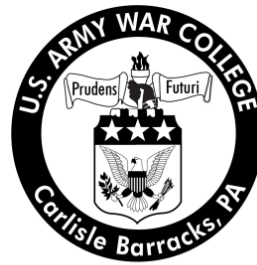


United States Security Policy Implications of a Post-Fidel Cuba

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**UNITED STATES SECURITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS
OF A POST-FIDEL CUBA**

by

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U.S. policy towards Cuba has long lost its creative initiative and effectiveness. As much a tribute to the political cunning of Fidel Castro as to other domestic forces, American efforts at regime removal and support to the Cuban people have all ended counterproductively. With each action, the Revolutionary government has emerged even more politically powerful and entrenched. However, recent changes on the island have for the first time opened up unique opportunities and windows to advance U.S. national security objectives towards Cuba. While some of these opportunities are fleeting, others are as inevitable as the “biological solutions” the island’s geriatric leadership. As a result of the later, the government will almost certainly have at least one more succession or transition in the coming decade. It is the purpose of this paper to provide a U.S.-Cuba background, proposed succession and transition scenarios, address some of those nascent prospects, discuss the resultant security policy implications, and finally make recommendations.

UNITED STATES SECURITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF A POST-FIDEL CUBA

The current U.S. policy ignores recent developments that have potential to redefine relations with Cuba. The sanctions-based policy has significantly impeded the United States ability to influence the direction of policy in Cuba or gain a broader understanding of events taking place on the island.¹

—U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations

The maxim that “insanity is doing the same thing, over and over again, but expecting different results,” is commonly attributed to Albert Einstein. Due to his death four year before Fidel Castro’s 26th of July insurrection came to power, it was impossible for that quote to have had anything to do with Revolutionary Cuba. Nonetheless, the adage’s applicability to U.S.-Cuban policy since seems almost serendipitous... or maybe it’s just the sign of a timeless insight. Either way, U.S. policy over the last half century towards Cuba has maintained a constancy of national interest objective that have been resolutely pursued by static, tried-and-failed isolation policies.

An easy culprit for America’s sadly stale approach in the pursuit of Cuba’s policy objective is a blinding political fixation on the villain and Maximum Leader, Fidel Castro. Across eleven U.S. administrations, Fidel Castro has challenged and bested U.S. efforts to remove him, his regime and his Revolution from the island.² A laughable bit of U.S. foreign policy following President Bush’s 2002 declaration of the “Axis of Evil” came when U.S. Under Secretary of State John Bolton included Cuba in a “Beyond Axis of Evil.”³ Domestically, the powerful hard-line lobby of Cuban-American exiles that has resembled a blood feud against the Castro brothers has also added to the policy intransigence.

For the first time in nearly five decades, Castro's step down from power has opened opportunities previously unavailable. Though the despotic rule has been masterfully handed off to his younger brother, Raúl Castro, things have changed and new doors will continue to open for U.S. policies into the near-term. For one, Raúl is certainly no Fidel. Where the elder was a brilliant demagogue and shrewd politician, the younger's leadership talents come from managerial skills and loyal followings. On the other hand, one similarity that the bothers have in common is their advanced ages. With both Castros in their 80's, the inevitable next power shift looms undeniably.

For the first time in several generations, changes in the U.S., the island, and even internationally have opened unprecedented opportunities and windows for advancing U.S. security policy objectives towards Cuba. This confluence of events is unique and worthy of analysis. That is the purpose of this Project. The document will provide a general background on U.S.-Cuban relations, address some of those nascent prospects, discuss the resultant security policy implications and make recommendations. All of this is in the sincerest hope of helping to finally stopping American's "Cuba insanity."

Background: Pre-1959

Separated by the 90 mile-wide Florida Straits, U.S.-Cuban relations since the early ninetieth century have reflected the proximity of distance and interests which inexorably has drawn the two countries together. As early 1807, President Thomas Jefferson wrote to his Secretary of War that precipitating a war with Spain might not only win Florida and Mexico, but also that "probably Cuba would add itself to our confederation."⁴ The executive branch has not been the only branch of the government to gaze southward. Congressmen also have shown interest in bringing the Caribbean

island into the United States fold. Just two years before the American Civil War, southern Senators Jefferson Davis and John Slidell championed a bill proposing to offer Spain a \$30 million down payment for the island. The bill failed due to burgeoning tensions over domestic slavery and associated issues over Cuba's slave trade. But the economic and security interests that precipitated it would not dissipate, as informal annexation of the island would remain a recurring focus for the next century.⁵

Eventually the Caribbean island's struggles for independence from Spain created the ideal pretext that Jefferson had considered almost a century earlier. As a result of Spain's defeat during the short-lived Spanish American War, Cuba (as well as Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines) was ceded to the U.S. The handoff between ruling countries was a crushing disappointment to Cuban nationalists. Their worst fears proved true when the Stars and Stripes were raised over Havana in victory instead of the Cuban national flag. The U.S. ruled Cuba outright for the first four years of its "independence."⁶ Uncle Sam's nose was well inside the tent and his body wasn't far behind.

While Cuba had won its formal independence, the victory was hollowed by paternalistic American intervention that displaced any real civil or economic sovereignty. A de facto colony was in the making and America had no qualms flexing its hard and soft power over the island. In the first two decades of the 20th century, U.S. armed forces were dispatched to Cuba three times to restore order and for other political reasons.⁷ Perhaps more insidiously, the Platt Amendment to the Cuban Constitution legalized the subordination of Cuban autonomy to U.S. paternalism.⁸ Even Cuba's first president was complicit when he negotiated a perpetual lease for Guantanamo Naval

Base that made a sham of Cuba's sovereignty.⁹ Every step of the way, the colossus to the north increasingly exerted its interests in the nascent Cuba. While a façade of independence remained from the cancellation of the Platt Amendment in 1934 through 1959, all critical elements of that self-rule remained contingent upon American consent. Throughout the period, support of Cuban "strongman" leaders and the resulting corruption further fanned anti-American sentiments within large segments of the Cuban populous.

Background: 1959-1989

It was this nationalist reaction that most influenced and was politically exploited by Fidel Castro. With Fidel's three year old insurgency winning, the U.S.-backed President Fulgencio Batista abdicated power and fled the country on New Year's Day 1959. The charismatic and bold Castro quickly and ruthlessly consolidated power on the island. The Maximum Leader successfully crafted his domestic and international brand as the western hemisphere's revolutionary bulwark against the "yanqui" imperialism. A lifelong anti-American, the hallmark of his rule has been a dogmatic contempt and zealous undermining of the global super power just across the Florida Straits.

