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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION

June 9, 1995

95 JUN 9 A8:58

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ANTHONY LARA ✓
PATRICK GRIFFIN 98

SUBJECT:

Response to Congressional Letter on Migration
Agreement with Cuba

Purpose

To respond to a letter from several members of Congress on the recent migration agreement with Cuba.

Background

Several members of the House Committee on International Relations have written to criticize your recent decision on migration policy towards Cuba. They have asked for the suspension of its implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the attached letters.

Attachments

Tab A Response to Congressional letter
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

AP

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Representative Burton:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

With regard to my Administration's recent migration decisions, I firmly believe they are in our national interest. As you know, the situation at Guantanamo posed serious humanitarian, safety and financial difficulties. The potential for violent unrest, combined with the cost of administering the safehaven and the personal toll indefinite presence in the camp was taking on the Cuban migrants, required us to take action. My Administration's challenge was to resolve this problem without encouraging a new, uncontrolled outflow from Cuba.

I concluded that the only way to forestall such a massive and dangerous exodus was to signal our determination to put an end to illegal migration from Cuba while at the same time maintaining expanded opportunities for legal admission. This course of action required that the United States build on the September 1994 agreement to further regularize U.S.-Cuban migration relations. The May 2 agreement meets these objectives.

The steps we have taken offer a humanitarian solution for Cuban migrants at Guantanamo, ensure the integrity of our borders and, by discouraging irregular and unsafe departures, will save human lives. At the same time, we will continue to admit at least 20,000 Cubans from Cuba every year, and we will provide protection for genuine political refugees.

My decision not to disclose the talks was based on a concern for safety. Any rumor was likely to trigger a massive exodus of rafters trying to anticipate any new Cuban-U.S. migration agreement. The ensuing panic might well have resulted in significant loss of life, both at Guantanamo and on the high seas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

The Honorable Dan Burton
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1406

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Peter:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

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Sincerely,

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The Honorable Peter Deutsch
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0919

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Representative Diaz-Balart:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Honorable Lincoln Diaz-Balart
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3519

THE WHITE HOUSE

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Dear Representative King:

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The Honorable Peter T. King
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-2901

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rin", with a stylized, cursive script.

The Honorable Robert Menendez
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-4312

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Representative Ros-Lehtinen:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0304

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Representative Smith:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bill" and last name "Clinton" clearly legible.

The Honorable Christopher H. Smith
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3810

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill", written in a cursive style.

The Honorable Robert G. Torricelli
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, NEW YORK
CHAIRMAN

WILLIAM F. GOODLING, PENNSYLVANIA
JAMES A. LEACH, IOWA
TOBY ROTH, WISCONSIN
HENRY J. HYDE, ILLINOIS
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CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, NEW JERSEY
DAN BURTON, INDIANA
JAN MEYERS, KANSAS
ELTON GALLEGLY, CALIFORNIA
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA
CASS BALLENGER, NORTH CAROLINA
DANA ROHRBACHER, CALIFORNIA
DONALD A. MANZULLO, ILLINOIS
EDWARD R. ROYCE, CALIFORNIA
PETER T. KING, NEW YORK
JAY KIM, CALIFORNIA
SAM BROWNBACK, KANSAS
DAVID FUNDERBURK, NORTH CAROLINA
STEVEN J. CHABOT, OHIO
MARSHALL "MARK" SANFORD, SOUTH CAROLINA
MATT SALMON, ARIZONA
AMO HOUGHTON, NEW YORK

RICHARD J. GARON
CHIEF OF STAFF

One Hundred Fourth Congress

Congress of the United States

Committee on International Relations

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 1995

LEE H. HAMILTON, INDIANA
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER

SAM GEJDENSON, CONNECTICUT
TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA
ROBERT G. TORRICELLI, NEW JERSEY
HOWARD L. BERMAN, CALIFORNIA
GARY L. ACKERMAN, NEW YORK
HARRY JOHNSTON, FLORIDA
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK
ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, AMERICAN SAMOA
MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA
DONALD M. PAYNE, NEW JERSEY
ROBERT E. ANDREWS, NEW JERSEY
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY, GEORGIA
ALCEE L. HASTINGS, FLORIDA
ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN, MARYLAND
MICHAEL R. MCNULTY, NEW YORK
JAMES P. MORAN, VIRGINIA
VICTOR O. FRAZER, VIRGIN ISLANDS (IND.)

