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Cuba's revolution continues

By James Cox
USA TODAY

HAVANA — When he's not shouting "Socialism or death!" Fidel Castro is often in the company of star-struck foreign investors, presenting them with robust Trinidad cigars made exclusively for him.

When he's not denouncing Cuban-Americans as "worms" and traitors, he's looking for ways to get them to send more money to friends and relatives they left behind. And when he's not leveling another blast at U.S. "imperialism," Cuba's leader is fine-tuning an economy that is utterly dependent on the hated "Yanqui" dollar.

Forty years after its Jan. 1, 1959, revolution, the commandante's socialist paradise is mired in poverty and bound up in contradictions. It is reliant in equal

MOVES OPPOSED, 6A

measure on a diet of dollars and the ongoing propaganda value of a credible threat from the U.S. government.

The Clinton administration on Tuesday unveiled measures intended to ease Cuba's 37 years of U.S.-imposed economic isolation. It hopes to undercut Castro's ability to use the United States as a bogeyman and, at the same time, expose the schizophrenia of a regime that sustains itself with a mix of socialist rhetoric and limited market reforms.

The contradictions in Castro's Cuba are not lost on its 11 million people.

"The reality is that the (U.S. economic) blockade has become a pretext for everything he does," says Jesus Trujillo, a university administrator in Havana. "It would be fabulous if the U.S. took the blockade away. Then Fidel wouldn't have a way to justify what's happening here. It would be a chance for us to demonstrate to our president that our problems are internal."

The biggest problem faced by Cubans is that their government pays them in pesos and charges them in dollars.

The dollar was legalized in 1993, when the Cuban economy was close to collapse. The Soviet Union, Cuba's biggest trading partner, had disintegrated, and the government needed hard currency to pay its bills.

Today, the peso is worth little. Cubans redeem them for only a half bottle of cooking oil, 5 pounds of rice and four eggs each month — when they're available.

Cubans must buy even their basics — soap, gasoline, pork, clothes — from state-owned dollar stores. They swap pesos for dollars — 20 for 1 — at go-

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Study in contrast: Cubans push a bike loaded with produce past a billboard featuring Fidel Castro and the words "Long live the revolution," in Havana.



Tearful reunion: A Cuban-American man, center, visits his family in Havana in November after the ban was lifted on direct flights to Cuba from the USA.

Restrictions eased

President Clinton eased the U.S. embargo against Cuba Tuesday. The new measures allow:

- Any U.S. resident, not just family members, to send money to Cubans
- Food and supplies from the USA to be sold to restaurants and farmers.
- Direct mail service.
- Charter flights between cities other than Havana and Miami.
- The Baltimore Orioles to play the Cuban national baseball team in March

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CONT...

Economic stranglehold stifles Cuba

Continued from 1B

vernment banks.

The average Cuban salary ranges from \$7.50 to \$12 a month, and the average pension is about \$3 a month. Castro's dollarization policy has tended to reward the most suspect of Cubans — those whose relatives fled to the USA and now send money back to family members.

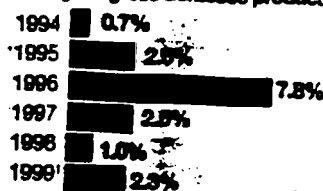
Remittances from Cuban exiles could total as much as \$1.2 billion a year. That would make handouts Cuba's second-largest source of foreign exchange after tourism.

Most of the money comes from Cuban-Americans, who are allowed to send back no more than \$1,200 a

Economy on rebound

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 cost Cuba billions in Soviet aid and eliminated the island nation's biggest market. The Cuban economy shrank 35% from 1989 through 1993, then started growing.

Change in gross domestic product



1 - estimate
Source: Cuban government, USA TODAY research

USA TODAY

"We are on an island, and we don't eat fish," grumbles a cabbie named Umberto.

Cuba kept most foreign investors at arm's length until 1995. Today, there are 350 joint ventures in areas such as hotels, telecommunications, oil and gas exploration, and mining. Foreign investment, a paltry \$80 million only three years ago, climbed to roughly \$550 million in 1998.

Foreign companies still can't legally own land or buy factories. Nor can they hire and pay employees directly.

Indeed, foreign business people complain that Cuba has priced its workers off the market by demanding high wages and benefits not found even in developed countries.

The government's development strategy largely ignores manufacturing — Cuba makes few finished products for export — in favor of an expanding tourism industry.

With the USA, its biggest potential market, off limits, the government has decided that "hotels are cheaper than factories," says Havana economist Omar Everleny-Perez.

Cuba, which hosted only 100,000 visitors in 1990, drew 1.5 million last year and expects 7 million in 2010, even if the U.S. embargo remains.

The European, Canadian and Mexican tourists who have flocked to Cuba in recent years have given the economy a welcome lift. Prices for Cuba's main exports — sugar and nickel — have fallen to 10-year and 11-year lows, respectively.

The best way to safeguard the revolution is to proceed with a cautious, controlled opening that keeps most assets in the hands of the state and most Cubans on the state payroll, says Alfredo Casanova, vice minister of economy and planning.

Otherwise, Cubans would lose the income equality and universal access to health care and education that are Castro's proudest achievements, he says. "Cuba will not introduce a market economy. ... We don't want to abandon the cause of social justice."

Cuban officials are defiant when asked if the U.S. could topple Cuba's socialist system by lifting the embargo.

"We've never had one peaceful moment to prove our case," says Carlos Fernandez de Cossia, a U.S. specialist in Cuba's foreign ministry. "We are ready to take the challenge. If people on the street say the embargo is an excuse to cover the shortcomings of socialism, lift it and let's see."

COVER STORY

year but in many cases are believed to be sending much more. Militantly anti-Castro, they are probably the biggest violators of the U.S. economic embargo against his regime.

The government estimates that 40% to 45% of Cubans have access to dollars, money sent from abroad, tips from tourists and token "incentive pay" given to selected workers.

"You can't live unless you get dollars from abroad," says an 86-year-old retiree who gives her name only as Nena. She says she survives on the cash sent by relatives in Miami and handouts from the Catholic Church.

Yet even as he has created more demand for dollars, Castro has made them harder to earn.

Most forms of private enterprise remain illegal in Cuba. Cuban entrepreneurs can't employ anyone but their relatives. Jewelers can't deal in silver or gold. Farmers must harvest enough to fill government quotas before they can sell surplus produce.

A job with a foreign company is not the answer. Employees of foreign firms get paid in pesos by the government, which collects their salaries in dollars from their employers.

The government legalized self-employment in 1993. That spawned thousands of restaurants, called *paladares*, opened by Cubans in their homes and limited to 12 seats.

Castro later lashed out at owners of the small eateries. He eventually ordered authorities to increase taxes on *paladares* and other hard-currency earners and force them to prove that they bought their supplies from state sources. Many restaura-

teurs simply closed their doors.

As a result, Cuba has fewer self-employed workers today (154,000 out of a workforce of 4.2 million) than it had in 1995 (200,000).

"We are not a capitalist country; we are a socialist one. We are not in the process of a transition. We are not becoming a capitalist economy," says Miguel Figueras, a top aide in the Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation.

Scavengers and hustlers

The combination of scarcity and dollarization has turned Cuba into a nation of scavengers and hustlers.

Gypsy cabs prowl Havana's boulevards. Touts direct tourists to illegal *paladares*. Cigar rollers smuggle contraband smokes from the factory each night and sell them to foreigners at cut-rate prices. Fishermen skim a portion of their catch and sell to restaurants. Flea-market vendors peddle pre-revolution memorabilia and cultural treasures on the sly. Maids work off the books at the homes of Cuba's new, dollar-rich privileged class.

Metal and wood are valuable commodities. That's why there is scarcely a basketball rim left hanging in Havana.

The mistrust between government and populace is plain. Fishermen are carefully vetted for their political loyalty before being allowed out to sea, lest they try to ride the currents to freedom in the Florida Keys.

Consumption of lobster, shrimp and beef by ordinary Cubans is illegal because the government has reserved those commodities for export.

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U.S. loosens restrictions to help Cubans,

Limited measures won't alter embargo policy significantly

By Daniela Deane
USA TODAY

The Clinton administration announced Tuesday that it is relaxing the U.S. embargo against Cuba. But, in reality, there will be no fundamental change in U.S. policy toward the communist island nation.

In announcing several small steps aimed at helping the Cuban people and not Fidel Castro's 40-year regime, the White House rejected pressure to name a bipartisan commission to reconsider the United States' longstanding policy toward Cuba.

"The important side of this news is that no commission will be named," said Lisandro Perez of Florida International University. "These very lim-

ited measures were a way of balancing the announcement that there will be no review of U.S. policy."

Among the new steps, the administration said the government will allow anyone in the United States to send money to Cuban families and nongovernmental organizations. Presently, only Cuban-Americans are allowed to send money to their families.

The new measures allow the sale of food and agricultural supplies to nongovernmental bodies such as businesses. A direct mail service to Cuba and more commercial flights also will be permitted.

Twenty-four senators, backed by an array of former Republican government officials, had asked Clinton to establish the review commission.

The United States slapped a trade embargo on Cuba in 1962 to try to weaken Castro. The Helms-Burton law tightened the embargo in 1996.

The United Nations, Pope John Paul II and many major U.S. allies

have urged the United States to end the embargo, saying it is only hurting the Cuban people.

"This is definitely a victory for the hard-liners, (who oppose any change in U.S. policy)," said Max Castro of the University of Miami.

Larry Birns of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs called it a "pre-emptive strike" against people who wanted a change in policy. "It's just a tinkering of that policy," he said.

Hard-line Cuban-American groups acknowledged that they had won.

"I'd have to agree with that," said Jose Cardenas of the Cuban American National Foundation when asked if the measures were a victory for those who want no change in U.S. policy.

William Rogers, former assistant secretary of State for Latin America and a supporter of the commission, said three Cuban-American congressmen had heavily lobbied the administration against establishing the panel. But he said the measures

were "a step in the right direction."

"I don't regard this as a disaster defeat, but I would have preferred they would have gone further," Rogers said.

Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the major congressional supporter of the commission, called the administration's rejection a "missed opportunity to review an ancient policy."

In Miami, home to more than two-thirds of the United States' 1.5 million Cuban-Americans, reaction was mixed.

Magda Trujillo, 49, an art gallery owner, said she believes the Cuban government will end up the beneficiary of direct sales of food and agricultural products.

Lawyer Juan Carlos Bermudez, 35, called the changes minor. "I don't think they are incredibly significant."

Contributing: Deborah Sharp in Miami

not
Castro

WHA/AS

Clinton Cuba plan has mixed reaction

Havana insists embargo must be lifted

By Ben Barber
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Clinton administration plans to let the Baltimore Orioles play in Cuba and increase aid, trade and visits to the Caribbean island nation stirred passions yesterday that have been simmering for 40 years.

The Cuban government was cool to an announcement by President Clinton yesterday of a plan to ease the U.S. embargo of Cuba by increasing flights, food and cash flows to the Communist country. Anti-Castro Cuban-Americans split on the plan. Business groups approved.

"First, we must wait and see if it is true," Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said during a visit to Haiti.

"It is not the first time that announcements are made of initiatives that don't really go to the root of the problem. The root of the problem is still a blockade that is unjust," he said.

But Rep. Charles B. Rangel, New York Democrat, said yesterday he had met with Cuba's deputy foreign minister, Fernando Remirez, and "came away with the impression the Cubans favor the proposals," said a Rangel aide.

Mr. Remirez also asked Mr. Rangel to invite New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner to Cuba to discuss widening the baseball diplomacy, the aide said.

The Clinton administration did not contact the Cuban government to discuss the proposals before presenting the plan, said Jim Dobbin, special assistant to the president and senior director for Inter-American Affairs at the National Security Council.

Jose Cardenas, Washington director of the anti-Castro Cuban-American National Foundation, said yesterday, "We're willing to give the administration the benefit of the doubt.

"These initiatives seem to fall within the parameters of U.S. policy — reaching out to the Cuban people in ways that don't result in any meaningful benefit to the regime."

The Clinton proposal is intended to help the Cuban people, not the

Castro government.

Mr. Cardenas said he was pleased the administration rejected a proposal by Sen. John W. Warner, Virginia Republican, to form a commission to review overall Cuba policy.

"That was a product of a very intense lobbying campaign by anti-embargo lobbyists," he said.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright told reporters the changes in the 40-year U.S. embargo on Cuba were taken "in response to Pope John Paul II's inspiring pilgrimage to Cuba" a year ago and aimed "to reach out to the people of that country, to make clear our concern for them and to make their lives more tolerable."

"First, we will seek to expose additional elements of Cuban society to democratic practices and values by encouraging additional religious, scientific, educational, athletic and other exchanges between our two peoples," she said.

This could include exchange visits by the Baltimore Orioles and other U.S. teams to Cuba and by Cuban baseball teams to the United States. Profits would go to charity.

An aide to Sen. Connie Mack, Florida Republican, said the senator wanted to be sure that the Cuban government did not benefit financially.

The administration plan calls for flights to Cuba from cities other than Miami and to destinations in Cuba other than Havana; allows all U.S. residents to send up to \$300 a month to Cuban families; allows some larger payments to non-government entities in Cuba; restores direct mail; and authorizes the sale of food and agricultural goods to private entities and farmers in Cuba.

Opponents warned that since virtually all farming is state-run, it would be nearly impossible to insulate sales of U.S. products from the Cuban government.

"Overall, this is the single most substantial change in U.S. policy for a decade," said John Kavulich, president of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council in New York, which opposes the embargo.

• This article is based in part on wire service reports.

Miami's Cubans Find Good In Easing of Restrictions

Proposed Panel Could Have Done Worse, Some Say

By SUE ANNE PRESSLEY
Washington Post Staff Writer

MIAMI, Jan. 5—For the many Cuban Americans here who view any easing of U.S. restraints against Cuba as a triumph for President Fidel Castro, the Clinton administration's announcement today allowing more U.S. travel and cash into Cuba was a reason to breathe easier. At least, they said, President Clinton stopped short of naming a formal commission to review overall policy toward the communist government.

Hard-liners had feared that such a commission would threaten strict trade embargoes the United States has had in place against Cuba for the past 36 years. For that reason, they fought hard to discourage the administration from embarking on any reevaluation despite support for the idea from 24 senators from both parties and some Cuban Americans outside the generally conservative Miami exile organizations.

"The hard-liners have been able to shoot the commission out of the water," said Max Castro, a senior research associate at the North-South Center at the University of Miami, who is no relation to the Cuban leader. "The commission symbolized the prospect of big, big changes."

As things stand, the hard-liners still fear that any additional money that flows into the island will only benefit Castro and his government. But as always, reactions here in the nation's largest, most active and most vociferous Cuban American community were suspicious, divided and hotly debated as residents tried to decipher what the changes really mean and who in the homeland will benefit the most.

"I think this is a little bit for everybody, a carrot for everybody," said Jaime Suchlicki, a professor of international relations at the University of Miami and author of the book "Cuba From Columbus to Castro."

"For the hard-liners, it means no commission and more money for TV Marti and Radio Marti," the U.S.-funded stations beaming to Cuba, he added. "For the Cuban Americans, it means more travel to Cuba and more money to Cuba. It may encourage more independence for economic groups. But it's not going to bring about any political changes, because Castro is not willing to provide any political changes."

Although the Miami area's Cuban American community of more than 600,000 is not monolithic, Suchlicki said, the hard-line view still prevails, despite the death last year of its most powerful leader, Jorge Mas Canosa of the Cuban American National Foundation. This is true, he explained, despite a belief by

some that the younger generation is not as passionate about Cuba as the older warriors who have vivid memories of life before Castro's 1959 revolution.

A poll taken last year by Florida International University showed that 72 percent of those surveyed favor the tough, no-concessions approach, Suchlicki said, and observations in his own classrooms have convinced him that anti-Castro sentiment knows no age limits.

"I have students who are more radical, more hard-line than many of the old people," he said. "They're frustrated there are no changes in Cuba. Some say, 'We'd like to go bomb Fidel.'"

As the White House unveiled its revamped policy today, Clinton emphasized that the measures "are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban government."

They involve an expansion of person-to-person contact: direct-mail service, more direct charter flights to Cuba and the sale

"The hard-liners have been able to shoot the commission out of the water. The commission symbolized the prospect of big, big changes."

— Max Castro, of University of Miami

of agricultural supplies and food to nongovernmental bodies such as religious groups, restaurants and independent farmers. Until now, commercial exports to Cuba have been banned.

The new measures also would increase the flow of money by allowing any U.S. resident to send up to \$1,200 a year to Cuban families and nongovernmental groups; presently, only Cuban Americans can send money to relatives there.

In an apparent attempt to duplicate the "Ping Pong diplomacy" toward China in the 1970s, the United States also would allow the Baltimore Orioles to play two exhibition baseball games against the Cuban national team this spring, providing none of the proceeds make it to Castro's coffers.

But some exile groups questioned how it will be possible to keep American money away from Castro. Jorge Mas Jr., who is

vice chairman of his late father's Cuban American Foundation, said that his group, although satisfied that the commission has been scotched, has serious concerns about the sale of food and medicines to Cuba.

"There is no private sector in Cuba and there are no independent nongovernmental organizations in Cuba," he said.

U.S. attempts to reach out to Cuba in recent years had been thwarted by several dramatic political episodes, including the mass exodus of more than 30,000 Cuban refugees to South Florida in 1994 and Cuba's shooting down in February 1996 of four unarmed planes operated by a Miami-based pro-democracy group, Brothers to the Rescue.

Momentum has picked up again with two highly symbolic events—Pope John Paul II's historic visit to Cuba last year and

the recent celebration of Christmas on the island. Meanwhile, Castro, 72, celebrated the 40th anniversary of his takeover on New Year's Day.

Jose Basulto, leader of Brothers to the Rescue, remained unimpressed by Clinton's initiatives and was scathing in his assessment of the president's motives. "This is another one of those cosmetic announcements the Clinton administration makes for political purposes," he said.

At Miami radio station WCMQ, the Clinton-Castro question was the major topic for hundreds of callers, said Tomas Regalado, a Miami city commissioner who also is director of the Spanish news station. The callers were glad there will be no commission, he said, but "skeptical because once again, the president tried to please everyone."



BY JOSE LUIS MAGANA—ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liana Lopez, left, buys stamps at Havana post office to send letter to sister in Miami. President Clinton eased restrictions on commerce between the United States and Cuba.

Cuba Adopts 'Wait-and-See' Stance

Reuters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Jan. 5—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina greeted news of an easing of the U.S. embargo on Cuba with some skepticism today and said the Cuban government will take a "wait-and-see" attitude about the announcement.

"First we must wait and see if it is true. And then evaluate what exactly is the truth," Robaina said on arrival at Port-au-Prince International Airport for a two-day visit to Haiti. "It is not the first time that announcements are made

of initiatives that don't really go to the root of the problem. The root of the problem is still a blockade that is unjust."

President Clinton earlier had announced a relaxation of the 36-year-old U.S. embargo against Cuba and proposed an expanded exchange of athletes, scientists and others aimed at bringing the people of the two nations closer together.

"We don't have much to say at this point, because this is something that was just announced.... We prefer to listen first, then study, and finally comment," Robaina said.

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1999

THOMAS BOSWELL

No Matter Who Wins, Castro Suffers a Loss

As if Cuba hasn't got enough problems, with poverty, hurricanes and a dictator, now the destitute island may get a visit from Albert Belle during spring training. No international incidents, please.

The thought of the new Orioles free agent being introduced to Fidel Castro is just delicious. Albert, Fidel, Fidel, Albert. What a cage-match stare down!

All sorts of Havana-moonlight foolishness was buzzing through baseball yesterday as word spread that Baltimore might play a pair of home-and-home exhibition games against Cuba this spring.

In the tradition of ping-pong

diplomacy with China, the idea of a game between the island's legendary national team and a major league club has been a dream for decades. As long ago as the '70s, when I visited Cuba to report on the nation's fanatical passion for sports, the most frequent topic of discussion was the possibility of seeing "Great Leaguers" play games in Cuba.