Castro's aggressive 1960 domestic and international posturing set in play a series of events that ultimately cast the two countries on opposite sides in the Cold War. In rapid succession, he nationalized foreign investments on the island, seized many of the largest plantations and passed the Agrarian Reform Law. All of these were defining hallmarks of leftist ideology. Nationalization struck its opening blow for the Revolution when the government effectively took over the American-owned Cuban Telephone Company and the Compania Cubana de Electricidad by installing government

“intervenors.” These regulators forced rate reductions and service increases – an economically unsustainable coercion. The nationalization of all U.S. business interests continued without “prompt, adequate, and effective compensation,”¹⁰ President Eisenhower countered with a partial cessation of trade between the countries. Concurrently, the U.S. also commenced planning and training exiled Cubans in Guatemala for para-military action against the island.¹¹ Just a few months later, newly inaugurated President Kennedy formalized the political and economic embargo. In an overt attempt at regime change, the failed Bay of Pigs invasion followed closely that same year. Castro answered with the declaration that Cuba was a Marxist-Leninist country and in a defensive move, aligned with the Soviet Union. The stage was set for relations with the U.S. for the remainder of the Cold War.¹²

In 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear Armageddon with the island as the center stage. While Castro’s role in the Cold War showdown was relegated to an inconsequential supporting actor role, his humiliating “defeat” from the removal of those nuclear missiles further hardened his convictions. For the U.S., the national security threats from its only adversarial neighbor echoed throughout the remainder of the Cold War. Though American diplomatic and economic policies aimed at strangling Revolutionary Cuba continued throughout the Cold War, the USSR’s successfully offset American effort through massive direct economic and military support which eventually reached 21% of the island’s GDP.¹³

Domestically, the Maximum Leader institutionalized the Revolution through coercive, government mandated land and property redistribution, brutal repression and Marxist reforms that established the economic and political supremacy of the state.

Punctuated by the “Liquidation of Capitalism and Market Erosion” (1959-1960) and the “Orthodox (Stalinist) Central Planning Model” (1961-1963) sub-periods, all private economic activity were co-opted by the state with the meager exceptions of 30% of agriculture and some street vending.¹⁴

Background: 1989-Present

The Caribbean island’s existential dependence on Soviet patronage resulted in an economic freefall after the 1989 demise of its communist benefactor. By 1993, the island’s GDP had contracted a staggering 32% compared to 1989. Even with the severe “Special Period during Peacetime” austerity, by 1998 the country’s output was still 21% below its 1989 output of \$20.5 billion.¹⁵ In conjunction with the Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) of 1992’s cinching of U.S. trade embargo, Castro was reluctantly forced to introduce economic reforms “for the survival of the revolution.”¹⁶ The resultant thaw between the two countries was unfortunately short-lived. It ended with the shoot down in international airspace of a couple of U.S. aircraft operated by Cuban exiles. The Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996)¹⁷ was passed as a direct result of the Cuban transgression and has been the centerpiece of U.S. policy toward Cuba ever since.

The aggressive international reach that Title III of Helms-Burton enacted in the pursuit of recourse against Cuba was controversial and received considerable international pushback.¹⁸ The Act extended U.S. policy towards compensation and appropriation of Cuban assets into the sovereignty of other countries. This extraterritorial aspect was objected to by many of our allies, the European Union (EU) and the United Nations.¹⁹ In direct response, the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico and the EU all passed specific laws to counter Helms-Burton’s perceived sovereignty

intrusions. However, thanks to suspension provisions in the law, every U.S. President since the law was enacted has been able to neutralized the most contentious portion (i.e. Title III) by routinely (biannually) suspending the offending extraterritorial provisions.²⁰

In the almost two decades since Helms-Burton, U.S.-Cuban relations have ebbed and flowed with changes in U.S. administrations, Cuban economic and diplomatic alliances, and even the health of Fidel Castro. Most recently, the succession of the authoritarian dictatorship from brother to brother (i.e. Fidel to Raul Castro) also created opportunities and disappointment.

Throughout the Maximum Leader's reign which has spanned eleven U.S. Presidents, two constants remain at a stalemate. First, Fidel Castro's has domestically and internationally exploited an intense anti-Americanism demagoguery as his revolution's primary "weapon of mass distraction."²¹ This has been persistently opposed by the United State's unfaltering policies aimed at "assisting the Cuban people in regaining their freedom and prosperity, as well as joining the community of democratic countries."²² As a result, U.S. policy towards Cuba has promoted American's enduring national interests by neutralizing Cuba's threat, promoting national vitality and values, and advancing international order.

Succession/Transition Scenarios

Since the downfall of the Soviet Union, U.S. government, academic, and research literature pondering post-Fidel futures and possibilities burgeoned. With the seemingly unrecoverable loss of its existential economic and military lifeline, the end of the Castro dynasty suddenly appeared very possible. The predominant literature converged on a three outcomes:

1. Succession – Raúl Castro successfully assumes the reigns for power and continues with some version of a communist dictatorship.

2. Military Government – The military displaces the Castros with a junta or dictatorship, possibly even power sharing with the Cuban Communist Party (PCC).

3. Democratic uprising – A Western European or “Arab Spring”-modeled democratic revolution.

Unfortunately, the reports and predictions for a post-Castro Cuba proved premature. If nothing else, the Castro regimes have always manifested a supreme pragmatism in pursuit of their survival. The 1990’s Special Period and subsequent opportunistic alignment with Venezuela may have been its greatest achievement in that sense. By 2006 it was becoming obvious that, short of a “biological solution” among the octogenarian Castros, the familial succession would prevail.

Over the course of three years, Fidel Castro cautiously passed the reigns of his regime to his younger brother and second in command, Raúl Castro. A rapid decline in Fidel’s health resulting from intestinal problems in 2006 forced him to take his first steps down from power. He provisionally passed the head of state and government mantle to Raúl in July of that year. After what could be described as a long probational period for Raúl and with continuing health problems for Fidel, the Maximum Leader announced just days before the 2008 single-party, rubber-stamping National Assembly that he would not accept a nomination to remain in power. Five days later, the Assembly duly elected Raúl as the new head of the state and Government of Cuba (GOC). The succession was remarkably successful, stable and seamless.²³

Since then, the younger brother has cautiously and incrementally laid the foundation for his version of the Cuban revolution. Aside from a few reported instances in 2009 when the residual influence of the older Castro last reared its dissenting head, Raúl has systematically moved to build his supporting nomenklatura and affect his vision for the island. In the former, the unexpected purge of many of his brother's "Fidelistas" with his own loyal "Raulistas" during the 6th Communist Party of Cuba congress asserted the absolute nature of his political coronation.²⁴ In the latter, his vision for the revolution includes "updating of the (socialist) model."²⁵ Many leading Cuba analysts, academics and policy makers concur that this will ultimately include moves towards a Chinese (or Vietnamese) model of market-based economies controlled within an authoritarian regime.²⁶ Undoubtedly, Raúl Castro appreciates the benefits of a model of "patrimonial authoritarianism, or economic opportunity expanded but political power and critical economic decision-making authority remaining concentrated in the hands of the state."²⁷ This will be something akin to "Socialism with a Cuban Character," to play off Deng Xiaoping's famous "Socialism with a Chinese Character." By 2011, the charter seeds of such economic liberalization were to bear societal and political fruit.²⁸

Though Raúl may have become Cuba's uncontested caudillo, the political sanctity of his brother's strategic policies have hindered the country's progress. The residual deference to Fidel's policy precedence lingers in the political ether like a viscous medium that resist any sweeping changes. Though incremental changes have been possible, broad strategic changes have found resistance from Fidel's past dictates. Perhaps no issues better manifest this strategic impediment than well-

intentioned relations with Washington. Though it may only be strategically important to Raul and just a matter of time,

“No other departure from his brother’s legacy would be as monumental as supporting rapprochement with Washington. He would begin to move out of Fidel’s shadow, asserting himself definitively as his own man. It would be a popular policy in the military, with most civilian leaders, and especially with the Cuban people. His main objective would be to win a significant reduction, or termination, of the U.S. economic embargo. (It can be suspected) that unlike Fidel, he will be willing to negotiate in good faith and with no superseding precedence.”²⁹

And yet with each passing year, the inescapable geriatric nature of Cuba’s revolutionary leadership presses the impermanence of the revolution’s vanguard, or “históricos” as they’re called. Raúl and his second in power, Jose Machado Ventura, are both 80 years old. The regime’s number three authoritarian, Ramiro Valdés, is only a year younger.³⁰ However, Raúl may be particularly susceptible to the ravages of time due to his past alcoholism.³¹ The former Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations and a top aide to Raúl, Alcibíades Hildalgo, has stated that the younger Castro brother lacks the health (among other qualities) to be much more than a transition leader.³² In light of this cast of elderly character, the “biological solution” continues to loom large. Prudence necessitates that any long-term Cuban power construct revisit the futures alternatives mentioned above:

1) Succession – Raúl’s 2006 interview admission that “I have always been discreet, that is my way” acknowledged his life-long pension for personal discretion and privacy. Whether intentionally or not, this has made his life a mystery to all but a select inner-circle few. Not even a significant biography about him had been written until Brian Latell’s 2007 *After Castro*.³³ Intelligence on him has only recently surfaced and to a lesser degree about his family. Among what is know is that he has four children, three

girls and a boy, with his wife of almost fifty years, Vílma Espin. Their son, Alejandro Castro Espin, is a Colonel in the Ministry of the Interior (MININT) who became a personal assistant to Raúl after the succession. As an Angola campaign veteran and author of the anti-American *El Imperio del Terror* (Empire of Terror), he has well established revolutionary credentials.³⁴

As a result of Raúl's innate secrecy, only recently has the possibility of another familial succession started to emerge. Award winning Cuban dissident blogger, Yoani Sanchez, raised this specter in her *Generation Y* blog post, "Kim Jong-Un and Alejandro Castro Espin: Destined by Blood to Be Dictators?" In the December 2011 blog she contemplated that Raúl's son might bear a dynastically resemblance to North Korea's new minted "Supreme Leader," Kim Jong-un.³⁵ Any democratic reader of her blog can but shutter with her at the thought.

A succession from father to son would be the least predictable of outcomes. Research done in support of this Project did not yield a single reference to Alejandro; there is virtually no literature on this potential Castro dauphin. For that matter, the sum of the public domain views and perspectives about him may have been those penned by his own hand for his book.

Born in 1965, the revolution has been his whole life and its lead players his family. A career internal security officer, the default position would naturally be that he has orthodox views towards it. Similarly, it would not be surprising if he mirrored his father's perceived openness to a Chinese/Vietnamese model of economic liberalization. What would be a black swan is if Raúl's son surfaced as an agent of true democratic

liberalization after a handoff of power. As a result of this knowledge gap, this possible outcome bares the most nebulous national security implications for the U.S.

2) Military Government – Outside of the Castro dynasty, the most foundational and powerful institution in Cuba is the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR). Unlike many Communist states, the Cuban military historically preceded and was the ideological kernel from which the PCC evolved. The 26th of July Movement that brought the Castro's, Ernesto "Che" Guevara and the rest of the "historicos" to power also displaced or assimilated other established socialist organizations on the island. In a nod to Mao's adage that all political power flows from the end of a barrel, the party's power ideologically and literally sprung from just such "pistolas."

Throughout the revolution, the FAR has expanded the breadth and depth of its power. With Raúl Castro at its helm from inception until his "promotion" in 2008, the military's power has expanded commensurate with that of its highest ranking general. First of all, Raúl has by most accounts been an effective leader and champion of the military. He has developed it in spite of "limited resources and some evidence of corruption, (into) a disciplined, professional, hierarchically organized, and comparatively well-run institution."³⁶ Similarly, he assured its absolute monopoly of force through the incremental subordination of all other armed organizations on the island.³⁷ Most recently in the PPC, the elevation of loyal "Raulistas" mentioned above has also added to the army's political power. Lastly, in another nod to China's People's Liberation Army, the FAR has taken over the "stewardship" of major and lucrative sectors of the Cuban economy. This institutional preeminence in Cuba was confirmed by Hidalgo

during the 2004 USAID-sponsored international conference on “Transitions from Communism: Lessons Learned, Challenges Ahead for Cuba:”

The FAR is the most important institution of the regime, first even to the Communist Party, and intertwined with it in the upper echelons. Economic projects controlled by the military present (upwards of 60 percent) of the Cuban economy in select fields. Their existence presents a new form of the war for royalties and a definite form of corruption. It is also one of the most organized ways to preserve the control of the Communist Party in the event of change. Those economic structures play an important part of the clandestine organization that the party is supposed to adopt in the event of losing political power partially or completely.³⁸

Even if the military does not preserve power directly in the form of a junta or another despot, but simply power shares with the Communist party, “under any conceivable scenario, the military will continue to be a key, decisive player.”³⁹ As a result, it would be a mistake to underestimate the survivability of Cuba’s governing institutions. The EU Foreign Affairs Chief has concurred with this same judgment when he warned that those institutions are more comparable to stronger China or Vietnam models than they are to the weaker Central and Eastern European socialist ones.⁴⁰ When looking at international analogs for Cuba, another European military-first variation which could evolve towards democratization is a “Turkish solution.” In that rendition “there is a likely short-term solution predicated on military dominance that admits a strong place in the sun for a civilian sector in organization, administration, and law.”⁴¹ Within the same hemisphere, there have been examples of authoritarian Latin American militaries which maintained absolute power but successfully placed technocrats in charge of major aspects of the country, including the economy. A prime and perhaps palatable example was Pinochet’s coupe d’etat, subsequent junta rule and eventually democratic handoff of power.⁴²

It may be a fool's hope to see Cuba without an authoritarian government in the immediate future. Certainly the governing institutions are hardened and poised to prevent the missteps that precipitated European communism's implosions.⁴³ And yet, this most likely post-Raúl outcome offers several opportunities. With the final elimination of both Castros from the equation, it automatically opens a sizeable political space in U.S. policy that has been prohibited by anti-Castro legislation and regulations.⁴⁴ From a Homeland Defense perspective, the nominal capabilities of Cuba's FAR will continue to pose no significant threat to America into the foreseeable future. But most of all, the intransigence of U.S. domestic policy towards the Castros' Cuba could finally be denied of the myopia that has perpetuated ineffective policies for more than a half century. All told, this possible future offers a likelihood of marginally encouraging implications for U.S. national security implications.

3) Democratic Uprising – A democratic uprising on the island presents a confounding paradox. While it would result in optimal strategic outcomes for the island and the U.S. in the long-term, it also poses the most significant near-term risk to the Cuban people and U.S. national interests.

The road to a "Free Cuba" has several potential paths. The least likely but most dangerous scenario would be a "Cuban Spring" popular uprising. The most likely and least dangerous would be a protracted economic and political evolution across a series of governments concluding in a democratic or quasi-democratic state. Such post-Castro era governments will most likely come from factions of the existing regime.⁴⁵

Similar to 2011's events in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and the broader middle-east, a Cuban Spring could fracture the island's existing power structure at best and might even

overthrow the GOC altogether. For that to evolve, several key events would have to develop. The paramount requirement would be an internal security withdrawal from the civic space which would afford dissidents the political maneuver space to solicit and coalesce opposition support. To incentivize and coordinate support, continued liberalization of cellular and internet usage could be leveraged as popular informational linkages. Finally, if a critical civic mass was achieved by dissidents and their supporters, a singularly brutal or compelling event could unleash Cuba's DNA which historically has endorsed violence to effect political change. At the extreme, the deep-rooted hatred and resentments that the Revolution has pressurized over the last half century could erupt in political vendettas, infighting over societal restructuring, and strife over the political process.⁴⁶

The MININT forces would lead any crackdown. However, if it failed to quell the uprisings, the FAR could be drawn into direct violence against the Cuban people. This would be unprecedented and could have devastating repercussions for the FAR and the regime. If the FAR did act against the people, it would shatter its reputation as the protector of the people; this would be eerily similar to the Egyptian Army's evolving relations with the Egyptian people. The outcome of a violent upheaval could be tragic for Cubans and threatening to U.S. national interests. Regardless of the outcome, security and stability in post-Castro Cuba would remain at risk if not completely crushed.

At the other end of the regime's risk, time and likelihood spectrums is a slow decay away from Revolutionary socialism. Marxist-Leninist communism's global bankruptcy has not gone unnoticed by Raúl or the rest of the ruling elite. A transition to "Socialism with a Cuban character" seems likely after Fidel's death and will put the

country on a slippery path to liberalization. As discussed above, economic reforms will likely lead the transition. However, as the “proletariats” dependence on the state is displaced by economic self-reliance, so too will the demands for greater political freedom be disengaged from economic dependence. The benefits to Cuba are many, as they are to American national interests.

That said, even if democratization acquires a foothold many problems and risks will remain. The revolution’s profound scars will take long to heal. Similarly to other democracy transitions around the world, reconstruction will have its challenges and travails.⁴⁷ At the same time, these challenges should be more than offset by the long-term advantages that a democratic or “Free Cuba” will enjoy. The most salient is its proximity and extensive legacy of close relations with the world’s sole remaining superpower just to its north. From a resource perspective, Cuba’s extraordinary natural beauty and rich cultural heritage have already proven their desirability in the global tourist market. Also, the Cuban diaspora is a large, wealthy and one of the most politically powerful exile groups in the U.S. It could easily back an informal Marshall Plan for Cuba.⁴⁸ Collectively these advantages promise unprecedented support and capacity for a government that adopts an economically liberal, politically free and tolerant, and rule of law centric society.⁴⁹

U.S. Policy Implications - Defined

As with any foreign policy, analyzing the impact to the United States of a post-Fidel Cuba is best assessed through the most overarching and enduring lens. As the acme of U.S. executive strategic policy, the 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) presents the most appropriate lens through which to look at future U.S. – Cuban policy inferences.

As background, the NSS lays out the strategic approach that guides attainment of U.S. national goals. Within that framework, four “enduring national interests” are articulated as the approach’s cornerstones:

- Security – The safety and security of Americans is salient as the government’s highest priority, though protection of the nation’s allies and partners is also included within this enduring interest.
- Prosperity – As the fountainhead of much of America’s domestic and international strength, its economic vitality must be promoted and fostered.
- Values – Respect for universal values is a crucial key to a country’s legitimacy with its citizenry and around the world, and is a key source of “soft power.”
- International Order – The U.S. acknowledges that its efforts at international “security, prosperity, and universal values” can best be served by “foster(ing) collective actions to confront common challenges.”⁵⁰

Implications: Security

The enduring interests in the NSS are not given explicit prioritization. Yet a closer reading clearly gives domestic and international security salience over the other concerns when it states that there is “...no greater responsibility than protecting the American people. Furthermore, we embrace America’s unique responsibility to promote international security – a responsibility flows from our commitments to allies, our leading role in supporting a just and sustainable international order, and our unmatched military capability.”⁵¹

Throughout the Cold War, Cuba’s biggest threats to U.S. national interests were mainly security concerns. At the zenith of its menace, the GOC infamously brought the

world to the brink of nuclear Armageddon during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Over the protracted Cold War, its alignment with the USSR created very real and very close proxy for the Red menace. Funded by Moscow's largess, Castro even projected military power in support for socialist uprising in Africa and Latin America to the distress of America's western allies.

However, a great deal has changed after the fall of the Soviet Union. Unable to even feed itself, much less extend the socialist revolution beyond its borders, Cuba has become a mere shadow of what it once was. Its military has been hamstrung for more than two decades by the most austere of means. As a result, the FAR has been relegated to little more than a "residual" and "defense" force which poses no security risk to the U.S. or other countries in the hemisphere into the foreseeable future."⁵²

Though its military decline has devastated the island's power projection, it continues to court substitute replacements to past Soviet patronage. Militarily these solicitations epitomize the adage that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." The most obvious candidate is the current country of its old state sponsor, Russia. Over the last few years, relations with Russia have rekindled. While lacking its historic ideological alignment, the longstanding alliance against the U.S. still has significant geo-political appeal to both countries. As recently as 2008, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev visited Havana for those purposes. Later that same year, the Russian Navy made its first port call on the island in several decades. Raúl Castro's reciprocated with a Moscow visit the following year. A closer parallel to the USSR-Cuban alignments, China has also intensified its affairs with the GOC. Also in 2008, Chinese Paramount Lead Hu Jintao visited Cuba. During the visit, the communist countries signed dozens

of agreements including significant Foreign Direct Investments to upgrade the island's oil refining capabilities."⁵³ Finally, Cuban-Iranian relations have significantly intensified over the course of the last decade.⁵⁴ As recently as January 2012, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Raúl Castro during a Latin American tour which U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida aptly called a "tour of tyrants."⁵⁵

A Cuban military capability that all of these countries would certainly like to leverage is Cuban intelligence penetration of the U.S. Because of relatively low cost of the human-centric spying, GOC has grown exceptionally capable in this threat. Brian Latell, a CIA agent who has led Cuban analysis, has affirm just that, "They're one of the best intelligence services in the world... they're comparable in a way to the Israeli intelligence. They're very focused on a couple - one or two very central core issues. They do those missions very, very well."⁵⁶ This threat will endure as long as Cuban and American governments remain adversaries and can only intensify if sufficiently coveted by potential international patrons.

With the prominence given to terrorism in the last three National Security Strategies, Cuba's designation as one of only four "State Sponsors of Terrorism" seems to counter-target it as major threat to the U.S.⁵⁷ The 2010 "Country Report on Terrorism" from the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism revalidated Cuba's inclusion on the list. However, an examination of the justifications brings objectivity into question. While chiefly characterizing the designation as resulting from continued inaction in severing past terrorist organization ties and vocal opposition to U.S. global anti-terrorism efforts, the report does not explain why several offsetting

positive steps against terrorism did not remove the country from the list.⁵⁸ This is an area ripe for future relation improvements without any real increased risk to the U.S.

Outside of these military challenges, scholars, policy-makers and military experts alike judge an uncontrolled mass migration to pose the most serious security threat from Cuba.⁵⁹ Even in the best cases of a Free Cuba, security challenges from migration would remain at the forefront of U.S. concerns.⁶⁰

Past examples have bitten both the Carter and Clinton administrations. 1980's Mariel exodus of over 125,000 refugees and the "rafters" migration of 1994 both stand as ominous examples.⁶¹ Migration agreements brokered by Cuban Vice President, Carlos Lage, and defensive steps taken by U.S. inter-agency offer some amelioration against any new uncontrolled flight. That notwithstanding, another Mariel swarm would certainly trigger a security crisis.⁶² U.S. Ambassador Vicki Huddleston frames the exodus problem in 2010's *Learning to Salsa*:

The scale of future migration is difficult to predict with any certainty and is affected by many factors. The Coast Guard may have modeled scenarios of future migration, but if so, the figures remain classified, as far as we know. The last exodus, in 1994, involved approximately 37,000 Cubans. A future migration could exceed this level. In fact, according to the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American studies, between October 2005 and September 2007, 77,000 Cubans will (have) reached American soil, more than twice the numbers of the 1994 exodus. Today, Homeland Security Task Force Southeast stands poised to deploy *Operation Vigilant Century* in the event of a sudden mass migration.⁶³

Going forward, there are several areas of ongoing security cooperation between the neighboring countries that show promise. The first of these has been recurring meetings between military officers from both countries. Initiated by the commander of the Guantanamo base, General John Sheehan, the military-to-military "fence-line talks" initially provided a venue for both sides to workout practical common concerns

surrounding the base.⁶⁴ Since his retirement, General Sheehan and other retired U.S. military officers expanded the bilateral cooperation to include visits to Havana for discussions on “migration, drug trafficking, operating procedures at the U.S. Naval Base Guantánamo Bay, U.S. military maneuvers, and other regular threats.” The talks reached a surprising high-water mark in 2002 when Cuban military officers advocated for and Raúl Castro pronounced that any Al Qaeda detainees that escaped into Cuba would be returned to the base.⁶⁵ In the absence of any formal diplomatic ties between the countries, these cordial mil-to-mil engagements have proven a form of quiet diplomacy and continue to “lay the groundwork for future cooperation and more peaceful transitions in the U.S.-Cuban relations.”⁶⁶

One change to Guantanamo that offers a simple and bilaterally acknowledged contribution to security will be to shutter the detainee prison. The 2010 NSS recognizes these advantages and commits to closing the prison in order to, “To deny violent extremist one of the most potent recruiting tools...”⁶⁷

The other area where cooperation serves the security interests of both countries is drug interdiction.⁶⁸ Both countries concur on the damage that illicit drugs incurred in terms of societal damage and outright cost. As a result, this was one of the only areas where Fidel Castro was willing to cooperate with the “yanquis.”⁶⁹ The cooperation reached a high point during the 1996 seizure of the Columbian vessel *Limerick* which yielded one of counternarcotics’ biggest cocaine busts.⁷⁰ Since then, the U.S. Coast Guard has maintained a liaison in the American Interest Section in Havana to facilitate and coordinate interdiction (and migration) efforts between the two countries. These

confidence building steps promise to continue to promote national security aspects of both countries well in the post-Castro future.

Implications: Prosperity

Similar to security interests, the 2010 NSS looks both inward as well as to the world when it acknowledges the importance of economic vitality to American interests. Both domestically and abroad, it affirms that the means created from economic growth, innovation and responsibilities are equally as important to the successful as to the disenfranchised: “The United States has an interest in working with our allies to help the world’s poorest countries grow into productive and prosperous economies governed by capable, democratic, and accountable state institutions.”⁷¹

From the Revolution’s beginning, Castro’s attacks on U.S. economic interests have served his anti-American demagoguery and been central to the Revolution’s socialist pedigree. That early nationalization of U.S. enterprises amounted to the theft of foreign direct investment (FDI) with a book value of nearly \$7 billion (in 2011 dollars).⁷² This does not even include the appropriation claims of many Cuban exiles. While decades-long compensation claims will continue to pose a wicked problem for future U.S.-Cuba reconciliations, it will present a most imposing challenge to any future GOC. Though successive socialist regimes will be hard-pressed to come up with the assets or political will to solve the quandary, the problem is not with successful precedence.⁷³ In the other extreme, efforts by a transitional democracy will also be stymied by exiles trying to return to recover appropriated property. While significant economic improvements may be able to table the claims for some time, compensations

issues will have to be resolved before any substantive U.S.–Cuban relations normalization can take root.

America’s “two track” policy for Cuba includes the economic “stick” of sanctions as well as the civic “carrot” of support for the Cuban people.⁷⁴ In this approach, it is unfortunate that common economic benefits are subjugated to the lead of punitive sanction. This simply misses that American national interests are best served by an economically strong and vibrant Cuba. To varying degrees, this is the case for all three proposed scenarios. While it is a foregone conclusion that trade with a Free Cuba would be optimal for both countries, a less-than-democratic but economically liberal GOC would also engender mutually benefits.

For Cuba, the destitute economy can wait no longer. The Cuban Minister of Economy and Planning, Marino Murillo, candidly admitted as much in 2010, “the gigantic paternalistic state can no longer be, because there is no longer a way to maintain it.”⁷⁵ This confession that the country is in ruins was confirmed to be literally true by a University of Miami study which uncovered “that in Havana alone an estimated 300 buildings collapse every year, and that about 100,000 residents there live in unsafe structures. Highways, utilities and sewage systems, water mains, and other critical infrastructure are in advanced stages of disrepair.”⁷⁶

This national disrepair signals an immense latent demand for infrastructure rehabilitation. The magnitude of the need for public goods developments alone is staggering. One estimate assessed the requirements at just over \$8 billion.⁷⁷ FDI at these levels would be most welcomed by U.S. capital and if invested, would help prime the Cuban economic engine.

With economic self-reliance, Cuba could finally wean itself away from the string of anti-American patrons that it has historically courted. The current anti-U.S. dependency is based on Hugo Chávez's political and ideological apprenticeship to Fidel Castro, and Cuba's reciprocal energy parasitism of Venezuela. The former appealed to Fidel Castro's hubris and Chávez's socialist ambitions. In the latter, the GOC received from the South American country approximately 90,000 barrels of the 145,000 per day (BPD) it uses.⁷⁸ Chávez domestically sold this \$3.2 billion annual energy subsidy by pointing to the corps of Cuban medical doctors which displaced Venezuela undeveloped medical profession.