MICHAEL H. VAN DUSEN
DEMOCRATIC CHIEF OF STAFF

William J. Clinton
The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to you to express our deepest dismay and disappointment over the Administration's recent decision to reverse U.S. immigration policy towards Cuba, as well as over the manner in which that decision was reached. We are extremely concerned that this step signals the beginning of a process of normalization of relations with Cuba; a process that we here in the Congress will vigorously and firmly resist.

There are several aspects of this policy shift that are extremely troubling to us. First and foremost, we are appalled that a decision of this magnitude was arrived at without any consultation with relevant Members of Congress. It is inconceivable that Members of the House International Relations Committee and other interested Members should learn of the Administration's actions in such a critical and sensitive area after the fact. A policy arrived at and implemented in such a fashion cannot have any legitimacy.

We are also extremely upset over the secret negotiations carried out with Castro's Cuba by the Administration. Members of Congress were under the clear and distinct impression that the only official channel of communication with the Castro regime was through the New York talks set up after last year's immigration crisis. The high level talks with Cuba set a very bad precedent and sent a very unfortunate signal that relations with Cuba are creeping towards normalization.

Most repugnant is the notion that the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard will be collaborating and cooperating with the authorities of a vicious communist dictatorship in forcibly returning freedom-seeking people to the clutches of the very same repressive police state. We see no possible way that U.S. authorities can adequately monitor and vouch for the safety of those people returned to Cuba. Furthermore, we are concerned over the possibility that Fidel Castro could exert pressure upon you by threatening to execute or otherwise harm any of the returning refugees.

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35 MAY 17 1995

We are certain you do not need to be reminded that Cuba is one of the most notorious rogue states in the world today. Under Fidel Castro, Cuba occupies a prominent place on three abominable lists: those of the states engaged in terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and horrible violations of human rights. In Cuba today, attempting to leave the country without authorization is still considered a criminal offense, punishable by a harsh prison term. Castro's violations of human rights are well known and well documented. The United Nation Human Rights Commission, Amnesty International, and our own State Department's Human Rights Report, among others, provide ample detailed and chilling evidence of these crimes against humanity.

It strains every notion of propriety and moral sense to envision the United States of America, the world's beacon of freedom, handing refugees over to such a regime.

At a time when it is more crucial than ever to tighten the noose around the neck of the Castro regime, the Administration appears to be doing precisely the opposite. This ominous policy shift, as well as the Administration's failure to endorse the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1995, are bound to be perceived as steps towards the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba. Such a perception will be extremely demoralizing to the Cuban people and extremely damaging to the cause of promoting freedom in Cuba. The anguished, negative reaction we have witnessed in recent days in the Cuban-American community is a small indication of the deep frustration and disappointment felt not only in that community, but among lovers of freedom everywhere.

We therefore urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to suspend the implementation of the new policy towards Cuba until Congress is adequately consulted, and until the implications of the policy can be adequately assessed.

Sincerely yours,

Don Burton

R. T. Tull

Michael Diaz-Vazquez

Pete King

Peter Deutsch

Glenn Ros-Lehtinen

John D. Dingell

Glenn Smith

*Please
Staff*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 17, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR ANDREW SENS
NSC Executive Secretariat

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY *SB*

SUBJECT: Presidential Correspondence

Attached are copies of letters sent to the President from various members of Congress. Since these letters address national security issues, we would appreciate your assistance in having drafts written.