On Monday, the White House announced that President Clinton has approved a loosening of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, including letting the Orioles play those two games. The only apparent hitch is a proviso that the

See BOSWELL, D2, Col. 3

THOMAS BOSWELL

Castro's Cuba Can't Stand Up to America's Orioles

BOSWELL, From D1

proceeds go to an appropriate charity, not Castro's government.

However, before we fantasize about a Cuba-Orioles showdown, we should acknowledge two difficulties. Don't be too sure these games will happen. Plenty of Cuban exiles will fight the idea. And Castro himself, upon reflection, may be too savvy to allow these apparently innocent exhibitions; in retrospect, they may someday be seen as a distinctly subversive influence in undermining his authority.

"Castro took enormous amounts of property from many people who'd worked for generations," points out my friend John Fitzgerald, an Orioles season ticket holder whose family was driven from Cuba when he was 12 with only the possessions they could carry. "I hate these cutesy ideas. There should be no contact with Castro. Let them play games after they return what they stole from us."

Ironically, the goals of Cuban exiles might actually be served by an Orioles game in Havana. People everywhere are drawn powerfully, almost magnetically, toward what they do not have, but deeply want. It's now a commonplace of Cold War history that the more the Soviet Union's population learned about the West's culture, the weaker the Soviet regime became.

Don't underestimate the power of something as apparently trivial as a

sport. Not if the game in question is baseball and the country is Cuba.

Nothing in Cuban society evokes more passion—or gives more consolation against decades of privation—than the island's fabulous baseball tradition, including teams packed with fine players in every Cuban province. Twenty years ago, the intensity of Cuban crowds—there's no admission fee, workers arrive carrying their machetes, and cows sometimes wander through the stands—was almost scary at times. Baseball was more than a release. It was sustenance.

Every night during sugar-cane cutting season, workers return home to watch the game of the night in the top Cuban league on TV. The screen doesn't go blank until the last out has been made in the last game on the island. Few Americans can imagine what baseball means to Cuban national pride. Supremacy in international baseball events sometimes seems like the island's only reason to smile.

Since then, the Cuban economy has crumbled further. Then, cars were 20 years old but functional. Now, they are comically ancient. Then, there were shortages. Of what? You name it. I never saw a room that had light bulbs in more than half its sockets. Now, in many cases, there is nothing.

Castro desperately wants much that the Clinton administration is offering in the name of humanitarianism. Resumption of

direct postal service. Permission for U.S. firms to sell fertilizer, pesticides and agricultural equipment to independent farmers. And, perhaps most important, authorization for any U.S. citizen—not just family members—to send as much as \$1,200 a year to needy recipients in Cuba. Those dollars are gold to a desperate economy.

What Castro does *not* want, what he has resisted for many years, and what he will probably try to duck out of this time, too, is allowing his people to see Cal Ripken on the field at the Stadio in Havana. Ripken, and every other Great Leaguer in an Orioles uniform, is a symbol of the freedom, the wealth and the possibility for open-ended self-fulfillment that America has long represented to people under totalitarian control.

Even Albert Belle—perhaps especially Albert Belle—captures the reason that Cubans should despise their lot under Castro. Freedom counts only if it extends to those who seem—to the majority—to deserve it least. To many, Belle has been the consummate bully. Yet, in American baseball, he is allowed to flourish. Only his own self-destructiveness oppresses him.

In Cuban baseball, in stark contrast, it is absolutely forbidden that authority of any kind be disputed, whether it be the manager, the umpire or, of course, the state. Long ago, I saw the best player in

Cuba at the time—Wilfredo Sanchez—called out at second base. Sanchez leaped three feet in the air in rage. Yet, by the time he landed back on Cuban soil, he had composed himself completely and showed no hint of protest at the incorrect call.

What Cubans will see in the eyes of the Orioles, if Castro lets them play, will not be decadent dollar signs—though plenty of Orioles love a buck. They will recognize deeper expressions than that—ones that all people understand. They'll see the energy and high spirits that come along with pursuing happiness. They will sense the complete absence of fear in the American players—their relaxation, self-confidence and ability to express themselves freely. In some cases, maybe the Cuban fans will even sense that the Orioles have the freedom to make fools of themselves or defy authority. Plenty of 'em did that last year, yet not one had to flee the country in a fishing boat.

The Cuban and American players on that field will come from utterly different worlds. From Brady Anderson's Elvis strut to Will Clark's smirk to Mike Mussina's studious Stanford stare, every Cuban fan will sense the gulf between Havana, Cuba, and Baltimore, Maryland. And they'll want desperately to close that distance.

Fitz, root for the Orioles to go to Cuba. It won't help Castro. Trust me on this one.

BASEBALL

Baseball Mulls O's-Cuba Games

By MARK MASKE
Washington Post Staff Writer

While Baltimore Orioles officials began to work yesterday toward completing plans to play home-and-home exhibition games this spring against the Cuban national team, Major League Baseball's leaders were taking a wait-and-see approach on the issue of whether they will give their required approval to the proposal.

The Orioles have received permission from U.S. government agencies to negotiate the terms under which the games, one in Cuba and one at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, would be played. The approval of the Orioles' request is part of the Clinton administration's latest relaxation of U.S. trade sanctions against Cuba in an attempt to encourage activities by Cuban charities while circumventing the government of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

But under baseball's rules, any such exhibition games would have to be approved by Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association, and some of the sport's leaders said yesterday that such approval is not a given.

One top baseball official said he

thinks there is a good chance that the games will happen, but also cautioned that Orioles majority owner Peter Angelos already is having second thoughts about the matter and added: "This could be very controversial. We have to think about this very hard before we go ahead with it."

Commissioner Bud Selig and Players Association chief Donald Fehr were noncommittal.

"This is a matter that has come up from time to time before," Fehr said from the union's offices in New York. "With these new developments, we'll obviously take a hard look at it."

Selig said from his office in Milwaukee that he'll listen to the recommendation of the sport's committee on international play before making a ruling.

"Peter Angelos has kept me apprised of all developments," Selig said. "I certainly understand all the ramifications. I'll be anxious to get the recommendation of the committee, and we'll act accordingly from there."

Baseball's leaders apparently have concerns about safety, about the willingness of major league players to play in Cuba and about a possible

backlash by Cuban-Americans if the games are played. Former Orioles first baseman Rafael Palmeiro, who was born in Cuba but grew up in Miami, said yesterday that he would not play an exhibition game in Cuba. Palmeiro signed with the Texas Rangers as a free agent this winter.

Administration officials have made it clear that the games will be played only if the proceeds do not go to Castro's government. Angelos and others at his Baltimore law office were on the telephones for most of the day yesterday discussing their plans. A group of Orioles officials may travel to Cuba by next week.

In a written statement released by the Orioles, Angelos said: "The Orioles are extremely pleased that our government has approved the request for a license to play a baseball game in Cuba with the Cuban national team, with a follow-up game envisioned at Camden Yards. The granting of the license is the first positive step in a process which the Orioles initiated more than two years ago. The Orioles will continue to work with Commissioner Selig in the forthcoming negotiations.

"Baseball is a wonderful medium in bringing people together. This

has been demonstrated time and again in a variety of contexts. In that spirit, the Orioles welcome the opportunity to play a part in the efforts to improve relations between the two peoples."

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The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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HEADLINE: In Miami, Cuban exiles say U.S. policy will benefit Castro

BYLINE: KAREN L. SHAW, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: MIAMI

BODY:

When Enrique Lopez fled Cuba 38 years ago, he left aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws in the impoverished dictatorship.

Each year, he and other family members living here send up to \$ 4,000 back home to help struggling relatives. Lopez welcomed news that the Clinton administration plans to expand aid and other contact between two countries.

"Cuba is basically an undernourished country. I'm not going to have my family starve," Lopez said.

But not all Cuban exiles are happy about the policy shift. Dr. Blas Prieto, who left Cuba 35 years ago and has no close family on the island, adamantly opposes the plan because he believes it will strengthen Castro's government.

"We need the people who are suffering to suffer more and more ... and they will go into the streets," Prieto said outside a restaurant in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood.

President Clinton announced on Tuesday a five-point plan to allow cash transfers of as much as \$ 1,200 from private Americans to needy Cubans, excluding government officials. Previously, Cuban-Americans were allowed to send money only to relatives.

The initiatives also contemplate U.S. food sales to non-governmental organizations and independent restaurants for the first time, as well as direct mail service and an expansion of direct charter flights.

"These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban government," Clinton said.

Cuban natives Guido Castellanos, 65, and his son Juan Carlos, 36, exemplified a generation gap on the issue.

"He's the opposite of me," said the younger Castellanos, translating for his father as the two ate at a restaurant. "I think it's a good thing. They've been repressed for so long. Anything to get food to the people."

Lopez said the U.S. government is wrong to believe only Cuba's citizens will benefit.

"NGOs (non-governmental organizations), they're approved by the government," Lopez said. "You're actually releasing the (economic and social) pressure."

But the policy shift will encourage democracy, he said.

"The way to create change (is) by providing alternatives," Lopez said. "We knocked down Red Square with Coca-Cola, rock and roll and blue jeans."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

15TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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January 6, 1999, Wednesday, CONSTITUTION EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 09A

LENGTH: 369 words

SERIES: Home

HEADLINE: Many fear aiding Castro, but others see both sides

BYLINE: Arthur Brice

BODY:

Cubans in Atlanta expressed an array of reactions Tuesday to President Clinton's move to relax relations with the Communist island nation.

Some of the approximately 6,000 Cubans in metro Atlanta were adamantly opposed. Others were torn. Still others praised Clinton's efforts.

The harshest criticism came from those who say Cuban President Fidel Castro will benefit from the diminished barriers.

"Clinton wants to normalize relations because he is almost a Communist," said Guillermo Merlo, 73, a former professor who noted that Clinton protested against the Vietnam War when he was a Rhodes Scholar in England.

"He keeps helping Castro," said Merlo, a 29-year Atlanta resident. "We don't agree with that. This will benefit Castro, not the people."

Merlo favors a hard-line approach in dealing with Castro.

"Clinton should obligate him to have democracy," he said. "Obligate him to release prisoners, to have liberty for the people, to have free political parties."

Although opposed to Castro, other Cubans say they see both sides.

"I'm kind of torn," said real estate broker Norma Santana, also a 29-year Atlanta resident. "The people will definitely benefit, but I hate to give Castro one cent. If I had to choose one side, I'd say, 'No, I don't want them to lift the restrictions.' "

Santana, 53, said this slight rapprochement could signal the beginning of improved relations with Cuba, possibly leading to diplomatic recognition.

"If they start with this," she said, "it will probably happen, slowly but surely."

Some Cubans applauded Clinton's efforts.

"You have to be pragmatic," said Ernesto Perez, an engineer with the Atlanta office of the Environmental Protection Agency. "Everything that helps the Cuban public is welcomed. When it comes to the humanitarian, politics doesn't exist. When you have family in Cuba, we're all Cubans."

Perez, 52, has lived in Atlanta since 1972. He still has an aunt and six cousins living in Cuba. His wife has eight uncles there. The Perezes particularly welcome the opportunity to increase the amount of money they can send relatives. "There is no alternative but to come closer to our brothers in Cuba," Perez said.

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 1999

16TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 The Atlanta Constitution
The Atlanta Journal and Constitution

January 6, 1999, Wednesday, CONSTITUTION EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 09A

LENGTH: 724 words

SERIES: Home

HEADLINE: Businesses hail eased Cuba embargo

BYLINE: Shelley Emling

DATELINE: Miami

BODY:

Howls of anger came from some Cuban exiles. But President Clinton's easing of U.S. sanctions against Cuba, announced Tuesday, also won enthusiastic support from some U.S. businesses.

In making the announcement, Clinton rejected a proposal for an all-out review of the 38-year-old embargo against the hemisphere's only Communist holdout.

But the United States will allow direct mail service to Cuba, expand direct charter flights, increase cash transfers from private Americans to needy Cubans and encourage exchanges of athletes, scientists and other professionals.

For example, the Baltimore Orioles will be allowed to arrange exhibition baseball games with the Cuban national team in both the United States and Cuba.

"This is a substantial change in U.S. policy and probably the single-greatest change in U.S. policy in more than a decade," said John Kavulich, president of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council in New York, the largest nonpartisan U.S. source of information on Cuba.

The most controversial measure is one that allows the sale of U.S. food and agricultural supplies to nongovernmental entities, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and independent farmers.

Critics blasted the measure, saying it would require too much cooperation from the Cuban government and could be illegal.

"This is nothing but smoke and mirrors," said Wayne Smith, the top U.S. diplomat in Havana during the Carter administration. "No one can sell food to groups in Cuba when the distribution system is run by the state. These moves just avoid a serious and much-needed review of American policy towards Cuba."

Smith had hoped Clinton would agree with at least 21 senators who have pushed

for establishment of a bipartisan commission to analyze the effect of the embargo on America's economy and relationship with its allies.

Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.) said the sale of food products could empower Cuban President Fidel Castro more than the Cuban people.

"Since virtually nobody on the island has significant amounts of hard currency except the government, who will be purchasing these products?" he asked.

Kavulich said the sale of food commodities to Cuba could total \$ 300 million this year, but only if the Cuban government provides funds to nongovernmental organizations so they can afford the purchases.

Meanwhile, most U.S. business groups applauded the announcement.

"We do think it's time to review our entire policy, and we believe this is a step toward doing just that," said Frank Kittredge, vice chairman of USA Engage, a coalition of 675 businesses working to end unilateral U.S. foreign-policy sanctions.

Kavulich added that the moves could benefit many U.S. companies, including Atlanta-based United Parcel Service.

With an eye on the Cuban market, U.S. businesses have pushed hard for relaxation of the embargo since the visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba last January. The number of American business executives traveling to Cuba has grown from 500 in 1994 to 2,500 in 1998.

During his visit, the pope urged the world to open up to Cuba. And in apparent reaction, Clinton announced an easing of sanctions in March that included reinstatement of remittances by Cuban-Americans to relatives on the island of up to \$ 1,200 a year.

But administration officials reiterated this week that while the new initiatives go even further in promoting people-to-people contacts, none involves any softening of the U.S. embargo. They said lifting the embargo would require a change in U.S. law.

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina greeted Tuesday's announcement with some skepticism.

"It is not the first time that announcements are made of initiatives that don't really go to the root of the problem," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright responded that U.S. policy toward Cuba was designed to promote closer ties between people of both countries without providing aid to a "repressive and backward-looking regime."

But exile Frank Calzon, director of the nonprofit Center for a Free Cuba in Washington, warned that the measures "imply that the United States can play ball with Castro, but that's not true. Sure, you can play ball with him, but Castro still makes the rules, which just isn't right."

GRAPHIC: Photo :

Jackeline Morera sells stamps Tuesday at a post office in Havana that soon could be handling more cash transfers from Americans. / JOSE LUIS MAGANA / Associated Press
LOAD-DATE: January 7, 1999

12TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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January 5, 1999, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 681 words

HEADLINE: Revised U.S. policy: Cubans Si, Castro No

BYLINE: GEORGE GEDDA, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

While vowing unbending hostility toward the Cuban government, President Clinton is planning measures to increase contact between Cubans and Americans and to allow a significant expansion of cash transfers from private Americans to needy Cubans.

The proposals also contemplate U.S. food sales to Cuba on a limited basis for the first time as well as direct mail service and an expansion of direct charter flights. A formal White House announcement was expected Tuesday.

After officials disclosed the initiative on Monday, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., said the measures were part of an administration attempt to mask its "true intention of normalizing relations with the Cuban dictator," Fidel Castro.

But a senior administration official insisted none of the initiatives involve any softening of the three-decade trade embargo on Castro's Cuba.

Ros-Lehtinen's Cuban-American colleague, Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, R-Fla., said he will oppose any food sales to Cuba on grounds they are illegal.

The administration says any such sales would be limited to entities independent of the government and therefore would be legal.

The measures build on the Cuba Democracy Act of 1992, which tightened the U.S. embargo but also called for increased exchanges between Cubans and Americans.

Progress in people-to-people contacts have been hampered by political setbacks, including the mass exodus of Cubans toward Florida in 1994 and the shooting down by two Cuban MiG jet fighters of four unarmed, Miami-based planes north of the island in 1996.

The visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba a year ago has made it easier for the administration to introduce innovations. Officials insist the policy shifts help promote democracy without helping Castro.

A year ago, all cash transfers from U.S. residents to needy Cubans were barred. In March, Clinton reinstated the remittances, allowing Cuban-Americans to send up to \$ 1,200 a year to relatives.

Clinton is expected to ease that restriction further, permitting any U.S. resident to send money to the island up to the \$ 1,200 annual limit.

Until 1993, Castro barred Cubans from holding dollars, seeing the currency as a reminder of past Yankee abuses. With the Cuban economy in free fall, remittances have spared countless Cubans from destitution.

Administration officials see dollar holdings as a way to liberate ordinary Cubans from dependence on the state for survival. The more Cubans with more dollars, officials say, the more they will be able to open small business - another innovation of recent years that was once unthinkable.

The impact of Clinton's initiative is far from clear. Cuban cooperation will be required in some areas, particularly the plan for increased exchanges.

One early test will come when a delegation from the Baltimore Orioles travels to Havana, perhaps this week, to sound out Cuban officials on the possibility of one or two exhibition baseball games with a Cuban squad in March. Profits would be earmarked for independent charities aimed at assisting Cubans.

Clinton pleased pro-embargo conservatives by rejecting a proposal for creation of a bipartisan commission to review Cuba policy. To opponents, the proposal looked like a disguised bid to overturn the embargo.

The decision disappointed Sen. John Warner, R-Va., an embargo opponent who led the drive for the commission. He believes current policy treats Cuba more cruelly than more bona fide threats to national security, such as Iraq and North Korea.

Mail deliveries between the countries are possible but often take months. The proposal for direct service follows a significant expansion of U.S.-Cuban telephone communications earlier in the decade, made possible by an extensive modernization program.

Direct charter flights to Cuba were legal until 1996 when the four Miami-based planes were shot down. Clinton retaliated by banning such flights but reinstated them last March. His new proposal contemplates an easing of existing restrictions on such flights, possibly including allowing flights from U.S. cities other than Miami.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 5, 1999

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Chicago Tribune

January 5, 1999 Tuesday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 3; ZONE: N

LENGTH: 363 words

HEADLINE: ALBRIGHT URGES CLINTON TO OPEN DOOR MORE TO CUBA

BYLINE: By Tim Weiner, New York Times News Service.

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

The United States is ready to let more people and money flow to Cuba, aiming to open up the political life of one of the world's few surviving communist nations, senior U.S. officials said Monday.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more U.S. food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the countries, renew direct mail service from the U.S., and let the Baltimore Orioles and Cuba's national baseball team play in March, the officials said.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright formally recommended the steps to President Clinton on Monday. The White House is expected to announce them day.

Some of the changes would be incremental expansions of existing policies on private humanitarian aid to Cuban citizens. Taken together, they represent a consensus among top officials that, since the 40-year reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end someday soon, the U.S. must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

The kinds of proposals advanced Monday had been under review three years ago but were halted after Cuba shot down two planes of an anti-Castro group. The proposals moved forward after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year ago.

The measures endorsed by Albright can be undertaken by presidential order without congressional approval.

But Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) said he is "concerned that these efforts fall way short" of what could have been accomplished by a national commission that he had proposed to review and revise U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Albright recommended that no such commission be formed, saying it could never resolve the question of the economic embargo imposed in 1962.

The most important proposal is to increase the flow of dollars to Cuba, officials said. Such remittances, limited to \$1,200 a year from a Cuban-American family to relatives in Cuba, could increase sharply. Any U.S. citizen could

send \$1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba except senior communist officials.
Religious groups, human-rights groups and other organizations might be able to
send larger sums.

GUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 5, 1999

Copyright 1999 Chicago Tribune Company
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January 5, 1999 Tuesday, EVENING UPDATE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1; ZONE: C

LENGTH: 241 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON ANNOUNCES STEPS TO INCREASE CUBAN CONTACTS

BYLINE: Associated Press.

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

While vowing unbending hostility toward the Cuban government, President Clinton on Tuesday announced measures to increase contact between Cubans and Americans and to allow a significant expansion of cash transfers from private Americans to needy Cubans.

The initiative also contemplates U.S. food sales to Cuba on a limited basis for the first time as well as direct mail service and an expansion of direct charter flights.

"These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban government," Clinton said in a statement.

They are consistent with our policy of keeping pressure on the regime for democratic change--through the embargo and vigorous diplomatic initiatives--while finding ways to reach out to the Cuban people through humanitarian efforts and help in developing civil society."

After officials disclosed the initiative Monday, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) said the measures were part of an administration attempt to mask its "true intention of normalizing relations with the Cuban dictator," Fidel Castro.

But a senior administration official insisted none of the initiatives involve any softening of the 38-year old trade embargo on Castro's Cuba.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.) said he will oppose any food sales to Cuba on grounds they are illegal. The administration says any such sales would be limited to entities independent of the government and therefore would be legal.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

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Chicago Sun-Times

January 5, 1999, TUESDAY, Late Sports Final Edition

SECTION: NWS; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 458 words

HEADLINE: Clinton OKs some trade with Cuba;
Baseball games part of deal

BYLINE: BY THOMAS W. LIPPMAN

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

President Clinton has approved a loosening of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, including allowing the Baltimore Orioles to play two exhibition baseball games against the Cuban national team this spring, one in Baltimore and one in Cuba, as long as the proceeds do not go to the government of President Fidel Castro, senior administration officials said Monday.

The measures, to be announced today, are the second taken in 10 months by Clinton to relax restrictions on U.S. trade and commerce in Cuba under a policy that aims to encourage activities by Cuban charities affiliated with the Catholic Church and other nongovernmental organizations and to circumvent the Cuban government.

If accepted by Cuba, the new measures would include resuming direct postal service, authorizing any U.S. citizens to send up to \$ 1,200 a year to relatives in Cuba -- a right now reserved for relatives -- and allowing U.S. companies to sell fertilizer, pesticides and agricultural equipment to independent farmers and privately owned restaurants.

Officials said the administration had rejected a proposal by 24 senators from both parties to establish a bipartisan commission to review all aspects of U.S. policy toward Cuba, including the trade embargo.

A senior official said the commission was unnecessary because "there is already a bipartisan consensus" in favor of the current policy of expanding aid to the Cuban people in ways designed to lessen the control by the state.

The administration adopted its policy after a visit to Cuba last year by Pope John Paul II, a critic of both the U.S. embargo and the Cuban government's repressive policies. On a visit to Cuba shortly after the pope's, Baltimore Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke endorsed the idea of an Orioles exhibition game in Havana as a 1990s counterpart to the "Ping-Pong diplomacy" that helped open doors to China in the 1970s. Schmoke's visit was arranged by the Center for International Policy, a Washington group that advocates changing the U.S. policy of isolating and undermining Castro.

The Orioles already have received a license from the Treasury Department to send negotiators to Cuba to discuss terms for the proposed games, State Department officials said. They said Clinton is prepared to authorize the

games if U.S. conditions are met, including a guarantee that the proceeds go to Cuban charities not controlled by the Castro government.

Baseball is Cuba's most popular sport, and Castro, a former pitcher, is a big . The Brooklyn Dodgers played exhibition games in Cuba before Castro took .er in 1959, but such exchanges have been prohibited since the early 1960s.

The president has limited ability to modify the embargo against Cuba without an act of Congress.

GRAPHIC: WASHINGTON POST

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

22ND STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Southeastern Newspapers Corporation
The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)

January 5, 1999, TUESDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. A1

LENGTH: 704 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON TO EASE CURBS AGAINST CASTRO;
U.S. FUNDS, IDEAS HEADED TO CUBA

BYLINE: Tim Weiner The New York Times News Service

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

The United States is ready to let more people and more money flow to Cuba, aiming to open up the political life of one of the world's few surviving Communist nations, U.S. officials said Monday.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more U.S. food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the two countries, renew direct mail service from the United States and let the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team play ball in March, the officials said.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright formally recommended the steps to President Clinton Monday, and the White House is expected to announce them today.

Individually, some of the changes would be incremental expansions of existing policies on private humanitarian aid to Cuban citizens. But taken together, they represent a consensus among top officials that, since the 40-year-old reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end soon, the United States must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting U.S. money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

The kinds of proposals advanced Monday had been under review three years ago, but were halted when Cuba shot down Cuban-American pilots for an anti-Castro group. The proposals moved forward after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year ago.

The nature and the timing of the announcement arose in part from a just-completed Council on Foreign Relations report, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials. The report proposed essentially similar steps, and some bolder ones, like granting some U.S. businesses licenses to operate in Cuba and promoting Cuban-U.S. military ties.

In an interview, one of the two principal authors of the Council on Foreign Relations Report, Bernard Aronson, a former assistant secretary of state, said: "American policy has succeeded in containing the spread of Cuban communism. That

battle is over. We can move to a new stage in our policy. We should, because within the shell of Communist society in Cuba there is a fragile civil society clawing its way to the surface."

The measures endorsed by Albright can be undertaken by presidential order, without congressional approval.

Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), said he was "concerned that these efforts fall way short" of what could have been accomplished by a national commission that he had proposed to review and revise U.S. policy toward Cuba. Albright recommended that no such commission be formed, saying it could never resolve the question of the economic embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in 1962.

"It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism," Warner said Monday night. "We allow food and medicine to get into North Korea. We allow food and medicine to get into Iraq. And we still deny this tiny country basic things."

Reacting to the news in Miami, the Cuban American National Foundation, a conservative exile group, praised the administration for refusing to re-evaluate U.S. policy toward Cuba. It said most of the measures to be announced are consistent with current policy.

The most important proposal is to increase the flow of U.S. dollars to Cuba, officials said.

Such remittances are currently limited to \$ 1,200 a year from a Cuban-American family to relatives in Cuba.

The amount could increase sharply under the plan proposed by Albright: any U.S. citizen could send \$ 1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba except to senior Communist officials. Religious groups, human rights groups and other organizations may be able to send larger sums to sister organizations, officials said.

The most politically appealing of the proposals was for holding two exhibition games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team. Baseball is immensely popular in Cuba, which is a wellspring of baseball talent despite its poverty. Several Cuban players have defected and now play for American teams.

The Orioles organization has been privately discussing such an exhibition with U.S. officials since 1995. Their owner, Peter Angelos, is a major financial contributor to the Democratic Party.

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

24TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Cox News Service
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January 5, 1999

SECTION: International news

LENGTH: 1010 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON EASES EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA, DELIGHTING U.S. BUSINESS GROUPS
With CUBA-EMBARGO-0106. EDS: Corrects length of embargo in 3rd graf.

BYLINE: SHELLEY EMLING

DATELINE: MIAMI

BODY:

President Clinton announced controversial steps Tuesday aimed at easing U.S. sanctions against Cuba, drawing howls of anger from some exiles, but enthusiastic support from U.S. businesses that have lobbied hard for any loosening of the tough U.S. economic embargo.

In making the announcement, Clinton effectively rejected a proposal for an all-out review of the U.S. policy of isolating the hemisphere's sole communist holdout.

"These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban government," Clinton said in announcing the measures, which build on a previous easing of the 38-year-old embargo last March.

Under the measures, the United States will: allow direct mail service to Cuba, expand direct charter flights to and from Cuba, increase cash transfers from private Americans to needy Cubans, and encourage the exchange of athletes, scientists and other professionals.

The Baltimore Orioles baseball team, for example, will be allowed to arrange exhibition games with the Cuban national team in both the United States and Cuba.

"This is a substantial change in U.S. policy and probably the single-greatest change in U.S. policy in more than a decade," said John Kavulich, president of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council in New York, the largest nonpartisan U.S. organization providing information on Cuba.

Indeed, the most controversial measure is one that allows the sale of U.S. food and agricultural supplies to non-governmental entities on the island, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and independent farmers.

Critics blasted the measure, saying it would require too much cooperation from the Cuban government, and could even be illegal.

"This is nothing but smoke and mirrors," said Wayne Smith, formerly the top U.S. diplomat in Havana during the Carter administration.

"No one can sell food to groups in Cuba when the distribution system is run by the state," he said. "These moves just avoid a serious and much-needed review of American policy towards Cuba."

Smith had hoped Clinton would agree with at least 21 senators who have pushed for the establishment of a bipartisan commission to analyze the effect of the embargo on America's economy and relationship with its allies.

Sen. Connie Mack, R-Fla., said the sale of food products may empower Cuban President Fidel Castro more than the Cuban people.

"Since virtually nobody on the island has significant amounts of hard currency except the government, who will be purchasing these products?" he asked.

Shawn Malone, an expert on Cuba at Georgetown University in Washington, said the measure comes dangerously close to manipulating the Catholic church in Cuba.

"The church has tried to be independent in Cuba, so it doesn't help when the United States decides that food sales must go through non-governmental groups, such as the Catholic church," he said.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, R-Fla. -- himself a Cuban-American -- said he will oppose any food sales to Cuba because they would violate U.S. law.

The administration says any such sales would be limited to entities independent of the government and therefore would be legal.

Kavulich said the sale of food commodities to Cuba could total \$300 million this year, but only if the Cuban government is allowed to provide funds to non-governmental organizations so that they can afford the purchases.

Meanwhile, most U.S. business groups applauded Tuesday's announcement, saying it was a step in the right direction.

"We do think it's time to review our entire policy, and we believe this is a step toward doing just that," said Frank Kittredge, vice chairman of USA Engage, a coalition of 675 businesses working to end unilateral U.S. foreign-policy sanctions.

Kavulich added that the new moves could benefit a wide variety of U.S. companies, including Atlanta-based United Parcel Service.

With an eye on the Cuban market, U.S. businesses have pushed hard for a relaxation of the embargo since the visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba last January.

The number of American business executives traveling to Cuba has grown from 500 in 1994 to some 2,500 in 1998.

During his visit, the pope emphasized his long opposition to the embargo and

urged the world to open up to Cuba.

In apparent reaction to the pope's visit, Clinton announced an easing of sanctions in March that included a reinstatement of remittances by Cuban-Americans to relatives on the island of up to \$1,200 a year.

Administration officials reiterated this week that while the new initiatives go even further in promoting people-to-people contacts, none of them involve any softening of the U.S. embargo.

They said that lifting the embargo would require a change in U.S. law.

Such a move would enrage Cuban-American voters, meaning it's one the administration is unlikely to contemplate less than two years before a presidential election.

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina greeted Tuesday's announcement with some skepticism, saying it did not do away with an unjust blockade.

"It is not the first time that announcements are made of initiatives that don't really go to the root of the problem," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright responded Tuesday that U.S. policy toward Cuba was designed to promote closer ties between people of both countries without providing aid and comfort to a "repressive and backward- looking regime."

The new measures are designed to build on the Cuba Democracy Act of 1992, which tightened the embargo but also called for increased exchanges between Cubans and Americans.

But exile Frank Calzon, director of the non-profit Center for a Free Cuba in Washington, warned that the measures mostly reward the Cuban government, which is still a repressive one.

"These measures imply that the United States can play ball with Castro, but that's not true," he said. "Sure, you can play ball with him, but Castro still makes the rules, which just isn't right."

ENDIT

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 06, 1999

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The Des Moines Register

January 5, 1999, Tuesday

SECTION: Main News Pg.8

LENGTH: 403 words

HEADLINE: U.S. appears ready to expand Cuban ties
The changes are designed to reposition the U.S. for the time when Castro's reign ends.

BYLINE: Tim Weiner

SOURCE: New York Times

BODY:

By TIM WEINER
New York Times

Washington, D.C. - The United States is ready to let more people and more money flow to Cuba, senior U.S. officials said Monday.

The goal is to open up the political life of Cuba, one of the world's few surviving Communist nations.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more U.S. food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the two countries, renew direct service from the United States -and let the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team play each other in March, the officials said.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright formally recommended the steps to President Clinton Monday, and the White House is expected to announce them today.

The measures can be adopted by presidential order, without congressional approval.

A senior official said the measures "are intended to strengthen support for the Cuban people," to allow them "some elbow room" and "some modicum of independence."

Other officials said the moves are intended to increase educational, religious and humanitarian contacts.

Individually, some of the changes would simply be expansions of existing policies on private humanitarian aid to Cuban citizens. But taken together, they indicate a consensus among top officials that, since the 40-year-old reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end someday soon, the United States must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting U.S. money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

The kinds of proposals advanced Monday were under review three years ago, but were halted when Cuba shot down Cuban-American pilots for an anti-Castro group.

The proposals moved forward again after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year . "The pope's visit created a wedge through which political light and air can stream into Cuba," a senior official said.

The nature and the timing of the announcement arose in part from a just-completed Council on Foreign Relations report, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials. That report proposed essentially similar steps, and some bolder ones, like granting some U.S. businesses licenses to operate in Cuba and promoting Cuban-U.S. military ties.

The council's report said it hoped to "break the current logjam" in American policy toward Cuba.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

97

NEWS DIGEST

CUBA TRADE EMBARGO

US rejects full policy review

The US administration yesterday decided against setting up a bipartisan commission to make a comprehensive review of policy towards Cuba.

The State Department will recommend instead measures to promote individual contacts, fewer restrictions on flights and remittances, a direct mail service and a system that allows private Cuban entities to buy US food and agricultural inputs.

Washington has imposed full economic sanctions on Cuba since February 1962 to put pressure on Fidel Castro, Cuba's leader, to reform his one-party system.

Havana said yesterday the US trade embargo cost Cuba \$800m in 1998 and had accounted for \$60bn in the years since Mr Castro's 1959 revolution. The state-run daily Trabajadores said the sanctions last year caused an extra \$130m in shipping costs, \$155m in tougher credit conditions, \$200m in higher import prices, \$55m in lower export revenues, and \$260m in currency losses.

Reuters, Washington and Havana

(NHA) ZD

LEVEL 1 - 24 OF 44 STORIES

Copyright 1999 The Idaho Statesman
The Idaho Statesman

January 5, 1999, Tuesday

SECTION: National ; Pg. 1a

LENGTH: 188 words

HEADLINE: INSIDE TODAY

BODY:

NATION/WORLD

House gears up for Clinton trial

Within hours of convening the 106th Congress on Wednesday, House members will vote on authorizing key lawmakers to present evidence against President Clinton in a Senate impeachment trial, officials said Monday. (Page 3A)

TRADE WITH CUBA: President Clinton has approved loosening the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, as long as the Castro regime does not benefit. (Page 3A)

EYE ON IRAQ: An escalating dispute between the Senate and White House over U.S. strategy in Iraq has blocked a CIA operation designed to destabilize President Saddam Hussein. (Page 5A)

ELDER CARE: President Clinton proposes spending \$ 6.2 billion over the next five years to help millions of American families offset the cost of long-term care for the elderly. (Page 5A)

LOCAL TOPICS

PUBLIC SAFETY: The University of Idaho will make a statement today about an incident last week in downtown Boise after the Vandals' victory in the Humanitarian Bowl. (Page 1B)

YOUR GOVERNMENT: Nampa City Council makes it easier for residents to take part in an urban forestry program. (Page 2B)

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

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L.A. TIMES (AN) 1-5-99

U.S. to Boost Ties With Cubans, Official Says

From Associated Press

WASHINGTON—The Clinton administration plans to allow more contact between Americans and Cubans and to substantially increase the number of Americans eligible to send money to needy Cubans, a senior U.S. official disclosed Monday.

President Clinton also plans to approve the opening of direct mail service to Cuba, an expansion of direct charter flights to the island, and the sale of food to entities independent of the government and of farming materials to auto-

nous farmers.

A formal announcement was expected today.

The senior official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said the measures are not intended to improve relations with the Cuban government, but to show support for the Cuban people. The official added that the U.S. embargo against Cuba, imposed 37 years ago, will remain in effect.

Another official said the measures are part of the administration's goal of promoting peaceful democratic change on the island.

At the same time, the senior official disclosed that a proposal for the creation of a presidential bipartisan commission to review U.S. policy toward Cuba has been rejected. The senior official said a bipartisan consensus on Cuba already exists in the United States and, therefore, such a commission is not needed.

But Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.), who spearheaded the Senate effort for a commission, expressed disappointment over the decision. He called it "a lost opportunity for America to lead" and said current policy treats Cuba more cruelly

than it does Iraq and North Korea, where U.S. embargoes are less restrictive.

The planned measures drew criticism from two Cuban American members of Congress, both Florida Republicans. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen said the proposals are a mask to hide the administration's "true intention of normalizing relations with the Cuban dictator," Fidel Castro.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart said he opposes any sale or financing of agricultural products to Cuba, calling it illegal.

WHA/AS



Just GO THE PRINCE OF EGYPT

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HERALDLINK FULL STORY

Published Tuesday, January 5, 1999, in the Miami Herald

Initiative rejects plan for full policy review

By FRANK DAVIES
Herald Staff Writer

WASHINGTON -- In a politically cautious move, the Clinton administration will act today to allow more money to be sent directly to Cubans and greater contact with the Cuban people, while rejecting a proposal for a bipartisan commission to review U.S.-Cuba policy.

State Department officials said the initiatives, to be announced in detail today, are designed to help Cuban people and independent groups while minimizing any benefits to the Castro government. They include:

- Relaxing rules on remittances so anyone in the United States could send up to \$1,200 a year to any individual or group in Cuba, with the exception of high-ranking Cuban officials. At present, only family members in the United States can send cash to needy relatives in Cuba.
- Allowing the sale of some food and agricultural products to "entities independent of the Cuban government," such as restaurants, small farmers and co-ops. This initiative was sharply criticized by Miami's two Cuban-American House members, Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.
- Permitting the Baltimore Orioles to try to arrange two exhibition baseball games with the Cuban national team -- one in Cuba, one in Baltimore -- as part of an effort to increase cultural, sports and academic exchanges. The profits from any games would go to Catholic Relief Services, based in Baltimore, or a similar charitable group.
- Increasing charter flights to the island, restoring direct mail service and improving the capabilities of Radio Marti to reach more Cubans. U.S. officials said they have not discussed these measures with the Cuban government.

At the same time, administration officials said Monday they had turned down -- for now -- a proposal backed by three Republican former secretaries of state and more than 20 senators to create a panel to thoroughly review U.S. policy toward Cuba, including the embargo, which bans trade with the island.

"There's disagreement on the embargo, and no bipartisan commission can resolve that -- only Congress can change the law," one State Department official said.

Commission idea criticized

Several Cuban-American groups had criticized the suggestion of a commission, saying corporate interests wanted to use it to attack the embargo. Sen. Bob Graham, a Florida Democrat, had warned the administration that naming a commission would hinder Vice President Al Gore's chances of carrying Florida in the 2000 presidential election.

Graham said Monday that he supports the new initiatives and was "extremely supportive" of the decision to forgo a commission.

"These changes are consistent with current law and further our effort to separate the Cuban people from their brutal, authoritarian government," Graham said.

The Cuban American National Foundation praised the administration's decision not to create a commission, but questioned some of the other initiatives.

"Any sale [of food] is going to the government in Cuba -- there is no private enterprise," said Francisco "Pepe" Hernandez, president of the foundation. He said his group will oppose that measure.

A/WHA/AS

Embargo invoked

Diaz-Balart warned that any efforts to sell food and agricultural products, such as pesticides and fertilizer, to entities in Cuba, would undermine the embargo and the Helms-Burton law, which tightened the embargo.

"The most troubling thing is the food -- that's clearly illegal. They would be violating the law to allow any such sales," said Diaz-Balart. "This is a bad way for the administration to start the new year."

Ros-Lehtinen said the sale of any products to nongovernment organizations in Cuba would "afford Castro a substantial opportunity to prolong his rule, because a majority of these are controlled by the regime."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called Ros-Lehtinen, Diaz-Balart, Graham and several other members of Congress to explain the changes, but at least one said she was not satisfied.

"I had lots of questions and very few answers," Ros-Lehtinen said. "For example, where is the international verification in place to make sure that this [food] gets to the Cuban people?"

'Elbow room'

State Department officials, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said the goal of these initiatives is "to allow the Cuban people some elbow room, a modicum of independence." The "most important nongovernmental organization" in Cuba is the Cuban family, one official said.

That official said the food initiative would not violate Helms-Burton, but that rules for such sales would have to be worked out by the State, Treasury and Commerce departments.

But some questioned how any food or product sales would work on the receiving end in Cuba. Bishop Thomas Wenski, head of Catholic Charities in Miami, said he did not know if church organizations would want to take on that responsibility.

"Caritas [the Catholic relief service in Cuba] would not have . . . any financial resources to buy those things, unless it got help from sister churches outside of Cuba. Where is Caritas going to get dollars?" Wenski asked.

U.S. officials stressed that there had been no negotiation or contact with Cuban officials on how these initiatives will work.

Herald staff writer Yves Colon contributed to this report.



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Getting in touch with HERALDlink



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HERALDLINK FULL STORY
Published Tuesday, January 5, 1999, in the Miami Herald

NEWS ANALYSIS

U.S. nibbling around edges of policy on Cuba

By JUAN O. TAMAYO
Herald Staff Writer

The Clinton administration's refusal to review U.S. policies on Cuba reflects the lack of political profits available to those who would improve bilateral ties, especially while Havana shows no sign of compromising and a U.S. presidential election looms, analysts say.

The relaxations of some U.S. restrictions on Havana also unveiled Monday show only Washington's desire to nibble around the edges of the Cuba policy iceberg and clear away a massive bureaucratic backlog, officials added.

"It looks like the administration took the path of least resistance, said Florida International University Professor Lisandro Perez, "rejecting a tough policy review but approving minor changes.

Speculation about major changes in U.S.-Cuba relations had been sweeping Washington since 24 U.S. senators and former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and Larry Eagleburger proposed last fall that Clinton name a bipartisan commission to "reassess U.S. policies toward the island.

Both backers and critics had viewed the proposal as a thinly veiled call for major changes in the decades-old embargo, and the administration's rejection Monday disappointed its supporters.

"They are missing the opportunity to have a much broader debate on policies . . . and blocking the flow of ideas, said Phil Peters, a Cuba analyst and fellow at the Alexis de Tocqueville Institute, a Virginia think tank.

Three basic reasons

Knowledgeable Washington officials said President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, a likely candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2000, vetoed the proposal for three basic reasons:

- The politicians, policy experts, academics, business people, humanitarian groups and other Cuba experts who advocate improving relations with Havana dominate intellectual debates but carry little political weight.

"This is not the heartland speaking, said one official in Washington. "This is a thin crowd, a bunch with good names but not a lot of political clout in terms of votes.

- Several policy experts and others who began advocating better U.S.-Cuba relations after the Cold War ended have now grown disillusioned with President Fidel Castro's refusal to embrace significant change.

"After a few years of hard work to promote some advances, people are saying, 'Hey, shouldn't he have to make a move also?" said one businessman who has long advocated lifting the U.S. trade and travel embargo on Cuba.

- No potential candidate in the 2000 elections wants to anger Cuban-American voters without reason.

"You simply cannot do very much on Cuba or be very adventurous when politics are on the line, said

Richard Nuccio, former Clinton White House advisor on Cuba issues.

Little more than a gesture

Cuba experts in fact saw the relaxations of U.S. regulations on Cuba also unveiled Monday as little more than a gesture toward disappointed backers of the so-called Kissinger proposal

Many of the changes in fact had been readied by the Treasury and State Departments 18 months ago to dissolve a large backlog of applications for licenses for contacts with Cuba, said one businessman with regular contacts with Treasury officials.

Treasury has been overwhelmed by requests from academics and humanitarian groups for permits to travel to Cuba, and to deliver food and medicine packages to nongovernment organizations such as the Catholic Church.

Most of the changes to be announced today come under the so-called Track II of the 1992 Torricelli Law, which allows people-to-people contacts as a way of promoting the growth of civil society in Cuba.

"It's interesting that no matter what people say of Track II, it comes back again and again as the best set of options for trying to create change in Cuba, Nuccio said.



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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

January 5, 1999 Tuesday Final

CTION: News Pg. 8 William Safire

LENGTH: 692 words

HEADLINE: 1999: Predicting the unpredictable

BYLINE: WILLIAM SAFIRE

SOURCE: The New York Times

BODY:

Avid players of last year's prediction pool were ahead of the curve on the bull market's incredible longevity, but were "misled" in 1998's favorite euphemism on just about everything else. Forget all that; what is past need not be prelude:

1. Next prime minister of Israel will be: a) ultra-principle d Benny Begin; b) ultra-centrist Dan Meridor; c) Colin-Powellesque Amnon Lipkin-Shahak; d) James Carville-handled Ehud Barak; e) much-abandoned Bibi Netanyahu; f) national-unifying Arik Sharon.

2. Surprise bestseller will be: a) "Lincoln's Men," the soldiers' view, by William C. Davis; b) "Face Time," a profoundly informed White House novel by Eric Tarnoff; c) "The Computer in the Visual Arts," by Anne Morgan Spalter; d) "Gray Dawn," by geezer-watcher Pete Peterson.

3. Social Security will be secured by: a) increasing taxes; b) cutting benefits; c) investing the trust fund in common stocks; d) raising retirement age to 70 of those now below 50.

4. The not-so-elderly Carol Bruce will bring needed luster to the Independent Counsel Act by: a) giving Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt a clean bill of health in her Indian casino payoff case; b) forcing Attorney General Janet Reno to charge Harold Ickes rather than allowing Bruce to pursue the investigation into the White House; c) out-showboating Helen Morgan with her extraordinary rendition of "My Bill."

5. Leading Hot Stove League candidate at year's end for vice president will be: a) New York Gov. George Pataki, now boning up on foreign affairs; b) Bill Richardson, reaching for the Hispanic vote; c) Hillary Rodham Clinton, if Vice President Al Gore does not get the top slot; d) New Jersey Gov. Christie Whitman, to bridge the GOP's gender gap.

6. Most heavily hyped story of the year will be: a) The Y2K bug bites Chicken Little; b) On your mark the euro is coming! c) What're you doin' Millennium Eve?

7. The year's good news will be: a) reform of sexual harassment law enacted to protect privacy; b) reformers win 20% of Russia's Duma, weakening anti-Semitic Communists; c) Internet shopping and exurban factory outlets put

the squeeze on mall rats.

8. Forced into retirement will be: a) Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic; b) Iraq's Saddam Hussein; c) North Korea's Kim Jong Il; d) Libya's Moammar Gadhafi; e) Cuba's Fidel Castro; f) China's Jiang Zemin.

9. The 700-page secret Cox Chinagate committee report will: a) be bottled up in security clearance by a nervous White House for months; b) detail success of Chinese intelligence agents in buying key U.S. technology through connections to Clinton fund raising; c) be seized on by Russian presidential candidate Alexander Lebed to show how criminal oligarchs have been shoveling technology to China that undermines Russian security.

10. The Independent Counsel Act will be: a) allowed to lapse in July, thanks to anger at Ken Starr's tunnel vision; b) renewed, thanks to Reno's Asian fund-raising malfeasance; c) radically revised to speed the process and limit those "covered."

11. Best-picture Oscar will go to: a) David Mamet's "Spanish Prisoner"; b) Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan"; c) Roberto Benigni's "Life Is Beautiful"; d) Terrence Malick's "Thin Red Line"; e) John Madden's "Shakespeare in Love."

12. Leading challenger to George W. Bush in Republican presidential polls will be: a) center-moving John Ashcroft; b) indefatigable Lamar Alexander; c) unbankruptable Steve Forbes; d) maverick John McCain. 13. Surprise at the Senate impeachment trial, if House managers get to call witnesses, will be: a) Monica Lewinsky's quiet composure; b) Betty Currie's recantation of early grand-jury testimony; c) Bill Clinton's dramatic appearance against his lawyers' advice.

14. President of the United States at year's end will be: a) Clinton, acquitted; b) Clinton, heavily censured after a "truncated trial"; c) Gore; d) Dennis Hastert, soon only two heartbeats away.

My picks, printed in what I hope is disappearing ink, are: 1-e, 2-b, 3-d, 4-b, 5-a, 6-c, 7-b, 8-f, 9-all, 10-c, 11-b (I'll play one favorite), 12-d, 13-a, 14-b. You gotta play to lose.

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

New York Times

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1999

U.S. READY TO EASE SOME RESTRICTIONS IN POLICY ON CUBA

FULL REVIEW IS REJECTED

More Money and People Will
Flow to Island, but Trade
Sanctions Will Remain

By TIM WEINER

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4 — The United States is ready to let more people and more money flow to Cuba, senior American officials said today, while rejecting a fundamental review of American policy toward Cuba.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more American food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the two countries, renew direct mail service from the United States and let the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team play ball in March, the officials said today.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright formally recommended the steps to President Clinton today, and the White House is expected to announce them on Tuesday.

A senior Administration official, speaking in Ms. Albright's seventh-floor State Department offices, said the measures "are intended to strengthen support for the Cuban people," to allow them "some elbow room" and "some modicum of independence."

Other officials said the moves are intended to increase educational, religious and humanitarian contacts with Cuba.

There was no immediate reaction from the Cuban Government.

Reforms in American policy toward Cuba were under review three years ago, but were halted when Cuba shot down Cuban-American pilots for an anti-Castro group. The proposals moved forward after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year ago. "The Pope's visit created a wedge" through which political light and air can stream into Cuba, a senior Ad-

Another factor was the death last year of Jorge Mas Canosa, the leader of the Cuban American National Foundation and the most vocal and influential anti-Castro Cuban-American political figure in the United States.

The nature and timing of the announcement also arose in part from a report just completed by the Council on Foreign Relations, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials. The report proposed essentially similar steps, and some bolder ones, such as granting some American businesses licenses to operate in Cuba and promoting Cuban-American military ties.

The council's report said it was intended to "break the current logjam" in American policy toward Cuba.

Under the steps recommended by Ms. Albright, the American embargo against Cuba, imposed 37 years ago, would remain in effect. So would additional restrictions added after

Continued on Page A4

U.S. Set to Ease Key Aspects Of Its Anti-Castro Policies

Continued From Page A1

the pilots were shot down.

Individually, some of the changes would be incremental expansions of existing policies on private relief aid to Cuban citizens. Taken together they represent a consensus among top officials that, since the 40-year-old reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end soon, the United States must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting American money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

"We are doing what we can to expand the space" in which Cuban citizens can breathe more freely, the official said.

The measures endorsed by Ms. Albright can be undertaken by Presidential order, without Congressional approval. Senator John Warner, a Virginia Republican, said he was "concerned that these efforts fall way short" of what could have been accomplished by a national commission he proposed to review and revise American policy toward Cuba. Ms. Albright recommended that no such commission be formed, saying it could never resolve the question of the economic embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in 1962.

"It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism," Senator Warner said tonight. "We allow food and medicine to get into North Korea. We allow food and medicine to get into Iraq. And we still deny this tiny country basic things."

Reacting to the news in Miami, the Cuban American National Foundation issued a statement today saying that most of the measures to be announced are consistent with current policy and praised the Administration for refusing to re-evaluate American policy toward Cuba.

The most important proposal is to increase the flow of dollars to Cuba, officials said.

Today these remittances are limited to \$1,200 a year from a Cuban-American family to relatives in Cuba. The amount could increase sharply under the plan proposed by Ms. Albright: any American citizen could send \$1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba except to senior Communist officials. Religious groups, human rights groups and other organizations may be able to send larger sums to sister organizations under proposals still in the works, officials said.

The most politically appealing of the proposals was for holding two exhibition games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team. Baseball is immensely popular in Cuba, a wellspring of baseball talent.

However, a baseball official said tonight that fears of angering anti-Castro Cuban-Americans could delay or scuttle a trip to Havana

planned for this week by members of the Orioles organization.

The Orioles have been privately discussing such an exhibition with United States officials since 1995. Their owner, Peter Angelos, is a major financial contributor to the Democratic Party.

But in February 1996 the Cuban Air Force shot down two unarmed civilian aircraft flown by Cuban exiles testing Mr. Castro's will. President Clinton almost immediately signed legislation to tighten the American embargo and strengthen trade restrictions against Cuba. The moves, which pleased anti-Castro Cuban voters in Florida and New Jersey, froze attempts aimed at thawing American-Cuban relations, including the idea of a baseball game being played by an American team in Havana.

The Orioles organization received Washington's permission for a trip to Havana later this week to discuss how to schedule the games. If they can be set up so that the Cuban Government receives little financial benefit from them, and so that profits go to authorized charities benefiting Cuban citizens, Government officials will grant the teams the license to play ball — once in Havana, once in Baltimore — during the exhibition season in March.

At least one staunchly anti-Castro Senator, Robert Torricelli, a New Jersey Democrat, said tonight that he found the new steps unobjectionable.

"Nothing here morally offends me," he said. "Our ultimate weapon against Fidel Castro is the flood of ideas." But he said the Administration's idea of sending American food to independent restaurants and independent farmers in Cuba was naive, since few such institutions exist and those that survive are tiny.

Mr. Toricelli, a Yankees fan, jokingly warned that "having the Orioles going to Havana may be good foreign policy, but it's bad baseball strategy." The Baltimore team finished fourth in the American League's East Division with a 79-83 record last year.

Administration officials said the forthcoming report from the Council on Foreign Relations helped to shape their new proposals, in part because it has received quiet support in conservative circles, leading them to believe that the steps put forth by Ms. Albright to the President today would be seen as politically bipartisan.

In an interview, one of the two principal authors of the report, Bernard W. Aronson, a former Assistant Secretary of State, said: "American policy has succeeded in containing the spread of Cuban Communism. That battle is over. We can move to a new stage in our policy. We should, because within the shell of Communist society in Cuba there is a fragile civil society clawing its way to the surface."

Copyright 1999 Star Tribune
Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

January 5, 1999, Metro Edition

CTION: Pg. 9A

LENGTH: 882 words

HEADLINE: U.S. moves to ease restrictions in policy toward Cuba;
Plan would boost economic, cultural exchange

SOURCE: New York Times

DATELINE: Washington, D.C.

BODY:

The United States is ready to let more people and more money flow to Cuba, senior U.S. officials said Monday, while rejecting a fundamental review of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more U.S. food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the two countries, renew direct-mail service from the United States and let the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team play ball in March, the officials said.

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Other officials said the moves are intended to increase educational, religious and humanitarian contacts with Cuba.

Pope creates hope

Reforms in U.S. policy toward Cuba were reviewed three years ago but were tabled when Cuba shot down Cuban-U.S. pilots for an anti-Castro group. The proposals moved forward after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year ago. "The pope's visit created a wedge" through which political light and air can stream into Cuba, a senior administration official said.

Another factor was the death last year of Jorge Mas Canosa, leader of the Cuban American National Foundation and the most vocal and influential anti-Castro Cuban-American political figure in the United States.

The nature and the timing of the announcement also arose in part from a report just completed by the Council on Foreign Relations, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials. The report proposed essentially similar steps, and some bolder ones, such as granting some U.S. businesses licenses to operate in Cuba and promoting Cuban-U.S. military ties.

The council's report said it was intended to "break the current logjam" in U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Under the proposal, the U.S. embargo against Cuba, imposed 37 years ago, would remain in effect. So would additional restrictions added after the pilots were shot down.

But individually, some of the changes would be incremental expansions of existing policies on private relief aid to Cuban citizens. But taken together they represent a consensus among top officials that, since the 40-year reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end soon, the United States must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting U.S. money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

"We are doing what we can to expand the space" in which Cuban citizens can breathe more freely, the administration official said.

'Lost opportunity'

The measures endorsed by Albright can be undertaken by presidential order, but congressional approval. But Sen. John Warner, R-Va., said he was concerned that these efforts fall way short of what could have been accomplished by a national commission that he had proposed to review and revise U.S. policy toward Cuba. Albright recommended that no such commission be formed, saying it never could resolve the question of the economic embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in 1962.

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sister organizations under proposals still in the works, officials said.

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If games could be set up so the Cuban government would receive little financial benefit from them and profits would go to authorized charities benefiting Cuban citizens, government officials would grant the team the license to play ball - once in Havana, once in Baltimore, during the exhibition season in March.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

31ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL)

January 5, 1999, Tuesday, Broward Metro EDITION

SECTION: NATIONAL, Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 731 words

HEADLINE: U.S. EASES RULES ON MAIL, CASH FOR CUBANS;
POLICY CHANGES AIMED AT HELPING THE PEOPLE

BYLINE: WILLIAM E. GIBSON and DEBORAH RAMIREZ; Staff Writers; Washington correspondent Rafael Lorente contributed to this report,

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

-- Reaching out to the Cuban people, the United States plans to allow Americans to sell food and send mail and money to Cubans independently of Fidel Castro's government.

The Clinton administration's initiatives, disclosed by senior officials on Monday, are designed to establish people-to-people contacts across the Florida Straits without helping Castro. Officials took pains to say they were improving relations with Cubans, not with the Cuban government.

While planning to expand direct charter flights, the administration stopped short of allowing U.S. tourism to Cuba.

The moves mark a marginal shift in U.S. policy, not a fundamental change. The economic embargo designed to force democratic reforms in Cuba will remain intact, administration officials said.

Despite pressure from business interests and the Catholic Church, the administration rejected proposals for a full-scale review of its embargo policy. But one official said the idea of setting up a review commission was not dead. The timing just was not right, he said, but a commission could be reconsidered in the future.

Reaction was split in the Cuban-American community of South Florida, where many people favor closer connections with Cubans while others worry that such measures might undermine the embargo.

"I think it's possible to be tough on a bad government and still be soft on the Cuban people," said Pedro Freyre, a Miami lawyer and Cuban-American activist who supports the embargo.

He said closer contacts could help Cuban families become more independent of their government.

His wife, Elena, a Catholic activist who opposes the embargo, was

32ND STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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The Tampa Tribune

January 5, 1999, Tuesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NATION/WORLD, Pg. 6

LENGTH: 283 words

HEADLINE: The bitter fruit of Castro's 40 years;

BODY:

Last week Cuban dictator Fidel Castro celebrated 40 years in power by giving a rerun of speeches from the past. He took credit for all the good things his revolution has produced, such as improved health care and near elimination of illiteracy, but blamed all the island's many horrific problems on the United States.

He also lambasted the free market, saying financial speculators "have turned the planet into a giant casino."

If we were to accept Castro's analogy of the world economy as a giant casino, then Cuba has been stuck at the nickel slot machines since Jan. 1, 1959. His blind devotion to Marxist ideology has crippled the Cuban economy.

One wonders if Castro can still be a true believer in socialism. After all, it's been tried in many places and what has it wrought? Political oppression often, extended poverty always. The richest socialist nation is still poorer than the poorest capitalist nation. The redistribution of wealth by the state is very difficult when the supply of wealth is quickly exhausted by the contradictions of collectivism.

Castro's supporters blame the 38-year-old U.S. embargo for most of Cuba's problems. But wasn't self-sufficiency one of the goals of the revolution? And aren't there other developed nations Cuba can trade with?

What suffering might have been avoided over the past 40 years if Fidel had but heeded Winston Churchill: "The vice of capitalism is that it stands for the unequal distribution of goods and services. The virtue of socialism is that it stands for the equal distribution of misery."

Thanks to Castro's never-say-die Marxism, the Cuban people still have plenty of misery to share.

TYPE: EDITORIALS

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

Clinton to relax embargo on Cuba

Orioles, Havana eye charity games

By Ben Barber
and Marc Selinger
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Clinton administration plans to announce a major relaxation in the U.S. embargo of communist Cuba today, allowing increased flows of cash, food, mail and airplane flights to the island nation 90 miles from Florida.

The new policy also would permit increased cultural exchanges with Cuba, possibly leading to exhibition baseball games between the Baltimore Orioles and a Cuban team.

A delegation from the Orioles may travel to Havana as early as this week to open discussions.

The profits would be earmarked for a private relief organization, possibly Catholic Relief Services, the Associated Press reported. The Baltimore-based charity has carried out relief work on the island for years.

The Clinton administration's new measures toward Cuba would allow any U.S. citizen or nongovernmental organization to send up to \$300 a month to any Cuban family, excepting officials, Reuters news agency reported. Under current rules, only Cuban-Americans can send that amount.

Cuban-American leaders criticized the move, saying it might allow President Fidel Castro — who celebrated 40 years in power last week — to lengthen that record.

A senior administration official, who spoke yesterday on the condition of anonymity, said the new policy "will involve expanding remittances by allowing U.S. residents to send money to independent groups and families, and it will expand

people-to-people contact."

The administration will allow direct flights from U.S. cities other than Miami to Cuban cities other than Havana for the first time in decades.

"This will help with family reunification," the official said.

"We will also establish direct mail service, as provided in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, and authorize the sale of food and agricultural products to independent nongovernment entities including religious groups and groups in the budding private sector."

Administration moves to ease the tight isolation of Castro-run Cuba last year allowed direct Miami-Havana passenger flights after two years in which Cuban-Americans had to fly to Cuba via Mexico or one of several Caribbean nations.

A State Department official said Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and President Clinton "have said they will continue to find ways to reach out to the Cuban people directly and support their independence from the government."

"To the degree they have access to more resources, they will be less dependent on the Cuban government," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

But Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican and leading critic of the administration's policy toward Cuba, blasted the White House plan, accusing it of trying to normalize relations with Havana by, among other things, waiving a law that deters investment in Cuba and allowing the sale of food to nongovernmental groups controlled by the Castro regime.

While the new policy "does have a few positive elements, these are merely included to hide the damning items and to mask the Clinton administration's true intention of normalizing relations with the Cuban dictator," said Mrs. Ros-Lehtinen, herself a Cuban-American.

U.S. lawmakers said the Clinton administration also rejected a suggestion that it form a commission to explore closer ties with Cuba.

"I feel it's a lost opportunity for this president," said Republican Sen. John W. Warner of Virginia, who had urged Mr. Clinton to form the commission. "It was an opportunity to help the Cuban people."

Mr. Warner and some of his Senate colleagues sent a letter to Mr. Clinton last year proposing a bipartisan commission to evaluate U.S. policy toward Cuba, including the nearly 4-decade-old trade embargo. Pope John Paul II's visit to Cuba last January had raised

hopes in some quarters of a thaw in U.S.-Cuban relations.

Conservatives have strongly opposed the commission proposal, which was supported by former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and Lawrence Eagleburger and by about two dozen senators.

Sources said the new policy originated at the State Department but was not influenced by Morton Halperin, recently appointed director of policy and a strong advocate of easing the embargo on Cuba.

The administration decided to increase contacts with the Cuban people after it rejected Mr. Warner's proposal for a commission as inappropriate, said the senior administration official.

"The Warner proposal was a catalyst for going over things" and it was "natural to have a policy review coming up on one year after the pope's visit to Cuba," the official said.

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The Washington Post

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1999

Inside: Health
Today's Contents on Page A2

25¢

Prices may vary in areas outside
metropolitan Washington (See box on Page A2)

U.S. Ready to Play Ball With Cuba

Clinton to Ease Trade Embargo, Using Orioles as Unofficial Envoys

By THOMAS W. LIPPMAN
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Clinton has approved a loosening of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, including allowing the Baltimore Orioles to play two exhibition baseball games against the Cuban national team this spring, one in Baltimore and one in Cuba, as long as the proceeds do not go to the government of President Fidel Castro, senior administration

officials said yesterday.

The measures mark the second time in 10 months that Clinton has relaxed restrictions on U.S. trade and commerce in Cuba under a policy that aims to encourage activities by Cuban charities affiliated with the Catholic Church and other nongovernmental organizations and to circumvent the Cuban government. The White House plans to announce the measures today, officials said.

If accepted by Cuba, the new

package would include resumption of direct postal service, authorization for any U.S. citizens to send as much as \$1,200 a year to recipients in Cuba—a right now reserved for family members—and permission for U.S. firms to sell fertilizer, pesticides and agricultural equipment to independent farmers and privately owned restaurants.

The measures were revealed yesterday as officials said the administration had rejected a pro-

posal by 24 senators from both parties to establish a bipartisan commission to review all aspects of U.S. policy toward Cuba, including the trade embargo. A senior official said the commission was unnecessary because "there is already a bipartisan consensus" in favor of the current policy of expanding aid to the Cuban people in ways designed to lessen control by the state.

See POLICY, A12, Col. 3

Orioles Are Up as U.S., Cuba Prepare to Play Ball

POLICY, From A1

The administration adopted its policy after a historic visit to Cuba last year by Pope John Paul II, a critic of both the U.S. embargo and the Cuban government's repressive policies. On a trip to Cuba shortly after the pope's visit, Baltimore Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke endorsed the idea of an Orioles exhibition game in Havana as a 1990s counterpart to the "ping pong diplomacy" that helped open doors to China in the 1970s. Schmoke's visit was arranged by the Center for International Policy, a Washington group that advocates changing the U.S. policy of isolating and undermining Castro.

The Orioles already have received a license from the Treasury Department to send negotiators to Cuba to discuss terms for the proposed games, State Department officials said. They said Clinton is prepared to authorize the games if U.S. conditions are met, including a guarantee that the proceeds go to Cuban charities not controlled by the Castro government.

Orioles owner Peter Angelos, normally outspoken, declined to comment on the possibility of an exchange. Team officials said the Orioles applied for a license to negotiate the games two years ago or more, but their enthusiasm has since cooled. The Orioles, unlike the New York Yankees and other major league teams, have no Cuban defectors on their roster, a fact that might make them acceptable to Cuba.

Baseball is Cuba's most popular sport and Castro, a former pitcher, is a passionate fan. The Brooklyn Dodgers played exhibition games in Cuba before the 1959 communist revolution, but such exchanges have been prohibited since the early 1960s.

Senior officials have said that Clinton came into office looking for ways to reshape the U.S. relationship with Cuba, but has been frustrated by the negative response from Castro. The Cubans' 1995 shootdown of two unarmed planes operated by a Miami-based Cuban exile group known as Brothers to the Rescue cut off any overtures toward a rapprochement, and paved the way for Clinton's signature on the so-called Helms-Burton legislation, which toughened the embargo.

Under the law, the president has limited ability to modify the embargo without an act of Congress. A senior administration official said that the measures, which were recommended to Clinton by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, all comply with existing laws that prohibit direct U.S.-Cuba trade.

Last year, Clinton authorized the resumption of direct charter flights and of family remittances, which had been suspended after the shootdown, and instructed the Treasury Department to expedite processing of applications for licenses to ship food and medicine.

Clinton will announce an expansion of authorized air service to Cuba from cities other than

Miami, U.S. officials said yesterday. Any U.S. citizen will be allowed to send \$300 per quarter, or \$1,200 a year, to recipients in Cuba, a relaxation of rules that now limit such remittances to family members. The Cuban government has authorized Cuban citizens to possess U.S. dollars, and Cubans who have access to U.S. currency are able to obtain far better food and medical care than those whose income is limited to pesos.

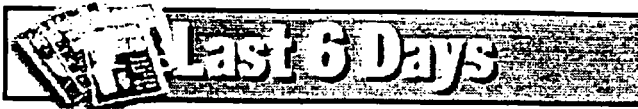
The president is also planning to authorize U.S.-based corporations to sell food and food-producing materials to independent restaurants and non-governmental organizations in Cuba, senior officials said.

Implementation of any of these proposals, including mail service, depends on the acquiescence of the Cuban government, officials said.

Albright telephoned key members of Congress yesterday to brief them on the president's planned announcement, officials said.

Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.), chief sponsor of the commission proposal, said a bipartisan review of a policy largely unchanged for nearly 40 years would have been appropriate. "I think it's a lost opportunity for President Clinton. Whatever his future may be, I would think he would have liked to open up Cuba as [Richard] Nixon opened up China," he said.

Staff writer Richard Justice contributed to this report.



From: News and Views | Beyond the City |
Tuesday, January 05, 1999

Prez Sez Increase Contact With Cuba

NEWS WIRE SERVICES

WASHINGTON

The Clinton administration wants to allow more money to be sent to people in Cuba, increased travel to the island, and direct mail delivery but has rejected a bi-partisan commission to review U.S.-Cuba policy.

The new initiatives, to be announced today, are designed to increase contacts between U.S. residents and Cubans while maintaining a stiff trade embargo against President Fidel Castro's government.

"There is general consensus on the idea of helping the Cuban people and promoting human rights," an official said last night, on condition of anonymity.

"We want to expand the space available to private Cubans. We have to keep pushing on the wedges," the official said.

An early test of the new initiative comes later this week, when representatives of the Baltimore Orioles baseball team plan to go to Havana to arrange some exhibition games.

Leading Cuban-Americans were livid, saying any weakening of tough sanctions can only help Fidel Castro.

"While today's announcement does have a few positive elements, these are merely included to hide the damning items and to mask the Clinton administration's true intentions of normalizing relations," said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.)

In another change, any U.S. citizen or charity would be allowed to send up to \$1,200 annually to any Cuban family. Presently, only Cuban-Americans can send that amount to their own families.

Rep. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) called that "unacceptable."

"This policy change will substantially increase cash flow to the regime," he said.

Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), who said the U.S. treats Cuba more cruelly than it does Iraq and North Korea, called the decision to scrub a bi-partisan commission "a lost opportunity for America to lead."

Cuba said yesterday the trade embargo cost the Caribbean island \$800 million in 1998 and more than \$60 billion since Castro's 1959 revolution.

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U.S. set to loosen rules on gifts, visits to Cuba

By Tim Weiner

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

January 5, 1999

WASHINGTON -- The United States is ready to let more people and more money flow to Cuba, senior U.S. officials said yesterday, while rejecting a fundamental review of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

The moves would let Cuban citizens receive millions more dollars from American friends and family members, allow them to buy more U.S. food and medicine, permit more direct flights between the two countries, renew direct mail service from the United States and let the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team play ball in March, the officials said.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright formally recommended the steps to President Clinton yesterday, and the White House is expected to announce them today.

A senior administration official, speaking in Albright's seventh-floor State Department offices, said the measures "are intended to strengthen support for the Cuban people," to allow them "some elbow room" and "some modicum of independence."

Other officials said the moves are intended to increase educational, religious and humanitarian contacts with Cuba.

Reforms in U.S. policy toward Cuba were reviewed three years ago but were halted when Cuba shot down Cuban-American pilots for an anti-Castro group. The proposals moved forward after Pope John Paul II visited Cuba a year ago.

The "pope's visit created a wedge" through which political light and air can stream into Cuba, a senior administration official said.

Another factor was the death last year of Jorge Más Canosa, leader of the Cuban American National Foundation and the most vocal and influential anti-Castro Cuban-American political figure in the United States.

The nature and the timing of the announcement also arose in part from a report just completed by the Council on Foreign Relations, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials. The report proposed essentially similar steps, and some bolder ones, such as granting some U.S. businesses licenses to operate in Cuba and

promoting Cuban-U.S. military ties.

The council's report said it was intended to "break the current logjam" in American policy toward Cuba.

Under the proposal, the U.S. embargo against Cuba, imposed 37 years ago, would remain in effect. So would restrictions added after the pilots were shot down.

But, individually, some of the changes would be incremental expansions of existing policies on private relief aid to Cuban citizens. Taken together they represent a consensus among top officials that, because the 40-year-old reign of Fidel Castro is likely to end soon, the United States must "promote a peaceful democratic transition" by injecting U.S. money, culture and ideas into the isolated island.

The administration official said that "we are doing what we can to expand the space" in which Cuban citizens can breathe more freely.

The measures endorsed by Albright can be undertaken by presidential order, without congressional approval.

But Sen. John Warner, R-Va., said he was "concerned that these efforts fall way short" of what could have been accomplished by a national commission which he had proposed to review and revise U.S. policy toward Cuba. Albright recommended that no such commission be formed, saying it could never resolve the question of the economic embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in 1962.

"It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism," Warner said last night. "We allow food and medicine to get into North Korea. We allow food and medicine to get into Iraq. And we still deny this tiny country basic things."

Reacting to the news in Miami, the Cuban American National Foundation, a conservative exile group, issued a statement saying that most of the measures to be announced are consistent with current policy and praised the administration for refusing to re-evaluate U.S. policy toward Cuba.

The most important proposal is to increase the flow of U.S. dollars to Cuba, officials said.

Such remittances are currently limited to \$1,200 a year from a Cuban-American family to relatives in Cuba. The amount could increase sharply under the plan proposed by Albright: Any U.S. citizen could send \$1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba except to senior Communist officials. Religious groups, human rights groups and other organizations may be able to send larger sums to sister organizations under proposals still in the works, officials said.

The most politically appealing of the proposals was for holding two exhibition games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team. Baseball is immensely popular in Cuba, a wellspring of baseball talent despite its poverty.

However, a baseball official said last night that fears of angering

anti-Castro Cuban-Americans could delay or scuttle this week's planned trip to Havana by members of the Orioles organization.

At least one staunchly anti-Castro senator, Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., said yesterday that he found the new steps unobjectionable.

"Nothing here morally offends me," Torricelli said. "Our ultimate weapon against Fidel Castro is the flood of ideas."

But he said that the administration's idea of sending U.S. food to independent restaurants and independent farmers in Cuba was naive, since few such institutions exist and those which survive are tiny.

In an interview, one of the two principal authors of the Council on Foreign Relations report, Bernard W. Aronson, a former assistant secretary of state, said: "American policy has succeeded in containing the spread of Cuban communism. That battle is over. We can move to a new stage in our policy. We should, because within the shell of Communist society in Cuba there is a fragile civil society clawing its way to the surface."

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The Inquirer

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Cuba policy misses the boat

A bipartisan call for change essentially gave Clinton impunity. Instead, we get baseball games. Maybe.

By Wayne S. Smith

Those who had hoped for something new in Cuba policy were deeply disappointed by the measures the Clinton administration announced last week.

Needed was a thorough review of policy that would lead to sweeping changes. What we got instead was a series of unimportant small steps, some impractical, others a timid augmentation of what we are already doing.

Thirty-nine years after the U.S. embargo was first imposed, Fidel Castro is still in power. The embargo has accomplished nothing. While regarding our refusal to trade with Cuba as eccentric, other countries also saw it as none of their business.

But with the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992, Washington began telling companies incorporated in other countries that they could not trade with Cuba. In the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, Washington threatened to haul foreign companies into U.S. federal courts if they "trafficked" in expropriated property in Cuba. It warned foreign banks not to provide credit to Cuba. Helms-Burton has caused serious problems with our closest friends and trading partners and spurred a widespread rejection of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Against this background, last October, a distinguished group called on the President to appoint a bipartisan commission to conduct a thorough policy review. Coming as it did from Sen. John W. Warner (R., Va.) and 24 other senators and from former Cabinet members of GOP administrations, including former Secretaries of State Henry A. Kissinger, Lawrence S. Eagleburger and George P. Shultz, the call for a bipartisan commission would have given the President effective political cover.

At first, the administration seemed amenable. But some members of Congress, led by Sen. Robert G. Torricelli (D., N.J.), and Cuban exiles in Miami and New Jersey voiced strong opposition.

The administration caved. It announced that there would be no commission and no policy review. There was no need for one, it asserted, because there was a strong consensus in favor of the existing policy. But if that was true,

why did respected people from both sides of the aisle insist that a review was needed?

As a sop to those who had hoped for more, on Jan. 5 Clinton announced measures he says will expand contact with the Cuban people and show support for them yet also keep the pressure on the Cuban government:

The number of charter flights carrying Cuban Americans to visit family in Cuba will be increased and routed from other cities besides Miami and Havana; the processing of visas and licenses will be streamlined; and there will be more cultural, academic and sports exchanges, including exhibition baseball games between a Cuban team and the Baltimore Orioles.

The latter is the only thing that could be termed a breakthrough: More than 20 years ago, Castro suggested a baseball game.

The other measures, however -- increases in the amount of money U.S. citizens can send Cuban citizens; the sale of food to private institutions and of farm implements to private farmers and cooperatives; the start of direct-mail service between the United States and Cuba -- are not likely to increase appreciably the flow of people between the countries. And if we're trying to improve relations with Cuba, why the increased funds for Radio and TV Marti?

So an opportunity has been lost. More meaningful steps are needed. Clinton might have indicated, for example, the administration's support for legislation to lift the embargo on the sale of food and medicine, removed all travel controls, or announced the closure of TV Marti and the transfer of Radio Marti back to Washington, where it could be brought under the effective control of the Voice of America.

The Jan. 5 announcement might have been couched in different terms, terms designed to indicate our readiness to enter into a more constructive relationship with the Cuban government.

People-to-people contact is useful, to be sure, but it is an illusion to think we can deal only with private entities and citizens in Cuba. Sooner or later, if we want to encourage the government to move ahead with reforms, we must deal with that government.

But that is a message that has not yet registered with the Clinton administration.

Wayne S. Smith, a senior fellow at the Center for International Policy, served as the chief of the U.S.-interests section in Havana from 1979 to 1982. He wrote this piece for the Los Angeles Times.

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Jan. 12, 1999

Hurting Cubans

Clinton eases a bit

FINALLY, President Clinton has taken some small steps to relax America's stranglehold on the bankrupt island of Cuba. He would ease the four-decade blockade by:

(1) Letting any American send up to \$1,200 a year in humanitarian aid, (2) allowing sale of food and agricultural supplies to Cuban groups, (3) improving mail service between the mainland and the island, (4) expanding charter flights to Cuba, (5) letting the Baltimore Orioles and Cuba's national team play exhibition games.

This is a welcome change - but it isn't enough. America should end all of its cruel measures designed to starve the Cuban people into abandoning communism.

America should end all of its cruel measures designed to starve the Cuban people into abandoning communism.

After Fidel Castro's small band of rebels ousted a Mafia-connected dictator and instituted Marxism, rich Cubans fled to Florida and began political war against their homeland. They didn't care if they hurt their relatives and countrymen, as long as it drove Castro from power.

Conservatives in Congress backed their effort to damage Cuba as much as possible.

But Castro wasn't driven from power. The only effect of the embargo was to inflict suffering on Cuba's people. Most of the world sees America as a malicious neighbor.

Clinton's small step should be followed by wide-open acceptance of Cuba. Friendly trade and tourism with capitalist America would soon wipe out Cuba's communism - something four decades of strangulation couldn't do.

Write a letter to the editor.

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Copyright 1999 Charleston Newspapers
The Charleston Gazette

January 12, 1999, Tuesday

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. P4A

LENGTH: 243 words

HEADLINE: Hurting Cubans Clinton eases a bit

BYLINE: Gzedit

BODY:

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LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

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Chicago Sun-Times

January 12, 1999, TUESDAY, Late Sports Final Edition

SECTION: EDT; LETTERS; Pg. 24

LENGTH: 1339 words

HEADLINE: U.S. trade with Cuba a boon to democracy

BODY:

I read with great interest your news story (Jan. 5) about the White House measures easing trade restrictions with Cuba, and your fine editorial ("Cuba deserves better," Jan. 6). I agree: Cuba does deserve better, especially the Cuban people suffering from the unfair, obsolete U.S. trade embargo. By the way, the U.S. business community deserves to have better economic opportunities in Cuba, as it does in the former Soviet Union, Vietnam and China -- countries favored by the White House with the easing of economic sanctions.

I have been to Cuba 10 times recently, and judging by the economic investments, trade and tourism from Canada, Latin America and European nations, the United States is hurting itself by losing good business opportunities while denying U.S. companies the opportunity to profit through trade with Cuba.

The American dollar has practically become the standard currency in Cuba, with few transactions made with the Cuban peso, which now is worth 1/20th of the dollar, or 5 cents. Isn't the legal circulation and dominating influence of the American dollar a most visible evidence of American capitalistic penetration of Cuba?

There are so many other signs of American-style practices in Cuba: the tourist attractions, hotels, restaurants, consumption of American products and the Cuban people's preferences for American movies, music, television and other forms of artistic and cultural expression.

Cubans' acceptance of the American way of life should be enough incentive for our government to completely lift the economic embargo that unjustly punishes Cuba, or at least continue improving business, cultural, communications and sports relations with Cuba.

From a more pragmatic point of view, if 37 years of economic embargo has done nothing to politically hurt the government of Fidel Castro, why does America insist on an obsolete measure that never will bring about the results of the strategy proposed in the early '60s?

I have known Castro since our school days at Havana University from 1947-52. I think the Cuban president is willing to negotiate, and the United States should call a summit meeting with him to discuss lifting the embargo and more democratization of Cuba. A full introduction of the American way of life in Cuba would in time contribute to the universal desire for a more democratic political system in Cuba.

Chicago Sun-Times, January 12, 1999

Fernando J. Fernandez, Berwyn

Image is everything

The Sun-Times was right (editorial, Dec. 31) to point out the irony of the Illinois State Bar Association's lawsuit protesting a new law that moves toward restoring public confidence in Illinois' court system by banning gifts between lawyers and judges.

The lawsuit claims that the Legislature has violated the separation-of-powers doctrine in passing this law to regulate the judiciary. The bar association also points out that the Judicial Inquiry Board, the Courts Commission and the Judicial Canon of Ethics were created to guard against improper behavior by judges and that the Judicial Ethics Commission required by the new law is redundant.

Perhaps the Legislature, like the public, doesn't feel assured by the existing safeguards. Certainly the track records of these boards and codes doesn't inspire confidence. From 1975 to 1997, the Judicial Inquiry Board received nearly 4,000 complaints of injudicious conduct. Only 55 complaints were passed on to the Courts Commission. Of those, the majority were either dismissed or handled with reprimands. Why? The Inquiry Board has an inadequate budget for staff and investigations; until recently, the courts commissioners were all fellow judges, and investigations and plea bargains are kept confidential.

A more positive direction for the bar association and the legal profession would be to strengthen judicial ethics enforcement to erase any appearance of undue influence over judges by attorneys.

The public deserves judges who are beyond reproach, and lawyers should be in the forefront of creating an effective judicial ethics enforcement system. While an independent judiciary is fundamental to our democracy, this lawsuit sends a signal that the bar association is not concerned about gift-giving between lawyers and judges.

Laura Sullivan,

Citizen Advocacy Center,

Elmhurst

Cynthia Canary,

Illinois Campaign for

Political Reform

Ethical redundancy

The Sun-Times has placed itself in the strange position of saying it doesn't care whether a new state law -- the Gift Ban Act -- is unconstitutional.

The Illinois State Bar Association fully supports stringent regulation of gifts to judges, but we believe it should be achieved in a constitutional manner. Our state Constitution mandates an ethics system for judges -- the

Chicago Sun-Times, January 12, 1999

Judicial Inquiry Board and the Illinois Courts Commission. The Constitution also requires the Supreme Court to exercise sole responsibility for overseeing the court system.

The Gift Ban Act's creation of an additional ethics commission conflicts with the system mandated in the Constitution. The last thing we need is competing commissions telling judges what they can and cannot do.

We believe it is important to object when such an unconstitutional act is made part of state law. While that position may be unpopular, it defends the decision made by the voters in adopting the Constitution and in amending the provision on the Courts Commission in the last election.

Timothy L. Bertschy,

president,

Illinois State Bar Association,

Peoria

Get your own limo

I could only shake my head as I lined up behind a sea of freezing commuters to cram myself onto an L the Monday morning after the snowstorm -- the chickens are surely coming home to roost.

For years, Mayor Daley has been pouring city funds into potted plants, bike racks and fat, no-bid contracts for his pals, while city funding for the CTA remains at 1963 levels: \$ 3 million, the minimum permitted by federal law.

Now, in a week when all Chicagoans -- rich as well as poor -- needed public transit, we realized that we'd been badly shortchanged by Daley's lack of vision. Maybe if Hizzoner had to stand out in the cold to wait for a bus like the rest of us, things would be different.

Joe Winston, Near North Side

City that won't work

True, the cold is intense here. But it also is cold in Milwaukee, New York and Boston. Their transit systems seem to be working fine. Their schools aren't closed.

When the mayor fired former CTA President Robert Belcaster, he made the mistake he's now paying for. Belcaster's fault was having an independent, outsider's view of how the CTA should be managed. He had no political baggage.

The mayor continues to support people who can't do what needs to be done. So congratulations, Bobby Rush. Your paper tiger may have a few teeth after all.

Thaddeus J. Kochanny,

Ingleside

We'll drink to that

In response to John Doyle, a representative from the American Beverage Institute (Letters, Jan. 5), I am upset that your paper continues to print outright lies by individuals who work for the liquor industry. Time and again, I have read that a 0.08 standard for determining alcohol intoxication for motorists will turn responsible social drinkers into criminals.

Doyle said that an individual who consumed two 6-ounce glasses of wine over a two-hour period would be considered "drunk." That is false.

When the Legislature was debating the 0.08 issue, state representatives tested these assertions by the liquor industry. After sharing a bottle of wine with dinner, two representatives were both well under the 0.08 limit. They discovered that an individual has to consume approximately an entire bottle of wine within an hour to be considered intoxicated.

The truth is, you can go out to dinner, share a bottle of wine and even have a port or brandy afterward and still remain within the law.

I am happy that most Illinois legislators were able to resist the money thrown to them by the alcohol industry and made 0.08 the standard for this state.

Henry T. Sadowski, Addison

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

3RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

January 12, 1999 Tuesday, METRO

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. A8

LENGTH: 589 words

HEADLINE: NO ONE BUT CASTRO WILL BENEFIT FROM EASING OF TRADE SANCTIONS

BYLINE: By Charley Reese of The Sentinel Staff

BODY:

You would think that, just as a matter of chance or accident, Bill Clinton would do at least one thing right occasionally. Apparently he can't. His easing of trade sanctions against Cuba is a big mistake.

He says that allowing Americans to send more dollars to Cubans won't help Fidel Castro, but he's lying. The only place Cubans can spend dollars is in government stores. The extra dollars will end up in Castro's bank account.

In order to wade through the muck of propaganda, let's clear up the difference between the trade sanctions against Cuba and the trade embargo against Iraq. The sanctions in regard to Cuba apply only to Americans and American businesses.

Castro is free to trade with every other country in the world. Cuba can export or import anything it wishes from any country except the United States. Therefore, Cuba's poverty cannot be laid at the feet of Americans.

The sanctions against Iraq, however, are a true embargo. There is a military-enforced prohibition against Iraq exporting or importing anything without express permission of the United Nations. Therefore, the poverty in Iraq is a result of the embargo and, of course, the bombing of Iraq's infrastructure.

In Cuban waters, however, there are no American ships stopping anyone from other countries from visiting or investing or doing business with the bearded, blowhard dictator. He blames poverty on us, but he's a Clinton-class liar.

The poverty of the Cuban people is deliberately imposed by Castro who, like all communists, confiscated both the land and the people's labor. He exploits both to fill the communist coffers. As in all communist countries, the top Reds live well at the expense of the people.

A few weeks ago a friend of mine made his first visit to Cuba, spending nearly two weeks there and driving from one end of the island to the other. He said the country is astoundingly beautiful, the land is fertile, and there are crops and cattle everywhere.

Yet, he said, the people are bordering on malnutrition, and even the stores that take dollars have bare shelves. Obviously, Castro is reserving the island's

Orlando Sentinel Tribune, January 12, 1999

bounty for his cadre and for export to earn money to support his police state.

Enforced poverty is a standard communist technique of control. People living on the subsistence level and at the mercy of the Communist Party for even that stay too busy just trying to survive to have any energy left for overthrowing the government.

Communism truly is a blight on the human race. Communists have more than once used enforced starvation as a means of mass murder. Stalin killed nearly 12 million Ukrainians by forced starvation, and the deposed Communist boss of Ethiopia used it against his enemies.

Because of all the communists and leftists in America, Castro's image is blurred, but he is a murderous psychopath. Years ago, I had a long conversation with Huber Matos, one of the revolution's most successful guerrillas. He finally broke with Castro and spent years in prison. He said Castro is very much like Adolf Hitler - a megalomaniac and a ruthless psychopath.

More recently, Cuban defectors who held high positions in Castro's government have written that he has a pathological hatred of the United States. One even wrote that Castro would order a military attack on the United States rather than give up power. He said the dictator's ego would prefer destruction by the United States than to have to admit that he is a failed leader.

Clinton and Castro both need to go and sooner rather than later.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

3RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Southeastern Newspapers Corporation
The Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle

January 11, 1999, Monday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A5

LENGTH: 365 words

HEADLINE: EDITORIAL ROUNDUP

BODY:

One small step

You'll never convince Jesse Helms or the hard-line Cuban exiles in Miami, but the fastest way to subvert Fidel Castro is to end the embargo and drench him in Levis and Walkmans, Yankees T-shirts and Taco Bells. The aging dictator keeps insisting, in his infamous, self-indulgent harangues, that the only choice for Cuba is socialism or death. Let a few more dollars into the country, and the Cuban people will quickly figure out some better options.

That's certainly what President Clinton has in mind with his proposal to allow more U.S. money to flow to families and non-governmental organizations in Cuba. The president also intends to allow direct mail service between the two countries, more charter flights and the sale of food and agricultural supplies to religious groups and independent farmers.

It's a small step, but one that inches the United States closer to a rational policy toward Cuba. The embargo was supposed to help topple Castro; 36 years after it was imposed, he's as entrenched and annoying as ever. It's time to see what a change in tactics might do. There's nothing more fatal to dictatorship, after all, than an open contrast of its scarcity, fear, rigidity and dullness with the abundance, confidence and choice possible under a free system.

Until Congress relents and relaxes the commercial embargo, though, the Cuban people will be denied a while longer the benefits of free trade, more badly needed humanitarian aid and the healthy ferment that comes from greater contact with the outside world. As a substitute, Clinton is offering two exhibition games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team.

Given the Orioles' showing last season, it may not be great baseball, but it's smart diplomacy. Let the fans in Cuba, where baseball is the national passion, contemplate a few free agents in action. They'll get the point, which is less about money than about the rewards of liberty and self-determination. The hard-line anti-Castro lobby won't like playing ball with the Cubans. But in any matchup between today's Cuba and a free society, it's Castro who stands to be the loser.

Detroit Free Press

GRAPHIC: Castro mug

Chicago Tribune

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10 Section 1 ▽

Monday, January 11, 1999

Another perspective

SANCTIONS. **THAT** oughta fix 'em! ...

The Miami Herald
1/11/99
MORIN



Left to right: Bob Menendez (D-N.J.),
Secretary Albright,
Ilana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL),
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ON CUBA
*NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE
FAILURE*

January 10, 1999

If your only means of transportation were a rusted-out clunker sitting on blocks in the garage, you would conclude it was time to get a new car. Not Bill Clinton. He'd figure that since the jalopy is paid for and never costs him money for gas or insurance, he's got the perfect vehicle. If that reasoning makes sense to you, you'll have no trouble understanding his latest policy shift on Cuba, which turns out to be no shift at all.

For 37 years, the United States has done its best to isolate, ostracize and squeeze Fidel Castro's regime in the hope of bringing it down. The latest indicator of its effectiveness came on Jan. 1, when Cuba's Communist dictatorship celebrated its 40th anniversary. But the Clinton administration thinks mere failure is no reason to try something different.

So when he finally got around to a sober re-evaluation of the U.S. embargo on Cuba, the president reached the conclusion that it's nearly perfect just the way it is. He announced only a few token changes--proposing to let any American, not just relatives, send money to Cubans, allow direct mail service between the two countries, expand the number of charter flights and, for those who wanted a really bold stroke, send the Baltimore Orioles there to play the Cuban national team. (Fine--but only if Castro agrees to keep Albert Belle.) The idea of appointing a bipartisan commission to



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address American policy, raised by two dozen senators and the likes of Henry Kissinger, was studiously ignored.

Anti-Castro exiles in Florida, who normally can be relied on to emit fire from their nostrils and smoke from their ears whenever relaxation of the embargo is mentioned, did not think this plan was worth denouncing. In fact, the conservative Cuban American National Foundation issued a statement praising Clinton.

Asked about claims that it had gotten its way with Clinton, the head of the group cheerfully acknowledged, "I'd have to agree with that." The administration apparently is more concerned about elevating Al Gore--a task that depends partly on Florida's 25 electoral votes--than on bringing down Castro.

Diehard defenders of the status quo say that expanding U.S. trade and investment would ease the economic crisis in Cuba and thus perpetuate Castro's grip on power. But listening to these partisans tell us how to get rid of Castro is like soliciting investment advice from a panhandler. If they had the answer, we wouldn't still be asking the question.

Once one of the most prosperous countries in Latin America, Cuba is now among the poorest. Its per capita income is less than \$1,500 per year--half the level in Guatemala and one-fifth the level in Mexico. Things were bad when Cuba was on the Soviet dole, but they have gotten worse since the Russians abandoned communism and stopped sending money.

Shortages abound, and most goods have to be bought in state-owned stores that accept only dollars, not pesos. Thanks to rampant prostitution--much of it employing children--"Cuba is now second only to Southeast Asia as a sex tourism destination," reports the left-leaning on-line magazine Salon. Cubans aren't allowed lobster or shrimp because they're reserved for export, causing one cabdriver to grouse to a USA Today reporter, "We are on an island, and we

don't eat fish."

But Castro, like Saddam Hussein, has an ever-ready excuse for every economic problem: the U.S. embargo.

Washington's implacable pressure lets him escape much of the blame for the wretched poverty of his workers' paradise. It also gives him a stature he otherwise wouldn't have: He must be very important to deserve such imperishable hostility. As with Saddam, merely surviving lets Castro stand as a defiant symbol of opposition to the Yankee imperialists. Without our persistent efforts to inflate his importance, he would be just another Third World tyrant.

Breaking down the existing barriers between the U.S. and Cuba would mean more Americans traveling and doing business in Cuba, exposing ordinary Cubans to ever-increasing contact with unapproved ideas and ways of doing things. It might also spur economic growth, which almost infallibly serves to stimulate demands for democracy and personal freedom.

So why does Castro favor junking it? He thinks a lifting of the embargo would be to his advantage--but then, Daniel Ortega thought his Sandinista regime would easily win a free election in Nicaragua in 1990.

Dictators don't gain from measures that expand the number of things that are outside their control. If we had the nerve to lift the embargo, Castro would soon discover that it was the best friend he ever had.

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LEVEL 1 - 38 OF 66 STORIES

Copyright 1999 Denver Publishing Company
The Rocky Mountain News (Denver, Co.)

January 11, 1999, Monday,

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Ed. F; Pg. 34A

LENGTH: 656 words

HEADLINE: IT'S TIME U.S. LET BYGONES BE BYGONES WITH CUBA

BYLINE: Charles Roos

BODY:

It's hard to tell these days just how and when Bill Clinton will take his leave of the presidency, but there's one loose end he ought to tie up, both in the national interest and as a matter of simple justice.

Cuba.

The United States has been damning Fidel Castro for 40 years and has enforced an economic embargo on Cuba since 1962, and what has it got us?

It has got us the scorn of most of the rest of the world, the disgust of many Americans and the creation in South Florida of an arrogant Cuban-American political force, a force so haughty and overbearing that it dictates foreign policy.

Ten days ago the president took a hesitant step toward common sense by easing restrictions on mail service, direct charter flights, purchases of food and medicine and the transfer of private funds to Cubans.

But that step was both small and tardy. Some of the same things were being considered three years ago, but were shelved after Castro's air force shot down two civilian aircraft flown into Cuban air space by Cuban-Americans - private citizens reportedly testing Castro's will to respond.

Well, he did, as he had a right to.

And after that, Clinton signed legislation tightening the embargo and trade restrictions. The U.S.-Cuba lobby cheered.

So what more could Clinton have done than he did this month? Well, for one thing, as Republican Sen. John Warner of Virginia has proposed, he could have set up a national commission to review our whole Cuban policy.

Warner points out that the United States allows food and medicine to reach North Korea, a former (and still potential) enemy, while keeping restrictions on Cuba.

As columnist Mike Royko observed during the 1995-96 troubles with Castro, "We had history's most terrible war with Germany, Japan and - to a much lesser extent - with laid-back Italy. Now we're all pals. We had another terrible war with Vietnam. Now we're shaking hands, making up and doing business with Vietnam

"We've been shaking hands and making up with all kinds of former enemies all over the world, which is good, because doing business sure beats counting body bags. But who do we still treat like our most dreaded enemy? A puny island with a tired government and a feeble economy that isn't a threat to us or anyone else."

Exactly.

Sure, we all know that Castro, long ago, invited the Soviet Union to come in and build missile bases that did, directly, threaten U.S. security. But that's history, like our troubles with Germany, Japan and Vietnam.

The Soviet Union has gone bust, ideologically, militarily and financially. Years ago it abandoned Castro to what he was bound to become, a feeble, worn-out ruler of a bankrupt island.

So let Bill Clinton truly act presidential. Let him simply declare peace with Cuba. Then, working with Congress, let him do everything he can, with whatever time he has left, to do justice to the Cuban people. They've suffered in isolation too long.

He doesn't have to hug Castro or invite him to the White House. He can treat him like a zany, shirttail cousin who maybe ought to be in a nursing home but is allowed to run loose (for whatever time he has left) because the Cuban people - his family - love him.

What would Bill Clinton risk by doing this? Well, votes, if he were thinking of running for anything, but I'd say that's unrealistic, wouldn't you?

Truth is, the anti-Castro Cuban-American bloc in the United States isn't likely to vote for any Democrat for anything anyway. It's still married politically to Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and conservative Republicanism, and it doesn't believe in divorce.

QUOTE: May Cuba, with all its magnificent potential, open itself up to the world, and may the world open itself up to Cuba so that this people, which is working to make progress and which longs for concord and peace, may look to the future with hope.

- Pope John Paul II, Havana, January 1998.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 13, 1999

LEVEL 1 - 24 OF 110 STORIES

Copyright 1999 The Deseret News Publishing Co.
The Deseret News (Salt Lake City, UT)

January 10, 1999, Sunday

SECTION: OPINION; Pg. AA4

LENGTH: 638 words

HEADLINE: Now may be the time to lift embargo and call Castro's bluff

BODY:

For decades, Fidel Castro has said, "If the United States would only lift the 'blockade' (his word), then Cuba would be free to solve its social and economic problems."

In reality, Castro fears that some U.S. president will call his bluff.

Bill Clinton has made it clear that he won't be that president.

This week, Clinton lightened, but didn't lift, some of the restrictions imposed on Cuba -- in one way or another -- ever since shortly after Castro took power 40 years ago.

The embargo has been a double-edged sword for Castro. Yes, it's made life difficult for rank-and-file Cubans. But whenever his Marxist-inspired policies failed, he's always had Washington to blame.

Last year, when the pope gave Castro a desperately sought injection of international credibility, your reporter went to Havana. The decay of this proud city is truly heartbreaking.

Havana's architecture is one of North America's treasures. But it's crumbling into ruin, a sad monument to Castro's reign.

For the pope's visit, Castro gave the city a fresh coat of paint, but not nearly enough to cover the depressing reality of what Havana has become. And in the countryside, the struggle to survive is even tougher.

Agriculture has always been the main business of the island. Today, it's a mess.

Even when the Soviets underwrote his communist experiment, Castro neglected to shore up Cuba's economic infrastructure. Today, farming and industrial equipment are Soviet relics -- at best -- held together with baling wire and prayers like the 1950s cars that stagger along Havana's streets.

So when crops are bad (as they have been in recent years), neither hard work nor hardware can help the Cuban people.

Some semblance of a reasonable argument can be made that Castroism once helped Cuba's poor in some ways. Literacy improved. So did the most basic health

care.

But there is no reasonable argument that his system has helped economically. One enduring mystery is why someone as smart as Castro, and he is -- as anyone who has been around him knows -- very intelligent, has so bullheadedly, yea, stupidly, clung to Marxist-Leninist economic dogma.

Long after even Mother Russia and Mao's China jettisoned the old mumbo jumbo, Castro remains a true believer.

He even claims that, without the embargo, Cuba would be overrun with foreign capital -- as if communism naturally inspired investor confidence.

Castro used to point proudly to Cuba's break with economic practices he considered corrupt and exploitative: gambling, prostitution, tourism. Now all of these are back.

A Cuban now can make vastly more money as a hotel chambermaid than as a doctor. Prostitutes of every persuasion swarm around tourists. The black market is thriving.

Castro continues to blame the United States for his failures. Even his own repressive measures, he claims, are a response to the embargo: If his communist experiment were allowed to proceed "without interference," then he could recognize freedom of speech, press and assembly.

So he claimed in an interview with your reporter a few years ago while teenage student journalists stood by with wistful smiles. I could ask Castro tough questions; they could not.

Now politicians and diplomats are urging Clinton to reconsider, perhaps even lift, the embargo. Some even proposed a bipartisan commission, which could have deflected or diffused any backlash from anti-Castro Cuban-Americans in Florida and New Jersey.

But those states are vital to presidential politics, and Clinton, like President Bush before him, has so far declined the opportunity to make any major change in American policy toward Cuba.

Could rethinking the embargo actually force Castro's hand? Would he be able to sustain his dictatorship without Uncle Sam as a boogeyman?

We may never know.

King Features Syndicate

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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The Plain Dealer

January 9, 1999 Saturday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: EDITORIALS & FORUM; Pg. 8B

LENGTH: 120 words

HEADLINE: CAN CASTRO SAY NO

BYLINE: THE MIAMI HERALD

BODY:

We have supported the ban on U.S. business dealings with or in Cuba. The idea, of course, is to prevent needless enrichment of Cuba's totalitarian government. But we just as vigorously support the so-called Track II of the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act. While Track I choked off trade, Track II attempts to promote civil society by allowing private groups to provide humanitarian aid to people in Cuba and by encouraging cultural and academic exchanges. ... Of course the measures' impact will depend on the Cuban government's willingness to agree. But Castro might be hard pressed to tell his people that they cannot enjoy money from U.S. relatives, or a good pro-baseball game. (Scripps Howard News)

NEW YORK TIMES SAYS:

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: THE FRONT BURNER

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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January 9, 1999 Saturday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: EDITORIALS & FORUM; Pg. 8B

LENGTH: 167 words

HEADLINE: IT DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH

BYLINE: By JUAN FORERO

BODY:

With the end of the Cold War, Cuba no longer serves as a base for potential Russian military operations against the United States. American business leaders have become increasingly interested in the profit potential of Cuba as it moves toward the post-Castro era. Conservatives have taken up the plea made by Pope John Paul II to ease the American economic embargo for humanitarian reasons. Finally, generational changes in the Cuban-American community have increased the influence of those interested in easing the privations of ordinary Cubans.

The pity is that the Clinton administration has been hesitant about seizing this opportunity. America should be doing all it can to break down the cultural and intellectual isolation of Cuban society through increased tourism, business and cultural and sports contacts. It should be defending human rights by strengthening its diplomatic presence in Havana. Clinton must go beyond useful tinkering with an outdated policy.

JUAN FORERO SAYS:

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: THE FRONT BURNER

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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January 9, 1999 Saturday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: EDITORIALS & FORUM; Pg. 8B

LENGTH: 171 words

HEADLINE: IT'S GLACIAL SPEED

BYLINE: THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

BODY:

Washington's cautious easing of restrictions on Cuba represents welcome incremental progress. This week's announcement falls well short of a dramatic move that could nudge Cuba toward democracy and lead to more normal relations, but it has the virtue of being politically realistic.

The new U.S. policy - easing the flow of money into Cuba and of people both ways - will reduce the isolation of the Communist country. Out-and-out tourism, Cuba's biggest moneymaker, is excluded. But people-to-people exchanges will be allowed in the arts, sciences, religion, education and sports.

The White House rejected a bolder recommendation from four former secretaries of State to create a bipartisan commission to review U.S.-Cuba policy. That commission - endorsed by Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William P. Rogers and Lawrence Eagleburger - could have set the stage for ending the punishing trade embargo in place since 1960, when Cuba, then a Soviet satellite, represented a real security threat to the United States.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: FRONT BURNER

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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January 9, 1999 Saturday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: EDITORIALS & FORUM; Pg. 8B

LENGTH: 161 words

HEADLINE: WHAT ARE THEY THINKING?

BYLINE: THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

BODY:

Clinton declined to create a bipartisan panel to review U.S. policy on Cuba.

His timidity on the point is inexplicable. He had ample political cover to set a bolder course. Former secretaries of state from Republican administrations had urged him to initiate the review, as had more than a dozen GOP senators, many of them of the extra-conservative persuasion.

So why cling to a failed policy? To placate Castrophobes in south Florida and their mossback champions in Congress?

For 40 years this crowd has concentrated solely on Castro's downfall; never mind the bitter consequences of isolation and embargo on the Cuban people.

What can they be thinking? The way to hasten the end of Cuba's long night is not to extend the darkness but to open up the country to trade and visitors and ideas. The only thing to thrive in Cuba after 40 years of U.S. enmity is Castro's tyranny. Isn't it time Washington tried a different tack? GEORGIE ANNE GEYER SAYS:

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: THE FRONT BURNER

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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January 9, 1999 Saturday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: EDITORIALS & FORUM; Pg. 8B

LENGTH: 123 words

HEADLINE: ISOLATION SUITS HIM

BYLINE: By GEORGE ANNE GEYER

BODY:

Early reports from Havana say the canny Cuban dictator's response is "cool." And you can bet your booties that it is!

If character is destiny, and it is, he will soon be doing exactly what he has done repeatedly in the past. In 1995, when a similar policy change was in the works, for instance, he shot down the two unarmed planes of the Cuban exile group "Brothers to the Rescue," thus guaranteeing that there would be no changes. The still-undeniable fact is that Fidel Castro does not want any American "opening" that would give Americans any real power or influence in Cuba and thus erode his absolute power.

Castro does not really care about the U.S. embargo, for it suits his real purpose, which is the isolation of Cuba.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: THE FRONT BURNER

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

Jim Hoagland



Clinton takes timid step toward Cuba

WASHINGTON—In his final days Fidel Castro endures an appropriate fate: The old revolutionary who once consciously sought to drag two superpowers into nuclear confrontation has become a geopolitical bone. His only importance comes from the energy others put into scrapping over and gnawing at him.

When Secretary of State Madeleine Albright staged a pre-emptive strike against a full review of America's obsolete and self-defeating Cuba policy this week, her real target was not Castro. The small opening offered as a substitute for a policy review and dramatic change will have marginal or no impact on the entrenched status of the world's last historical communist dictator.

Don't misunderstand. Albright's changes are certainly better than a slap in the face with a wet fish. They are in fact the kind of steps that a bold, innovative president would have taken on Day 1 of Term 2 as a commitment to bringing full change in U.S.-Cuban relations and an end to embargo within his presidency.

Clinton's mind and boldness were elsewhere. Cuba could wait. Two years after his second inauguration, and almost a full year after the mind-opening visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba, Clinton abruptly announced on Jan. 5 that he would accept Albright's recommendation for an easing of restrictions on the flow of mail, money and travelers to the Caribbean island.

This quarter-loaf fell out of the oven between two more ambitious and worthy efforts to question the U.S. embargo on Cuba. Clinton's plan was clearly influenced, if not triggered, by them.

Also figuring in the timing mix is a tentatively scheduled trip to and speeches in Florida by Albright. Such is the importance of appearance, and of the short run, in policy-making in the administration of the ninth American president Castro has bedeviled.

Clinton and Albright seem unwilling to accept the political costs for Al Gore in Florida and New Jersey of understanding that Castro today is weak enough to be negotiated out the door of power. Castro is a relic of another era and another battle.

In the 1962 missile crisis, he brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the edge of nuclear war and actually pushed Moscow to respond with atomic rockets to the U.S. landing on Cuba he thought imminent. Today he is an anachronism in what has become the decade-long Aftermath of the Cold War.

The full-loaf effort led by Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) and other conservatives to have Congress and the White House empower a national commission to review and revise U.S. policy toward Cuba is the right idea at the right time.

Warner has made no secret of his view that the commission would be looking at drastically revising or ending the 37-year U.S. trade embargo. He has eloquently described the costs to U.S. foreign policy of a mindlessly enforced embargo that serves little purpose. It merely gives Castro an external excuse for the glaring failures of his regime and intensifies friction between Washington and its most important allies.

"We allow food and medicine to get into North Korea. We allow food and medicine to get into Iraq. And we still deny this tiny country basic things," Warner said of Cuba, correctly calling Clinton's decision to pre-empt the commission "a missed opportunity."

Administration officials say they doubt that the Warner approach would prevail in the Senate and bring the changes in the Helms-Burton law and other legislation needed to end the embargo. "We did not want to use up political capital in naming a commission that would probably not be effective," said one State Department official. "We felt it was more realistic to split the difference. We felt it was not a time to go through a major self-examination on this."

But the administration did even less than the half-loaf approach urged on it by a Council on Foreign Relations report released this week. The report stresses the importance of opening Cuba to U.S. market forces. They also hold out the possibility of military-to-military contacts and U.S.-Cuban cooperation in the war on drugs.

The real message that comes from Clinton's tiny steps is that he is still not prepared to exercise leadership on Cuba as both he and Castro fade into the sunset.

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CUBA CONTACT: Proposal is small step toward more effective policy

January 8, 1999

You'll never convince Jesse Helms or the hard-line Cuban exiles in Miami, but the fastest way to subvert Fidel Castro is to end the embargo and drench him in Levis and Walkmans, Yankees T-shirts and Taco Bells. The aging dictator keeps insisting, in his infamous, self-indulgent harangues, that the only choice for Cuba is socialism or death. Let a few more dollars into the country, and the Cuban people will quickly figure out some better options.

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Given the Orioles' showing last season, it may not be great baseball, but it's smart diplomacy. Let the fans in Cuba, where baseball is the national passion, contemplate a few free agents in action. They'll get the point, which is less about money than about the rewards of liberty and self-determination. The hard-line anti-Castro lobby won't like playing ball with the Cubans. But in any matchup between today's Cuba and a free society, it's Castro who stands to be the loser.

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Copyright 1999 The News and Observer
The News and Observer (Raleigh, NC)

January 8, 1999 Friday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL/OPINION; Pg. A17

LENGTH: 816 words

HEADLINE: Clinton's half-steps toward Cuba

BYLINE: Susanna Rodell, Correspondent

BODY:

ROUGEMONT -- Forget Monica. Forget sex, lies and audiotape. Let's talk about Cuba.

It bothers me that the president couldn't keep his pants on and lied to us all about it; but it bothers me a whole lot more that he's a coward when it comes to certain obvious, rational, humanitarian policy decisions he could make - if only he had a bit of political courage.

Take Cuba. As an old Latin America hand said to me the other day, only if you're the biggest, strongest country in the world can you afford a 40-year mistake. That mistake is our Cuba policy. It's an abject failure, any way you look at it.

We have not succeeded in isolating Cuba, except from ourselves. The rest of the world is flocking into Havana, eager to do business.

We have not succeeded in turning the Cuban people against Fidel Castro. True, he's a dictator, but he's done a lot better by the Cuban people than his predecessor, Fulgencio Batista, whom the United States supported. During Fidel's reign Cuba's literacy rate has soared and health care has been extended into regions where people went for generations without seeing a doctor. True, the people are still poor, but it's always been a poor country for most of its citizens and Castro has succeeded in blaming our embargo for most of Cuba's ills. Despite our best efforts, most Cubans still love Fidel.

The folks who lost out were the rich, the ones who ended up in Miami and formed themselves into one of the most effective single-issue lobby groups in the history of American politics.

Headed by the recently deceased Jorge Mas Canosa, members of the Cuban-American National Foundation contributed millions to various congresspersons, among them the senior senator from this state. Mas Canosa succeeded in presenting the Cuban-American community as a monolith, rabidly anti-Castro to the point where any move to thaw our relations with Castro has been seen by generations of American leaders - Bill Clinton included - as political suicide.

Florida is a populous state. Cuban-Americans vote in presidential elections

and Mas Canosa's coffers were deep.

In fact, a new generation of Cuban-Americans is not so fanatically opposed to softening relations with Havana. Some even favor it.

Even so, we've ended up in the ludicrous position of having warmer relations with China, a much more ruthless and dangerous dictatorship, than we do with Cuba.

Consider the Helms-Burton Act, signed into law in 1996. As the name suggests, it was co-authored by the aforementioned senior senator and it imposes onerous restrictions on other countries doing business with Cuba, to the point where it has soured our relations with some of our staunchest allies. It calls for trade sanctions against any country doing business with Cuba. Problem is, everybody is doing business with Cuba. Canada is, the entire European Union is, Mexico is. The act functionally turns our best friends into trade enemies.

The practice of punishing countries for their trade relations with other countries is called a secondary boycott, and it's contrary to international law. But hey, we've just got this thing about Cuba, OK? Don't make us mad, says Helms-Burton.

Now Clinton was doing OK with this for a while. He steadfastly refused to sign the bill into law, until in 1996 a couple of ill-advised adventurers decided to fly their airplanes close to Cuban air space and got themselves shot down. Outrage! How could our brave president show he was not intimidated by this flagrant defense of Cuban national sovereignty? Why, he could sign Helms-Burton! Which he did.

Since then, Clinton has prevented some of the act's more odious provisions from being carried out by signing six-month waivers - a sure sign that it's a bad law in the first place.

This week, our president was offered the perfect escape. A bipartisan group of senior statesmen, including former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, suggested creating a bipartisan commission to review our Cuba policy. But even this relatively safe course was too dangerous. Clinton was taking no chances on messing things up for Al Gore in 2000.

Instead he'll take a couple of relatively modest steps, allowing direct mail service to Havana and letting people send more money to their relatives in Cuba. And we may just see, finally, the kind of contact that humanized the Chinese in the '70s: sports diplomacy (ping-pong then, baseball now).

In fact, it's an astute move. Sending the Baltimore Orioles to Havana is a move that even rabid Castro-hater Sen. Robert Torricelli doesn't object to, and it could just create a surge of interest and affection for the tiny country that continues to produce some of the world's best ballplayers.

And there's a chance, we're told, that the Cubans could also play here.

A modest suggestion: If that comes to pass, Bill, do something really courageous. Let Fidel throw out the first ball.

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Snuggling up to Fidel

“Socialism or death” used to be the battle cry of Fidel Castro’s revolution. Now, under policy changes adopted by the Clinton administration, more Cubans will reap the spoils of capitalism. Already strict observance of communist dogmas have been eroded on the island by a thriving black market, a nascent private sector, rampant prostitution that caters to pleasure-seeking tourists and the dollars those freewheeling tourists bring to the country. These changes have been brought upon by the breakdown of a flawed system, rather than any purposeful move towards free-market reforms by the government.

None of these factors can counteract the crippling stranglehold of communism, however. Cuba’s economic performance has dropped 38 percent in the last five years and the discontinuation of Soviet aid after 1989 was devastating to the country’s inefficient economy.

The changes in policy the Clinton administration has instituted can be broken down into two areas: allowing Cubans greater access to material goods and cash, on one hand, and greater access to U.S. culture and ideas, on the other. The former may prove problematic in some cases and inconsequential in others. Independent restaurateurs and farmers in Cuba will be allowed to purchase U.S. food and farming equipment, the Cuban government willing. According to some Cuba experts, however, the degree of autonomy these budding entrepreneurs are able to maintain from the government is limited, and the regime might find a way to benefit from the sales.

American organizations will now also be able to send significant cash contributions to non-government entities, but there are few such groups on the island. In addition, the administration has decided to allow any U.S. citizen to send up to \$1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba, except senior Communist officials, while before only citizens with Cuban relatives could send cash. Some analysts estimate, however, that money sent to Cuba from the U.S. far exceeded the legal limit. At any rate, the legalization of greater remittances will facilitate the sending of

money and may prove to serve U.S. interests since they send home the message, in material form, that free economies generate prosperity and could help wet appetites for political and economic opening.

The administration has also facilitated direct and indirect contact between Cubans and U.S. residents by allowing an increase in direct flights between the two countries, restoring mail service and allowing cultural and athletic exchanges, such as baseball games. This will prove to be a fortunate development. Any influx of U.S. ideas to the island could only prove positive.

U.S. voters need be wary, however, of the Clinton administration’s unspoken position towards Cuba. A commission to review U.S. policy, proposed by Sen. John Warner, was dubbed the Gore commission by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart because of their perception of the Vice President’s support for such a study. The administration has decided to reject the commission, but this was, according to some insiders, Clintonian political maneuvering in anticipation of elections in the year 2000.

Clinton & Co. have repeatedly waved the Helms-Burton law of 1996 and had a faint-hearted response to the shooting down of an unarmed civilian aircraft by the Cuban Air Force that same year. In the case Albert Gore were to become the U.S.’s next head of state, voters should anticipate future waiving of Helms-Burton legislation and an attempt to discontinue the U.S. trade embargo.

A weakening of the embargo would undermine the U.S.’s national interests. It is imperative that the U.S. keep a firm stand on these policies. Normalization of relations with Cuba is no magic formula. A large part of the rest of the world has already done so, and Castro is still Castro. The expropriation of U.S. assets is outright thievery and any country that does so must suffer consequences. The pressure on Cuba serves not only to weaken the regime, but is a standing testament to the consequences of Castro-style policies. The suffering of the Cuban people will end only after Castro is out.

Motherhood and Marines

Chicago Tribune

Thursday, January 7, 1999

Editorial

Cuba policy needs bolder changes

After decades in a deep-freeze, any uptick in the warmth of U.S.-Cuba relations must be counted as good news. And so it is with the Clinton administration's announcement Tuesday that it intends to loosen, if only a little, certain aspects of the American economic embargo on the island.

Still, the timidity of the measures—in apparent deference yet again to Miami's hysterically anti-Castro lobby—is a serious disappointment to those who hoped the president would launch a far more dramatic overhaul of our bankrupt policies toward Cuba.

Recently the administration has been offered several political covers for such an overhaul. A bipartisan commission, including such Republican heavyweights as former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, has volunteered to study this nation's Cuba policy and offer alternatives. The prestigious Council on Foreign Relations presented its own plate of policy options, well short of abrogating the constrictive Helms-Burton Act.

Before that, a bipartisan Congressional group had proposed a partial lifting of the embargo, while the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—hardly a coven of Castro sympathizers—urged the administration to make a move to lift some trade restrictions.

Moreover, Clinton's lame-duck status—and his search for a legacy amid all the scandals—also would have suggested bolder moves were in the works.

But for now, the biggest changes will be to allow United States citizens to send money to Cuba, to increase the number of direct flights to the island and to allow direct mail service, along with freer artistic and academic exchanges. Independent Cuban farmers and restaurant owners—an infinitesimal group—will be allowed to buy fertilizer and other goods directly from the U.S.

Administration officials argue that any opening between the two countries will undermine the grip of the Castro regime. In fact, hundreds of millions of legal and illegal dollars already flow to Cuba yearly from the U.S. This particular policy change is so limited that it's unlikely to accelerate any democratic transition in Cuba.