While this relation has worked well for the two caudillos, it appears to be at risk. The removal of Fidel from Cuba's center stage has started to develop cracks in the socialist partnership. Raúl Castro has been cool towards Chávez. Given the opportunity, it's likely that any future GOC would strive to sever its dependence on Venezuela also. But little is certain to substantially change while Cuba's oil reserves amount to only a 17 day supply and Venezuela is its main source of oil.⁷⁹

Just recently there has developed a light at the end of Cuba's energy tunnel. Surveys of offshore hydrocarbon fields may indicate a coming energy windfall. A U.S. Geological Survey approximates that Cuba's northern offshore fields contain upwards of 4.6 billion barrels of oil and 10 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Cuba's oil enterprise, Cubapetroleo or "Cupet," released a (questionably) higher estimate of 20 billion barrels of recoverable crude – levels comparable to U.S. national reserves.⁸⁰ If these fields prove productive, within three to five years Cuba could be producing as much a 350,000 BPD. Assuming the industry standard 60-40 split in production-sharing agreements

with foreign oil companies, this would make Cuba energy self-sufficient for the first time in its history.⁸¹ But oil and gas are not the only energy prospects for the country. A joint venture in sugarcane production with Brazil could reclaim up to 1 million hectares of sugar fields and convert the crop into a \$2.3 billion annual ethanol harvest. Combined with a fully operational oil industry, Cuba's GDP could increase \$3-5 billion annually from the energy boom.⁸² This economic windfall in conjunction with the prerequisite market transparencies required for supporting FDI would help eliminate its "dependency on a single-source provider of subsidies" and allow it to economically flourish⁸³

Cuba's new energy wealth could present a win-win opportunity for both itself and the U.S. For the U.S., Cuban offshore oil and gas FDI represent a number of openings,

...first, if U.S. and other reputable companies are involved in Cuba's offshore oil development it would reduce Cuba's dependence on Venezuela for two thirds of its oil imports. Second, it is preferable that U.S. oil companies with high standards of transparency develop the resources rather than, for example, Russia's notoriously corrupt oligarchy. Third, U.S. influence in Cuba is likely to increase if U.S. companies have an economic relationship on the ground. Fourth, U.S. companies have the technology and expertise to develop Cuban offshore oil and gas.⁸⁴

Another major market where U.S.-Cuban cooperation promises mutual benefits are biomedical and pharmaceutical industries. With similar rates of major diseases (e.g. cancer and diabetes) the common benefits would be more than just economic. Long proud of its "first world" medical research and training, the GOC has touted an advanced medical capacity. While Cuban Democracy Act restrictions on medicines have impeded cooperation historically, there have been some recent instances of innovation partnering. A notable example was the U.S. Treasury's 2004 permission for CancerVax, a California biotechnology company, to conduct clinical trials and license a group of experimental cancer drugs that originated in Cuba.⁸⁵

Finally, the importance of tourism in Cuba's present and future vitality has to be recognized. This inexhaustible resource was the natural economic kernel that Fidel allowed to introduce market forces into the country. Since then, it has proven a reliable and much needed source of western currency. That said, tourism's contributions to the economy have not been without societal downsides.⁸⁶ The solution for many of those problems is already inherent in the liberalization of the associated labor markets. Those labor markets if unleashed would resolve the incompatibilities caused by parsing a free market sectors in a command economy.

Cuba and America have a broad swath of common economic opportunities that would improve both of their interests. Raúl Castro and any follow-on GOC (especially the military "kleptocracy") have a great deal to gain by recognizing and acting on the same wisdom of President Bill Clinton's famous campaign barbs, "It's the economy stupid!" Across Asia, Russian, and even democratic Latin America, "somewhere between 40% and 50% of people said that they would prefer an authoritarian regime (i.e. less democracy), if they could have a better standard of living."⁸⁷ It definitely is the economy. The U.S. understands this in spades and any future GOC denies it at their own peril.⁸⁸

Implications: Values

The promotion of liberal values has been implicit in U.S. policy towards Cuba since the island's war of independence. More recently American commitment to the pursuit of those values was codified into law by CDA and Helms-Burton. These declarations of solidarity with the Cuban people will persist as long as the civic "carrot" of the two-track is working towards a Free Cuba. Specifically, these "certain universal

values” include freedom of speech, assembly, worship, and self-determination, as well as “dignity, tolerance, and equality among all people, and the fair and equitable administration of justice.”⁸⁹

Similar to both security and prosperity interests, it goes without question that a Free Cuba is the best poised to allow the attainment of liberal values. However, this is not the case for either of the proposed succession scenarios. Authoritarian governments are diametrically opposed to liberal values. Because the GOC’s survival is contingent on the subjugation of its people, the vexing problems then becomes finding leverage points to effect at least marginal political change.

The promotion of those U.S. values has long been opposed by several longstanding Cuban phenomena. First, any gain of political power (i.e. freedoms and liberties) by the populous must not be perceived as a zero-sum gain by the government. Like all despotic rulers, survival is paramount. Also, the tried and true scapegoating of U.S. sanctions remains an effective redirection from the true root causes of Cuba’s ails: incompetent government. Finally, a national deference to the tattered but persistent romance of Fidel’s egalitarian mirage has proven a tenacious distraction.

One approach to creating political space for advancing liberal values would be persuading a totalitarian government that it has excess political capital which if invested it could pay large societal dividends. The central assumption is that once the populous are “reminded” of freedom’s salience, their demand for it can only grow. To some degree, this process may have already begun with the post-Fidel string of political prisoner releases including thousands imprisoned for the repressively expedient crime of “dangerousness.”⁹⁰ Unfortunately, U.S. opportunities to politically exploit these

releases were never pursued. The most recent release was complicated by Cuba's imprisonment of USAID worker Alan Gross. Leveraging such opportunities for reciprocity will remain critical to engendering the promotion of desired values in solidarity with the Cuban people and American interests.

The second major hurdle to values liberalization, scapegoating the U.S., has already been dealt a severe blow by Fidel Castro's physical decline. Raúl, by all accounts, lack the vision and charisma to sell the increasingly untenable rhetoric to the Cuban people. It would be miraculous if another caudillo-in-waiting were able to duplicate the charismatic and populist support that such a tired excuse would require. It's therefore probable that without an extreme misjudgment by the U.S., this "weapon of mass distraction" will follow the fate of its master.

This same biological solution hastens Cubans dissatisfaction with government incompetence and corruption. The two-thirds of the island's population were born after 1959 and one in six have only known the post-Special Period austerity. Because these younger generations have no direct ties to causes of the Revolution and have only known its ravages, they are prone to be less loyal and even disillusioned.⁹¹ When the mirage of the revolutionary egalitarianism and its lead magicians are but a distant dream, only the nightmares of batons, guns and prison bars remain to suppress the their rights. As the only country in the Western hemisphere whose per capita caloric intake has decline over the last 50 years, that same majority must find the urgency to reject the empty substitutes of Revolutionary rhetoric.⁹² While the U.S. does have an irreplaceable role in promoting a Free Cuba, only the island's people can successfully break their shackles and finally rejoin the free global community.⁹³

Implications: International Order

U.S. National Security Strategies have long recognized that leveraging a “just and sustainable international order” is pivotal to maintaining the country’s global leadership role. In that construct, partner countries are developed and supported, but rogue nations must also be isolated. The latest NSS espouses as much in its Strategic Approach where it states, “When nations breach agreed international norms, the countries who espouse those norms must be convinced to bed together to enforce them.”⁹⁴ Specific to Cuba, U.S. interests are consistent with those assigned to the Americas and more specifically that, “...we will work in equal partnership, advance economic and social inclusion, safeguard citizen safety and security, promote clean energy, and defend universal values of the people of the hemisphere.”⁹⁵