Thank you very much for your assistance. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Jocelyn Jolley at x7500.

The following is a brief description of each letter:

- 1) Fred Heineman (R-NC), concerning the executive order barring U.S. trade with Iran;
- 2) Dan Burton (R-IN), Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), and six others concerning the U.S. immigration policy towards Cuba;
- 3) Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), concerning the executive order barring U.S. trade with Iran; and
- 4) Charles Robb (D-VA), concerning the White House Conference on Trade and Investment in Ireland.

Attachments

10/9
(date)

5 NSC PACKAGE 5

RM:

TOPP Stern

OK FOR SIGNATURE PER ~~JOHN~~ PODESTA

RETURN ALL LETTER(S) AND ORIGINAL MEMO(S) TO PODESTA'S OFFICE.

Shw
(Initials)

E -

These were signed &
returned Friday night
~~This is TOP SECRET~~
~~File on TOP~~
Thank
Mike

CS

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 9, 1995

Dear Representative Burton:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

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Sincerely,

Bill Clinton A

The Honorable Dan Burton
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1406

950612

THE WHITE HOUSE

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The Honorable Peter Deutsch
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0919

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Bill Clinton ^A

The Honorable Lincoln Diaz-Balart
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House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-2901

850612

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1995

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

With regard to my Administration's recent migration decisions, I firmly believe they are in our national interest. As you know, the situation at Guantanamo posed serious humanitarian, safety and financial difficulties. The potential for violent unrest, combined with the cost of administering the safehaven and the personal toll indefinite presence in the camp was taking on the Cuban migrants, required us to take action. My Administration's challenge was to resolve this problem without encouraging a new, uncontrolled outflow from Cuba.

I concluded that the only way to forestall such a massive and dangerous exodus was to signal our determination to put an end to illegal migration from Cuba while at the same time maintaining expanded opportunities for legal admission. This course of action required that the United States build on the September 1994 agreement to further regularize U.S.-Cuban migration relations. The May 2 agreement meets these objectives.

The steps we have taken offer a humanitarian solution for Cuban migrants at Guantanamo, ensure the integrity of our borders and, by discouraging irregular and unsafe departures, will save human lives. At the same time, we will continue to admit at least 20,000 Cubans from Cuba every year, and we will provide protection for genuine political refugees.

My decision not to disclose the talks was based on a concern for safety. Any rumor was likely to trigger a massive exodus of rafters trying to anticipate any new Cuban-U.S. migration agreement. The ensuing panic might well have resulted in significant loss of life, both at Guantanamo and on the high seas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Menendez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honorable Robert Menendez
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-4312

950612

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1995

Dear Representative Ros-Lehtinen:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

Bill Clinton ^A

The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0304

950612

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1995

Dear Representative Smith:

Thank you for your letter on United States policy toward Cuba.

My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

Bill Clinton ^A

The Honorable Christopher H. Smith
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3810

950612

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1995

Dear Bob:

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My Administration's policy is clear and remains rooted in the Cuban Democracy Act. We will maintain the economic embargo to pressure the Castro regime to reform. We are prepared to respond to significant political and economic change with carefully calibrated steps. And we are committed to a vigorous pursuit of Track II of the Act, which enables us to strengthen Cuba's fledgling civil society.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill Clinton", with a small "A" written above the "l" in "Clinton".

The Honorable Robert G. Torricelli
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

950612

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ID 9503919

REFERRAL

DATE: 12 JUN 95

MEMORANDUM FOR: WH STRIPPING DESK

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: TO: BURTON, DAN

SOURCE: PRESIDENT

DATE: 09 JUN 95

SUBJ: RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL LTR ON MIGRATION AGREEMENT W/ CUBA

REQUIRED ACTION: FOR DISPATCH

DUE DATE: 13 JUN 95

COMMENT:

FOR



JOHN W. FICKLIN

NSC RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICE