti, the United States should promote educational programs with a proven track record that will achieve real communication between Americans and Cubans.

VIII. Expand security cooperation - Cuba and the United States share some common hemispheric security and environmental protection interests. Cuba and the United States already cooperate in a limited fashion in controlling migration and combating drug trafficking. Cuba has expressed a desire to negotiate a broad security agenda with the United States. We urge the Administration to enter such a discussion to determine whether additional agreements can be reached to serve U.S. interests.

IX. Certified Property Claims - Progress in economic and political relations eventually will require the settlement of claims for expropriations of \$1.2 billion in U.S. property by the Cuban government 1959 and 1960. We urge the Administration to consider creative approaches to a resolution of the claims issue.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Lissa Weinmann 718 416 1653



NATIONAL SUMMIT ON CUBA

Will Demonstrate Cuban-American, Republican Support for Upcoming Votes to Ease Cuba Embargo

Washington, DC: As Members of Congress prepare to vote this Fall on lifting current restrictions on Americans' ability to travel to Cuba and to provide food and medicine to the island, the bi-partisan **National Summit on Cuba** will demonstrate the broad support across the U.S. for easing the 40-year old embargo.

The Summit-- **to be held on Tuesday, September 17 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC and extending into a Lobby Day led by Cuban Americans on Wednesday, September 18th** -- is expected to send a shock wave through the political establishment, particularly as it will debunk the perception of pro-embargo solidarity among Cuban-Americans and the national Republican Party.

The **Bush Administration** is sending **Dan Fisk**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, U.S. Department of State, to present its approach to Cuba. **U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO)** will moderate an audience question and answer session with Fisk following his speech.

The Summit audience will include **state delegations** comprised of important local leaders who will educate Administration officials and Congress on how different policy approaches might better serve their diverse interests. State officials from **Texas, Alabama, Oklahoma, Illinois, Florida, California** (where a state resolution calling for the embargo's end passed August 26, 2002) and other states will present and discuss avenues for change. A **new national survey** will be released at the Summit.

An estimated 500 Cuban American leaders from at least 10 different groups will **on September 18th hold a Press Conference, panel discussions, meet with elected officials and the White House**, and launch a major **new initiative** for a new approach toward Cuba.

Other Summit speakers include:

- **U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE)** as keynote, **Christopher Dodd (D-CT)** with closing remarks
- **U.S. Representatives Jeff Flake (R-AZ), George Nethercutt (R-WA), William Delahunt (D-MA)** and other members of the **House Cuba Working Group (Ret)**
- **General Charles Wilhelm**, former Chief Commander U.S. Southern Command, on "Our National Interest, Our National Security"
- Bay of Pigs veteran **Alfredo Duran**, President, Cuban Committee for Democracy, on "A Changed Political Equation"
- **Jose Miguel Vivanco**, head of Human Rights Watch Americas
- **Bob Stallman**, President, American Farm Bureau Federation
- **Bill Reinsch**, President of the National Foreign Trade Council and of USA Engage, a coalition, of more than 650 U.S. corporations, and a former U.S. Department of Commerce official

National Summit on Cuba Press Release – Page Two

- Video appearances by Former U.S. Federal Reserve Chair **Paul Volcker** and others

On July 23rd, the House of Representatives voted 262 to 167 to bar enforcement of restrictions on travel, 251 to 177 to end the cap on money sent to Cubans (both sponsored by Flake (R-AZ) and approved by voice vote a measure to lift all licensing for humanitarian trade with Cuba (Moran R-KS), all part of the Treasury Postal Appropriations Bill. **For the first time, an amendment brought forth by embargo supporters** (Goss R-FL) that would have conditioned free travel on the President certifying that Cuba is not involved in terrorist activities **was defeated 247 to 182.**

U.S. Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) sponsored language on the 2003 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill calling for \$3 million to be spent to fund narcotics interdiction efforts between the U.S. and Cuba. The Senate must still approve its Treasury appropriations bill; **Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND)**, who chairs the subcommittee in charge of the bill, already added language to end enforcement of the travel ban. Other amendments on humanitarian trade and remittances are expected to be voted on the floor in late Sept. Past Senate votes indicate clear majority support for allowing financing for humanitarian sales to Cuba.

These legislative moves toward more engagement with Cuba are expected to culminate in the **Senate/House Conference Committee of the Treasury appropriations bill likely to take place the end of September, early October.** President Bush has indicated that he may veto the bill (which funds the Department of Treasury's Al Qaeda hunt as well as the U.S. postal system) if it contains language easing the embargo on Cuba.

"The Summit will show that a majority of Cuban Americans join with other Americans in supporting the upcoming votes on free travel, easier humanitarian trade and lifting the cap on money sent to Cuba because these measures are in the best interests of the people of both nations," said **Silvia Wilhelm, President of Miami-based Puentes Cubanos** who is leading the Cuban American groups coordinating the events of the 18th.

For the past three years, **U.S. Rep. Tom Delay (R-TX)** has personally intervened in scheduled appropriations conference committee votes in order to thwart change on Cuba despite a **unanimous 2001 Resolution issued by his home state of Texas** calling for a complete end to the U.S. embargo on Cuba. **House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX)** recently caused headlines when he said his votes to sustain the embargo were cast out of loyalty to two Cuban American Republican colleagues in Miami.

"It is time for my former colleague Tom DeLay and remaining elements within the Republican leadership to stop thwarting the will of Congress and the American people on Cuba," said former 34-year Congressman from Tampa and WWII war hero, **Sam Gibbons** who will co-chair the Summit with **Bob Stallman**, President of the American Farm Bureau and **former President of the Texas Farm Bureau.**

According to **Lissa Weinmann**, Summit Coordinator: "The Summit is aimed at breaking several destructive myths about the Cuba embargo regarding its political support and its efficacy. We hope to provide Congress and the Administration with the substantive rationale and political cover for a new approach to Cuba that fulfills our national interests."

The Summit is sponsored by the **American Farm Bureau Federation, Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba (AHTC)**, the **World Policy Institute**, and supported by the **USA Engage coalition of more than 650 U.S. corporations.** For more information, see: www.nationalsummitoncuba.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CUBAN-AMERICANS URGE NEW APPROACH TO CUBA

On September 18, Cuban-Americans will converge on Capitol Hill to support upcoming votes to free travel and humanitarian trade to Cuba

Miami, FL and Washington, DC: Breaking a pervasive political myth about Cuban-American support for the U.S. embargo on Cuba, hundreds of Cuban-Americans will gather on Capitol Hill on September 18th to support specific changes to the U.S. embargo which they believe will help the people of Cuba while promoting American national interests. The lobby effort is part of the **National Summit on Cuba, to be held on September 17 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.** The Summit will demonstrate the breadth of support that exists in the United States for a new approach to Cuba.

Cuban-Americans from Miami and New Jersey will arrive in Washington on the morning of September 18th to join hundreds of others already at the nation's capitol. An estimated 500 Cuban Americans will convene at a **press conference at 11:00 am** at a location to be announced. The various groups will conduct panel discussions and meet with congressional offices. **A major initiative for a new approach towards Cuba will be unveiled.**

"As Americans and as surrogates for our loved ones in Cuba, we join with the vast majority of the members of Congress and the citizens of this great nation who support a new approach to Cuba," said Silvia Wilhelm, President of Miami-based Puentes Cubano and one of the event coordinators.

The Cuban Americans will support language on the House Treasury Postal Appropriations bill that cuts funds for the enforcement of all travel and humanitarian trade restrictions to Cuba, including licensing, as well as the cap on money that can legally be sent to family and friends on the island. **The measures were passed July 23 by a clear majority of House members. Recent polling done by Miami pollster Sergio Bendixen shows that a majority of Cuban Americans support these specific changes to the embargo.**

Bay of Pigs veteran and President of the Miami and Washington-based Cuban Committee for Democracy, Alfredo Duran, Esq., stated: "The Cuban American community has turned the page. The new generation is looking toward the future. Our economic, security and humanitarian interests are best served by engagement, not isolation. Our interests cannot be any worse served than by this futile embargo." Duran was held as a prisoner for 18 months before being released with others in the brigade in exchange for food and farm equipment.

Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, President of Miami-based Cambio Cubano, another group helping organize the 18th, spent 22 years in prison in Cuba: "The time has arrived to bid the embargo farewell. A good neighbor policy is the best way to contribute to the democratization of Cuba. I know from experience that Americans who travel to Cuba are true ambassadors of freedom."

"Despite overwhelming congressional votes in favor of lifting the travel ban, Cuban-Americans must still face penalties for simply visiting their loved ones. Congress has spoken, Mr. President. Let all Americans travel and expand contacts with our closest Caribbean neighbor," said Delvis Fernandez, President of the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund, a national umbrella group representing Cuban American groups across the U.S.

The Cuban American Advocacy Day is being coordinated by a number of organizations that include: Cambio Cubano, Cuban American Alliance Education Fund, Cuban Committee for Democracy, Puentes Cubanos and the US/Cuba Legal Forum. Other organizations supporting the event are: the Dante Fascell Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Fundacion Amistad, Cuban American Democratic Council and the Pan American Coalition.

For more information see www.nationalsummitoncuba.org.

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ADDENDUM: Program and select commentary from:

**THE DOMESTIC IMPACT OF US UNILATERAL
FOOD AND MEDICAL SANCTIONS: CASE STUDY CUBA**
Sponsored by The Cuba Education Project at the World Policy Institute

Thursday, June 15, 2000 Room 1539 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC

- 8:30 am:** Coffee / Opening Greetings: **Congressman George Nethercutt, Jr. (R-WA) and Senator John Ashcroft (R-MO)**
- 9:00 am:** **Panel One: A Comparison of Unilateral Sanctions on Food and Medical Products: Todd Erickson, Cargill, Inc. Minnesota; HP Goldfield, Partner, Swidler Berlin Shereff Friedman, former Assistant Sec. of Commerce**
- 10:00 am:** **Panel Two:** The Total Domestic Impact : **Dr. Paula Stern**, President, The Stern Group Inc. and **Former Chairperson of the US International Trade Commission** will present a first-ever economic analysis on the national impact of US sanctions on the sale of food and medical products to Cuba (*copies of report will be released at the event*). **John R. Block**, President and CEO, Food Distributors International and Former Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture; **Craig A. Ratajczyk**, American Soybean Association, St. Louis; **Alan Tank**, President and CEO, National Pork Producers Council, DesMoines; **Dennis DeLaughter**, Chairman, US Rice Producers Association, Houston.
- 11:10 am:** **Panel Three: Putting Faces with the Numbers: Perspectives from key State Delegations**
- | | | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|---|
| Alabama | Jim Lyons , Port of Mobile
Mayor Michael Dow , Mobile | Kansas | David Frey , Kansas Wheat Commission |
| Illinois | Joseph Hannon ,
International Trade Office,
State of Illinois
Robert Hauser , Professor/Head,
Dept. of Agriculture,
University of Illinois | Iowa | Don Mason , Iowa Cornrowers |
| Texas | Steve Pringle , Texas Farm Bureau
Hope Huffman , Texas cattle farmer | Oklahoma | Kevin Chambers , Oklahoma State
Department of Commerce |
| Mississippi | Lloyd Moore , MS Black Farmers and
Agriculturists Association
Steve Murray , Food and Fiber Center,
Mississippi State University | Louisiana | Dr. Daryl Burckel PhD
Port of Lake Charles
Nicholas A. Robins , Tulane University |
| | | Missouri | Scott Shearer , Farmland Industries |
| | | Arkansas | Andy Miller , Arkansas Farm Bureau |
| | | Florida | Sam Gibbons , Gibbons & Company,
former Ways and Means Chair
30 year US Representative for Tampa |
- 1:00pm** **Senator Christopher Dodd** (D-CT) introduces Lunch Speaker
Tom Donohue, President and CEO, United States Chamber of Commerce
- 1:30 pm:** Opportunity for Media Questions and Answers to Morning Panelists at Large
- 3:00 pm:** **Panel 4:** A Closer Look at Licensing, Shipping Restrictions, Ban on Direct Financial Transactions and Government Credits/Financing; **Pamela S. Falk**, Professor, City University of New York School of Law, Cuba Trade Advisor; **Stephen Northrup**, Medical Device Manufacturers of America
- 3:45 pm:** **Panel 5:** Pulling It All Together: **Phil Peters**, Vice President, The Lexington Institute, former US State Department official under Presidents Reagan and Bush; **Lissa Weinmann**, Director, Cuba Education Project, World Policy Institute, New York.

John Ashcroft
Speaking as U.S. Senator, R-MO,
Currently U.S. Attorney General

For those who think that we should use food as a weapon let me just say to you that if it is a weapon that backfires and that it has not been a successful weapon of diplomacy in any respect. I think there are lots of reasons not to use food as a weapon. The humanitarian reasons have already been recited but it is pretty clear that when we tell foreign governments that we will not sell them food or medicine we've literally authorized the leader of that government to explain to an undernourished and sick population that the United States is willing for them to be undernourished and sick and that we are willing to deprive them of the basic goods necessary to sustain life.

When we imposed sanctions against Cuba, originally Cuba was 51% of all the rice exports in the United States, our largest recipient. When we imposed sanctions against Iran, Iran was the largest recipient of American rice. Now, over and over again we managed to have deleted the largest of our markets in situation after situation and it's not productive, it is not helpful.

We've seen the failures over and over again of the attempts to withhold food and medicine as a means of shaping international diplomatic relations and I think it is time for us to understand that there is a better way. It is a way which reflects the kindness and goodness of the American people. It reflects our understanding that people should not be malnourished nor should they be in ill health. It is a kind of understanding that is very likely to make it possible for us to disagree with other governments and yet maintain a reputation for what is the goodness of the American people and our humanitarian spirit.

Tom Donohue
President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

While we're saying nobody can go visit Cuba and you can't spend money there and we're not going to do medicine and food there, there's \$3 billion of direct foreign investment going into Cuba. This is a little dingy area, \$3 billion in 18 months. Who's there? The French, the Spaniards, the Italians, the Mexicans, the Canadians, the Germans, I'm not sure about the English, but probably.

There are a lot of people in Cuba. They're buying up all the beachfront property, they're putting up hotels, they're investing in the mines, they're working real hard. You know, the back part of Cuba, they think there's a lot of oil around there, they've divided it up, it actually looks like a real estate development in Las Vegas. So they're going to sell off each little box and we're not going to buy any of them? You know, sometimes we aren't as smart as we look. We need to find another way to do this.

The bottom line for us at the U.S. Chamber is very simple. The objective of the American business community and what should be the objective of the American intellectual community and what should be the objective of the American economic community and the American government is to do away with unilateral sanctions that don't work. And if you believe that and if you're already out trading with all of those other people who we still have some sanctions on, why would we turn away from Cuba and not China? Let's see if we can do an inventory of why.

Well, we've got a Senate election down there, that's a good reason because there are a lot of people that have a lot of money and a lot of energy, we've got House elections there, we've got House elections in New Jersey and these are people that'll participate in the political process. So we're going to have the elections but we're going to have them every two years and we're going to have another Senate election sooner or later. I think it's very important to do what we think is

right in a very modest and thoughtful way instead of counting bull's-eyes. It has no good old American logic, it doesn't stand the test of common sense.

The bottom line is we have an objective that's far more significant than Cuba, it's far more significant than unilateral sanctions, It is the fundamental issue of taking our place in the world global trading economy as a leader. Not only a leader in dollars and cents, in sales and in products, but a leader in the moral, the economic, the financial and the national security interests of this country and of this world. And if what we're going to do is have unilateral sanctions on half the world and take ourselves out of the position of being able to articulate a positive position on what we believe and who we are and what we do then we are not as smart as we look.

If you accept that philosophy you then must accept that we need to deal with Cuba because it's closest, it's 41 years in doing and they're not a national security threat. I really think that our best interests are in moving forward on this and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States with its modest means is going to try and advance that philosophy.

And the fact of the matter is there are a lot of interesting people in government there in Cuba. If you talk to the ministers of Industry and Finance, they're doing a lot of business around the world. They've got a lot of direct foreign investment, they've got people bringing a lot of cash there, they're making a lot of interesting deals. They're just not doing it with us.

You talk to people in the Cuban legislature, and you'll see they're a profound people interested in their own country. We've had some meetings up in New York from time to time because that's where they can easily come and there's a dialogue going on not only with the Chamber and the leaders of Cuba but with lots of people because this is a fact of life, it's going to happen and will Fidel Castro adjust himself and let it happen in an orderly way? I think so. I think so for the simple reason that as more and more and more people get the joke, it becomes harder and harder and harder not to end the game and I just hope we can keep this up and the food and medicine thing would be wonderful step forward because it's winner-winner, there's no loser-loser. The U.S. wins because it's what we should do and it's the beginning of commerce and Cuba wins because these are extraordinary benefits to the people of Cuba, not to Fidel Castro.