Unlike the policy implications above, the major hurdle to this interest does not come from any continuation of the GOC, but from the rest of the world. International opposition to the perceived fairness and effectiveness of the economic sanctions has long posed an obstacle for U.S. policy. In the global scale, the problem is epitomized by the twenty consecutive years of near unanimous UN General Assembly resolution votes against the embargo.⁹⁶ More regionally, Spain and other European Union partners have strongly pushed to loosen sanctions. The arguments are straightforward and pragmatic, “since sanctions in place have not worked, it makes more sense to do things that would work, and (the next obvious one is to) change things.”⁹⁷ Even more locally, Cuba has managed to generally retain positive feelings among the people of Latin American in spite of the country’s domestic realities.⁹⁸ The rise of Raúl and any subsequent successions further complicated the problem of mustering international consensus. Several countries in the hemisphere see any new Cuban leadership as fresh

opportunities to engage in common interests. The two largest Latin American countries, Brazil and Mexico, have both ascribed to this approach and have indicated their interests in forging new ties since Fidel's stepped down.⁹⁹

On the other hand, this international dissention does hold some prospect for leveraging U.S. soft power. An indirect approach would be to coordinate U.S. proxy actions with partner countries interested in Cuba. This has the double benefit of leveraging U.S. soft power without compromising legislated restrictions or provoking hard-line Cuban-American ire. In this approach, burgeoning relations with Brazil and Mexico would be strong candidates. Devoid of the "bullhorn diplomacy" that have marginalized U.S.-Cuban policy efficacy for decades, the U.S. could better engage the island through hemispherical interlocutors. At a minimum, U.S. interests would be advanced through the proxy insights of what is occurring on the island in addition to the potential displacement of anti-American influences (e.g. Chávez).¹⁰⁰

Another potential gain for U.S. interests would be to upgrade its diplomatic presence on the island. For decades, the countries have reciprocated diplomacy marginalization with low-level "interest sections" in each other capitals. The fallback reasoning for the U.S. has always been that it did not want to appear to reward the GOC's legitimacy with an embassy. This is myopic and inconsistent. The national strategy clearly promotes engagement in order to "learn about the intentions and nature of closed regimes, and to plainly demonstrate to the public within those nations that their governments are to blame for their isolations."¹⁰¹ Additionally, the diplomatic level is inconsistent with the longstanding U.S. accreditation of ambassadors to both friendly and hostile governments.¹⁰² An embassy in Cuba could support critical awareness and

engagements. In the event of an opportunity or crisis, this presence could be the difference between knowing where, when, and with whom to act or just watching from across the Florida Straits.

Recommendations

In conjunction with the implication listed above, there has opened up a new, if fleeting, palette of options for near-term U.S.-Cuban relations. The starting point of many of these new opportunities was Castro's removal from center stage. His brother's subsequent pragmatic politics have thankfully added to the time window. Short of a Cuban Spring surprise, these policy implications equally apply to any non-democratic GOC succession. That said, the time for action is as fleeting as it is auspicious. Across the range of policy implication any dithering could withdraw an extraordinary chance to strategically move forward U.S. objectives.

One aspect of time-sensitive security concern not already mentioned is military backing. As of this report, Cuba has not yet secured the military sponsorship that would return it to its Cold war prominence. While China, Russia, and Iran have all been courted, no substantive patronage has materialized. It would be imprudent to think that unconditional military sponsorship would be the only possibility. News speculations of China reestablishing an old Soviet intelligence outpost on the island never materializing but nonetheless stand as an ominous warning to what could be a first step to such an alliance.

The paramount drivers of these short-lived opportunities are economic in nature. With those, the current period before Cuba taps its substantial oil and gas reserves may be defining the last real chance for the sanctions to have their desired effect. Once the hydrocarbons and the resulting hard currencies are flowing, the island will be freed from

many of the economic concession it has had to make to survive. A vibrant petro-economy will directly undercut any hope for future sanction efficacy.

Domestically, the traditional third rail of Cuban-America politics has also just recently been de-energized. Historically the exile community has been a bulwark against any Cuba policy that loosened universal values attainment. However, a major poll of registered Cuban-American voters in 2008 reflected a reshuffling of priorities. The Florida International University poll showed for that first time since polling began, the majority of respondents favored normalization of diplomatic relations with the island.¹⁰³ Even many in the older and more hard-line generations have broken with “first wave conservatives.”¹⁰⁴ This shift of collective opinions points to a new perspective that attainment of those values has to come from within the country and the U.S.’s role is best played through “engagement with Cuba in order to help the Cuban people create the conditions for democratic change from within.”¹⁰⁵

Finally, U.S. international legitimacy and influence have a great deal to gain from a more inclusive and less unilateral approach. U.S. retort to U.N. anti-embargo resolutions that bilateral relations are exempt from General Assembly scrutiny have had longstanding blowback. This rhetoric has historically undercut American’s legitimacy and wasted political capital on this central world stage. Outside of New York City and across the globe, decades-long sanctions against the island have netted few if any national objectives, all the while depleting substantial national soft power. The cost-benefit analysis to U.S. national foreign policy will remain exceedingly unfavorable, if not outright counter-productive.

Conclusion

The post-Fidel decade is stacking up to be a time of historic change for the people of Cuba. The first change in the regime's leadership in almost a half century has already started to bring improvements to the liberty and literally starved Cuban people. In this and the near-term, the U.S. must aggressively exploit these historic opportunities with all national elements of power. The pursuit of enduring interests as they apply to its neighbor just across the Florida Straits are very much back in play.

However, the window to effect change is likely fleeting. If the GOC establishes sufficient patronage or obtains economic independence, it may become truly impervious to the American economic, moral, or international influence. In this worst of scenarios, that indifference would shift achievement of national security interests even further away at the very time when they were most attainable. Worst yet, the greatest ally of the Cuban people will have let them down from an inability to act prudently and decisively. Across the American identity, that failure will have reverberation well beyond its policy towards a small island just to the south. Sadly, the insanity will have won the day.

Endnotes

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¹³ Gonzalez, Edward, *After Castro: Alternatives Regimes and U.S. Policy* (Coral Gables, FL: Cuban Transition Project, 2002), 1.

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¹⁷ *Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996*, Public Law 104-114, 104th Congress, Second Session, (January 3, 1996).

¹⁸ Peters, *A Policy towards Cuba*, 11.

¹⁹ Hillyard, Mick, and Vaughne Miller, *Cuba and Helms-Burton Act* (London, United Kingdom: House of Commons Library, 14 December, 1998), 28-38.

²⁰ Sullivan, *Cuba: Issues for the 112th Congress*, 18.

²¹ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies at University of Miami, *Conference Proceedings – Transition from Communism: Lessons Learned, Challenges Ahead for Cuba* (Coral Gables, FL: Cuban Transition Project, November 2004), 16.

²² *Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act*, Section 3.

²³ Sullivan, *Cuba: Issues for the 112th Congress*, 4.

²⁴ Ibid., 5-6.

²⁵ “The Start of a Long, Slow Goodbye,” *The Economist*, April 20, 2011, <http://www.economist.com/node/18586776> (accessed December 7, 2011).

²⁶ Concurring opinions include ex-CIA Cuba-desk analyst and author of *After Castro*, Brian Latell, Council of Foreign Affairs (CFA) Cuba expert and author, Julia E. Sweig, U.S. Ambassador and co-author of *Learning to Salsa*, Vicki Huddleston, and Congressional Research Service (CRS) Cuba expert, Mark Sullivan to name a notable few.

²⁷ Huddleston, Vicki and Carlos Pascual, *Learning to Salsa: New Steps in U.S.-Cuba Relations* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2010), 100.

²⁸ Llana, Sarah M., “For Cubans, new property rights – and the return of an old anxiety,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 20, 2011. By November 2011, the economic reforms were starting to add up across the Cuba. Electronics, cell phones, new cars, and other luxury items previously prohibited could be purchased legally – if citizens had the funds. Advertisements were starting to crop up everywhere for salon owners, stonemason, home-based restaurants, barbers, other recently licensed self-employed. However, the most seismic and far-reaching change in the Cuban economy was housing reform under which real estate could be bought, sold, or passed on to family members. In the aggregate these first reforms had significant positive effects on Cubans confidence in a country.

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³⁷ The Ministry of the Interior (MININT), the paramilitary Territorial Troop Militia (MTT), Youth Labor Army (EJT), and the Naval Militia are all subordinate to the FAR.

³⁸ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 44.

³⁹ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁰ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 174.

⁴¹ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 29.

⁴² Ibid., 33.

⁴³ Ibid., 45.

⁴⁴ Anti-Castro U.S. legislation and regulations include derivative action from the Trading with the Enemy Act, CDA, Helms-Burton Act, and Cuban Assets Control Regulations.

⁴⁵ U.S. Senate, *Staff Trip Report*, 3.

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http://ctp.iccas.miami.edu/website_documents/Challenges.pdf, (accessed December 28, 2011).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 44.

⁴⁹ Suchlicki, "Challenges to a Post-Castro Cuba."

⁵⁰ Obama, Barack, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), 40.

⁵¹ Ibid., 17.

⁵² Peters, *A Policy towards Cuba*, 3; Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 142.

⁵³ Sullivan, *Cuba: Issues for the 112th Congress*, 15.

⁵⁴ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 52.

⁵⁵ Oppmann, Patricia, "Ahmadinejad: Why does U.S. punish Iranians, Cubans?," *CNN News*, January 12, 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/01/11/world/americas/cuba-ahmadinejad/index.html>, (assessed January 12, 2012).

⁵⁶ "Book TV: Brain Latell."

⁵⁷ U.S. Department of States, Officer of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2010*, 149, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/170479.pdf> (assessed December 16, 2011). The 2010 State Sponsors of Terrorism include Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Iran.

⁵⁸ Ibid. The report indicates on page 149 that to be designated a State Sponsor of Terrorism, "the Secretary of State must determine that the government of such country has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism." In the section on Cuba, it goes on to indicate that the country "maintains a public stance against terrorism and terrorist

financing in 2010,” has “allowed Spanish Police... to confirm the presences of suspect ETA (Basque Fatherland and Liberty terrorist) members,” and even allowed U.S. “Transportation Security Administration (TSA) representative to conduct a series of airport security visits throughout the island.” The passive nature of the triggering attribute seems at odds with the designating criteria.

⁵⁹ Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 144.

⁶⁰ Suchlicki, “Challenges to a Post-Castro Cuba,” under “Labor Woes, Racism and the Rule of Law and Migrations.” Projections from current rates of U.S. visa requests predict that upwards of two million Cubans would permanently relocate to the U.S. and another half million would come as tourist and attempt to stay as illegal aliens. This does not include those claimed as relatives by U.S. citizens.

⁶¹ Latell, Brian, “The United States and Cuba: Future Security Issues,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, (Winter 2000), 88.

⁶² Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 137.

⁶³ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 37.

⁶⁴ Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 140.

⁶⁵ Latell, *After Cuba*, 246.

⁶⁶ Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 141.

⁶⁷ Obama, Barack, *National Security Strategy*, 22.

⁶⁸ Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 141.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Obama, *National Security Strategy*, 33.

⁷² Leland, *U.S. Business Interests in Cuba*, 4.

⁷³ Peters, *A Policy towards Cuba*, 12. If it was in Cuba’s interest, all the 5911 certified U.S. claimants could be compensated with partial recompense similarly to other settlements the U.S. has reached.

⁷⁴ Sullivan, *Cuba: Issues for the 112th Congress*, 18.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷⁶ Latell, *After Cuba*, 241.

⁷⁷ Betancourt, *The Role of the State*, 27. The \$8 billion estimate for Cuban public goods infrastructure repairs includes: \$2.1 in telecommunications, \$1.8 billion in highways, \$1.5 billion in utilities, \$1.4 billion in railroads, and \$1.3 in sewage treatment

⁷⁸ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 80.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 81.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 196.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸⁵ Ziegler, *U.S.-Cuban Cooperation*, 150.

⁸⁶ Latell, *After Castro*, 24. As a rare source of hard currency revenues in the Cuba, the availability of Euros and U.S. Dollars in tourism have had unexpected and deleterious second and third order effects. Drug and vice crimes have soared. The trends show that Cubans have left traditional professions for the lucrative pursuit of hustling foreigners for hard currency. In a strange inversion, "Dr's and physicist drive taxis. Unemployed scientists and engineers wait tables for tips... What good is degree, many youth ask, when there are few jobs and tens or hundreds times more than government wage can be made by providing services to foreigners?"

⁸⁷ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 51.

⁸⁸ U.S. Senate Staff, *Changing Cuba Policy*, 4. For details, see trip report's "Popular dissatisfaction with Cuba's economic situation is the regime's vulnerability" section.

⁸⁹ Obama, Barack, *National Security Strategy*, 35.

⁹⁰ Valdes, Tania, "More than 2,500 freed in Cuba amnesty: rights group," *Chicago Tribune*, December 27, 2011. In 2010, a deal brokered with the Catholic Church acquired the release of 130 political prisoners. Most recently, the December 2011 amnesty of 2,900 prisoners included five "prisoners of conscience" by the account of the independent Cuban Commission on Human Rights.

⁹¹ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 121.

⁹² Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 59.

⁹³ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 39. As suggested in *Learning to Salsa*, a public statement from the U.S. administration that reads as follow could be an important strategic communication: "The Cuban people deserve to be free. This is an opportunity for the people in these dishes a Cuba to move towards fully engaging the country in the international community. We reaffirm the current policy is ready to work with other members of the organization of

American states to develop relationships with Cuba based on the principles of mutual respect, national self-determination, institutional democracy, and the rule of law."

⁹⁴ Obama, Barack, *National Security Strategy*, 13.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁹⁶ Stogel, Stuart, "UN Resolution condemning embargo against Cuba passes once again," *The Miami Herald*, October 26, 2011. The most recent UN General Assembly vote (on October 26, 2011) passed by 182 to 2 (with three abstentions) condemning the embargo. The only two "no" votes were predictably from the United States and Israel. Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands abstained.

⁹⁷ Institute for Cuba and Cuban-American Studies, 64.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁹⁹ Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 40.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Obama, Barack, *National Security Strategy*, 11. The NSS assigns engagement importance for its ability to, "create opportunities to resolve differences, strengthen the international community's support for our actions, learn about the intentions of and nature of closed regimes and plainly demonstrate to the public within those nations that their governments are to blame for their isolations."

¹⁰² Huddleston, *Learning to Salsa*, 215.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