A bolder policy shift, even without completely lifting trade sanctions, would have deprived Castro of his most potent propaganda weapon—his litany of complaints about U.S. aggression—and forced him to confront his own people's most urgent question: After 40 years of revolution, why are things in our country still so miserable?

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

When Fidel Castro Goes

POST-COLD WAR American policy on Cuba has been hung up in a stalemate between those favoring the 37-year embargo and those believing it obsolete and inhumane. Sen. John Warner proposed a rescue in the form of a national bipartisan policy-review commission; he delivered the moderate Republicans. But the administration, cautious to a fault, cut its own deal. To accommodate hard-line opinion in Miami and the Senate, it backed away from the policy-review commission. For the rest, it now proposes to modestly extend modest earlier steps to widen humanitarian, economic and cultural contacts with the Cuban people and while continuing to deny relief to the communist government.

These steps go not far but in the sensible direction taken by a more ambitious new report from the Council on Foreign Relations. Led by former Democratic and Republican Latin-policy hands Bernard Aronson and William D. Rogers, this report addresses the same stalemate that stirred Sen. Warner.

The premise of all but the hardest-liners is that the Cold War is over and that the part of American policy calling for containment of Cuba worked and needs to be replaced by

engagement. The United States no longer harbors aggressive intentions toward Cuba and, in Washington's eyes, Cuba no longer poses a strategic or political threat.

But that leaves unresolved whether Fidel Castro can be compelled to yield power in exchange for the lifting of the embargo—unlikely; or whether the prior lifting will itself loosen his grip—likelier but hardly a sure thing. The administration's own tactic, one supported by the Council on Foreign Relations report, is to finesse the embargo issue in favor of a more realistic step-by-step opening.

The council draws attention to the models of de-communization provided by Soviet collapse. One lesson is that the bottom-up civil society built by citizens promises the smoothest transition from top-down communist rule. A second is to make a place for former (non-criminal) officials prepared to turn from communist allegiance to cooperation with democrats. But of all the questions pending about Cuba and America in the 21st century, the sharpest goes to the future connection between Cubans who stayed on under communism and those who fled and may wish to return when Fidel Castro, 73, goes.

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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL)

January 7, 1999, Thursday, Broward Metro EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. 14A

LENGTH: 460 words

HEADLINE: EASING OF RESTRICTIONS ON CUBA A WELCOME, BUT INCOMPLETE STEP

BODY:

Forty years ago on New Year's Day, Fidel Castro's band of 800 guerrillas overthrew the corrupt government of Fulgencio Batista and turned Cuba into the first communist state in the Western Hemisphere.

Dwight D. Eisenhower was president of the United States in 1959 and Castro's coup surely was as shocking to American policy-makers as it was to Batista's poorly led armed forces.

In the four decades since that fateful Jan. 1, eight more American presidents have sought to dislodge Castro with policies ranging from armed intervention by exiles (the ill-fated Bay of Pigs operation in 1961) to economic sanctions, international isolation and unremitting hostility. Yet the 72-year-old dictator still rules his impoverished police state only 90 miles from Key West, to the endless frustration of South Florida's Cuban-American community.

Despite abundant evidence that the United States' long-term Cuba policy has been not only ineffective but counter-productive, imposing severe hardship on average Cubans while strengthening Castro's control, the fiction persists that Castro will topple if only the U.S. keeps turning the economic screws.

Bill Clinton, the latest president to buy into this fantasy, took a welcome but incomplete step toward a more enlightened engagement with Cuba Monday when he announced plans to increase people-to-people contacts, allow more cash transfers from American citizens to needy Cubans and private sales of food to non-governmental agencies.

Clinton stopped short of creating a bipartisan commission to review Washington's failed Cuba policy, as he should have done, but the changes he did propose should help individual Cubans and small businessmen in their efforts to move toward a market economy and promote democratic reforms.

Direct mail service, the resumption of direct charter flights to Havana and authorization of cash transfers up to \$ 1,200 a year from any American to any Cuban, not just to relatives, make up the Clinton plan. The rationale is that as more Cubans hold dollars, they will become less dependent for survival on Castro's regime.

Cuban cooperation with the U.S. initiatives is uncertain, but a test of Havana's receptivity should come soon when a delegation from baseball's Baltimore Orioles, who conduct spring training in Fort Lauderdale, will propose.

Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale), January 7, 1999

a series of exhibition games against Cuban teams in March, with gate receipts earmarked for independent charities.

One of Clinton's predecessors, Richard Nixon, used "ping-pong diplomacy" to prepare Americans for his historic diplomatic overture to China in the 1970s. If "baseball diplomacy" can help Clinton open a promising new era of pragmatic engagement with Cuba, it is long past time to start the ball rolling.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, AP file photo; Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro speaks to supporters on Jan. 8, 1959 at the Batista military base "Columbia," now known as Ciudad Libertad.

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A Times Editorial

Overcautious on Cuba

The time is right for bold changes in U.S. policy toward the island nation, but the president takes only a few small steps.

© St. Petersburg Times, published January 7, 1999

President Clinton is often lauded for his sense of timing, but he just missed a good opportunity to repair U.S. policy toward Cuba. Last year's papal visit to Cuba and the death of hard-line exile leader Jorge Mas Canosa gave the president the opportunity to draw America's 37-year embargo of Cuba to a close. Instead, the administration unveiled a set of initiatives Tuesday that failed to capitalize on the momentum toward normalizing relations.

The White House announced steps to expand mail service and charter air flights between the United States and Cuba. It also eased restrictions on U.S. food sales to Cuba and expanded the laws allowing Americans to send donated cash. If all goes well, the Baltimore Orioles will soon play exhibition games against Cuba's national team.

The measures are designed to build bridges to the Cuban people while embarrassing their government, and they are welcome as far as they go. But they fall short of a comprehensive policy change that could foster a broader climate for democratic reform within Cuba.

Nothing wrong with a ballgame or two. Given the vitriol between Cuban and American leaders over the years, it is worthwhile for ordinary people from both countries to expand their contacts. But such exchanges already take place in other settings, from family reunions to private aid missions and academic conferences. The initiatives announced this week are a cautious step forward at a time when conditions are ripe for a dramatic break with the past.

The president rejected a proposal by former diplomats and moderate members of Congress for a full-scale review of U.S. policy toward Cuba. U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-Va., called for the appointment of a national commission that would conduct the first comprehensive review of sanctions against Cuba in decades. However, some cold warriors and extremists within the Cuban exile community oppose any such process.

Warner's idea, which is long overdue, is endorsed by some of the earliest architects of Cuba's containment because it provides the

framework for ensuring America's long-term interests in the region. Appointing the commission would increase the pressure on Fidel Castro to grant a new degree of political and economic freedom to Cuban citizens. It also would send the signal to ordinary Cubans that Washington views the Castro dictatorship as a temporary impediment to normal relations.

Typically, the president instead chose an incremental approach. Depending on how Castro responds to the Clinton overture, it may lead to a broader relaxation of relations in the future. However, the White House missed another opportunity to make a dramatic gesture that could have hastened the end of Castro's stranglehold on Cuban society.

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January 7, 1999, Thursday, FIVE STAR LIFT EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. B6

LENGTH: 584 words

HEADLINE: LET'S PLAY BALL

BODY:

U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS

Call it baseball diplomacy. Just as ping-pong prepared the way for more open U.S.-Chinese relations, a passion for baseball may help thaw U.S.-Cuban relations, still an icy relic of the Cold War. The Baltimore Orioles are hoping to play charity exhibition games with the Cuban national team, one in Havana and another in this country.

The baseball games are just the glitziest changes announced by President Bill Clinton on Tuesday. They also include the more quotidian: easing athletic, cultural and academic exchanges; establishing direct mail service; allowing more Americans to send money to individual Cuban families; authorizing the sale of food and other agricultural products to non-governmental organizations, such as churches and charities. Taken together, they are meant to "help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban government," said Mr. Clinton.

Be sure, the president's announcement is welcome and long overdue. But this opening falls far short of what the president could have done and should have done. A report from the Council on Foreign Relations, which has found favor among some conservatives, urged Mr. Clinton to take more dramatic steps, like approving certain companies to do business in Cuba. The president declined to do so.

Mr. Clinton also rejected the idea of Sen. John Warner, a Republican from Virginia, for a bipartisan commission to review U.S. policy toward Cuba. Presumably, a commission would give Mr. Clinton the political cover to end the embargo. "It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism," said Mr. Warner.

The world has changed since the embargo was first imposed, but the core of U.S. policy, shaped largely by the early waves of Cuban exiles, remains frozen in time and enmity.

The embargo was originally supposed to be a tool for getting rid of Fidel Castro. It hasn't worked. In and of itself, that is the single biggest reason for abolishing it. Why hang on to a policy that's a demonstrable failure, especially now when it may be counterproductive?

In and out of Cuba, people realize that Fidel Castro - and his era - are in their twilight years. The man who thumbed his nose at every president since John Kennedy is not immortal, and that fact is gradually transforming Cuba from the

inside out. Reports from Cuba suggest a gradual blossoming of civil society. Even the pope, a staunch anti-communist, has chosen engagement as the best way for nurturing that embryonic impulse. It's apparently paying off for the church.

If U.S. policy toward China and Vietnam are any guides, that should be the U.S. approach as well. The Clinton administration regularly justifies trade and closer economic ties with these countries as a part of a strategy for fostering political liberalization.

The same argument should apply to Cuba. Historically, the United States has much stronger ties to Cuba and would likely be more influential in shaping Cuban culture and society. Unlike conceivably China, Cuba poses absolutely no military threat to the United States. Nor does it pose a threat to Latin America. In fact, the majority of the countries within the Organization of American States support reintegrating Cuba into the hemisphere.

Cuban policy has rested for too long in the hands of exiles who dream about a triumphant return to Cuba. Mr. Clinton should craft a policy that reflects the interests of the whole country, not just a special-interest group.

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January 07, 1999, Thursday, 0 South Pinellas Edition

SECTION: EDITORIAL; EDITORIALS; Pg. 14A

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HEADLINE: Overcautious on Cuba

BODY:

The time is right for bold changes in U.S. policy toward the island nation, but the president takes only a few small steps. President Clinton is often lauded for his sense of timing, but he just missed a good opportunity to repair U.S. policy toward Cuba. Last year's papal visit to Cuba and the death of hard-line exile leader Jorge Mas Canosa gave the president the opportunity to draw America's 37-year embargo of Cuba to a close. Instead, the administration unveiled a set of initiatives Tuesday that failed to capitalize on the momentum toward normalizing relations. The White House announced steps to expand mail service and charter air flights between the United States and Cuba. It also eased restrictions on U.S. food sales to Cuba and expanded the laws allowing Americans to send donated cash. If all goes well, the Baltimore Orioles will soon play exhibition games against Cuba's national team. The measures are designed to build bridges to the Cuban people while embarrassing their government, and they are welcome as far as they go. But they fall short of a comprehensive policy change that could foster a broader climate for democratic reform within Cuba. Nothing wrong with a ballgame or two. Given the vitriol between Cuban and American leaders over the years, it is worthwhile for ordinary people from both countries to expand their contacts. But such exchanges already take place in other settings, from family reunions to private aid missions and academic conferences. The initiatives announced this week are a cautious step forward at a time when conditions are ripe for a dramatic break with the past.

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Press Journal (Vero Beach, FL)

January 7, 1999, Thursday

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. A10

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HEADLINE: IMPROVING CUBA POLICY

BODY:

President Clinton's decision to ease sanctions on Cuba is only common sense. The 37-year-old policy serves no one. What justification there was for a wholesale embargo - the threat of communism spreading from Cuba into the hemisphere at large - has long since passed.

Unfortunately, the president hasn't gone far enough, even though a bipartisan Council on Foreign Relations task force - co-chaired by former officials in the Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon administrations - has given him ample political cover to go further.

Building on a few token steps taken last year after Pope John Paul II's Cuban visit, the White House will allow the sale of food and agricultural items such as seed and fertilizer to private restaurants and farms. There are few such entities in Cuba, although this may spur formation of more, and since the State Department must OK sales on a case-by-case basis, approval could be cumbersome.

The White House also will work toward resumption of direct-mail service and allow more charter flights, letting them service cities other than Miami and Havana. And, too, State Department officials will streamline the visa and permission process for religious, scientific, educational and athletic exchanges, such as a proposed baseball exhibition game between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team.

And any U.S. resident, not just Americans with relatives on the island, can remit up to \$ 1,200 a year to Cuban families.

Clinton's proposals are actually timid. He could have been bolder, as the council urged, and lifted most limits on travel and remittances and food and medicine sales altogether. He could have allowed Americans, with some restrictions, to invest in the island.

American policy has been tied up in the personality of Fidel Castro, at 72 a fading force. The United States should be thinking beyond Castro. Clinton's actions are steps in the right direction.

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Half Steps on Cuban Change

Thursday, January 7, 1999

San Francisco Chronicle
CHRONICLE SECTIONS

IT WILL TAKE political courage, not visiting baseball teams and money mailed home, to change this country's rusting relations with Cuba. This week President Clinton dodged a chance to launch a bipartisan commission to appraise the 37-year-old boycott of Fidel Castro's island kingdom.

Instead, he approved a batch of changes that lower the U.S.-Cuban barriers, but only modestly. The Baltimore Orioles will play a home and an away game with the Cuban national team. Cuban Americans can use restored mail service to send up to \$1,200 per year to relatives. Plane flights will increase, and private groups may send food and supplies to non-government agencies in Cuba.

The changes suggest progress in dismantling the ossified trade and diplomatic barriers. But they were concocted to divert attention from the central question over continuing an American embargo which has punished Castro and stagnated his economy.

The job of containing him has long been over. Threadbare Cuba no longer sends its soldiers abroad to oppose U.S. interests, and 72-year-old Castro is no longer a showman- revolutionary likely to win over Latin America. Why can't Washington discard an old policy?

The reason is American politics. In particular, Clinton is worried about alienating Cuban American voters in swing states such as Florida and New Jersey from his preferred successor, Vice President Al Gore. Setting the bipartisan commission in motion would be seen by these anti-Castro voters as a sellout.

But after nearly four decades, the heavy-handed embargo of Cuba needs a fresh look. The island's politics have changed, its subversive threat is a faint flicker, and a younger generation of Cubans need a taste of America and its jostling ideas.

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A turning point is at hand, yet it will take courage and strength in Washington to break through the old concepts on Cuba. Instead, short-term political calculations continue to block opportunities for change.

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Cuba policy

Marginal changes are better than nothing

01/07/99

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President Clinton's rejection of a bipartisan panel to review Washington's policy toward Cuba is unfortunate, but predictable. Chalk it up to electoral politics.

With the approach of the 2000 presidential election, the outgoing Democratic chief executive is unlikely to act upon the bold recommendation of the business wing of the Republican Party. While otherwise logical and desirable, a full-scale review of Cuba policy could undermine the prospects of the Democratic Party's presidential nominee.

To put it bluntly, Cuban-American conservatives are politically powerful in Florida. And Florida is a state where only political donations and electoral votes are considered sweeter and juicier than oranges.

So Mr. Clinton took the baby steps of relaxing the embargo by facilitating greater people-to-people contacts and an easier flow of money to individuals. Even so, there was muttering from anti-Castro elements in Florida that the main beneficiary would be Fidel Castro.

But it was a sign that political times are changing that staunch anti-Castro figures such as Sen. Robert Toricelli found many of the new initiatives "unobjectionable." Those include:

- * More U.S.-Cuba charter flights involving cities other than Miami and Havana.
- * Improved mail service, perhaps including service by FedEx and UPS.
- * Sale of fertilizers and farm machinery to individual Cuban farmers.
- * Easier sale of food and medicine to individual

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Cubans and private businesses.

* The prospect of two baseball games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team, in Baltimore and Havana.

A thorough review of U.S. policy toward Cuba would have been preferable. That would likely have yielded a more comprehensive list of moves that would have been contingent upon specific reforms by the Castro regime. Such reforms could ease the transition from Mr. Castro's inevitable departure from the political scene - and reduce the prospect of dangerous repercussions from a scramble for power.

The administration justifiably argues that the initiatives are designed to help the Cuban people, rather than the government of President Castro.

The goal of the United States should be to demonstrate to the Cuban people that the U.S. government supports their bid for freedom and an improved quality of life. With or without a bipartisan commission, a step-by-step relaxation of the embargo should help send that message.

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C.S. Monitor

PA: OPINION, COLUMN, Page 11
 HD: Clinton Cuba shift is hardly enough
 BY: Pat M. Holt
 ED: ALL 01/07/1999
 TX:

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New year's day marked the 40th anniversary of the triumph of the Castro revolution in Cuba. Fidel Castro is by far the world's senior dictator.

The United States has a long history of accommodating itself to equally or more brutal Latin American dictators. One of the worst was Leonidas Trujillo of the Dominican Republic. FDR said of Trujillo, "He's an SOB, but he's our SOB." That explains why we have had such trouble accepting Mr. Castro. He is not, and never has been, nor ever will be, ours.

Since the days of the Monroe Doctrine, the US has had a hegemonic relationship with Latin America; but with pre-Castro Cuba it was something more. From the beginning of Cuban independence following the Spanish-American War, the US unilaterally asserted the right to intervene in Cuba and did so. American ambassadors acted as pro-consuls. Castro stopped that.

It did not take long for Castro in power to confirm the State Department's worst fears, and the American government shortly began to scheme for his overthrow. To no avail. Castro has survived the Bay of Pigs, the missile crisis (the only time he was a genuine threat to the US), countless dirty tricks hatched by the CIA, American economic embargoes, and the loss of \$3 billion or \$4 billion dollars a year in Soviet aid.

With the exception of Carter who made a modest, short-lived effort at rapprochement, every American president from Eisenhower to Clinton has followed the same policy of implacable opposition.

The policy has been motivated less by sober assessment of the US national interest than by Castro's destruction of US influence in Cuba.

In some respects, the Castro revolution was as much against the US position in Cuba as it was against the then Cuban government. Especially in its early days, the revolution had a strong puritanical streak. It ended gambling and open, big-scale prostitution, both of which were supported by American tourists and returned large profits to the American mafia. When the CIA was looking for a hit man to knock off Castro, the mafia was more than happy to supply one.

American interests in pre-Castro Cuba controlled more than vice; through legitimate investments, they also controlled a good deal of the Cuban economy. Castro ended this by expropriating American investments. This has given rise to large claims of American citizens against the Cuban government, but Cuba is hardly the first country to incur such claims.

The US has steadily raised the bar of what Cuba must do to get back in US good graces. When Cuba meets one standard, the US demands another. For years, we said Cuba had to get rid of Soviet influence. That was accomplished, though not by anything Cuba did, through the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

No longer having this to complain about, the US said Cuba had to democratize its politics, increase its respect for human rights, and liberalize its economy. Large steps toward the last goal have been taken under pressure of the cessation of Soviet aid. Desperate for foreign exchange, the Castro government is catering to Canadian and European tourists and is tolerating a resurgence of open prostitution.

The pope's visit a year ago brought some improvement in freedom of religion, and it was OK this year to celebrate Christmas. But the political system continues to be authoritarian. We tolerate this in China, but we demand more from Cuba.

A potent influence on American policy has been the large, vociferous, anti-Castro exile community in the US, concentrated in Miami with substantial numbers also in New Jersey. Many of these exiles dream of a return to the status quo ante in a post-Castro Cuba. This is unrealistic fantasy; some Castro policies can be reversed, but the omelette he made is never going to be unscrambled.

WHA/AS

The American obsession with Castro has long since become counterproductive. It is one thing to prohibit American trade with Cuba, foolish though this may be. It is something else to try to impose such a policy on third

Chicago Tribune

Thursday, January 7, 1999

Editorial

Cuba policy needs bolder changes

After decades in a deep-freeze, any uptick in the warmth of U.S.-Cuba relations must be counted as good news. And so it is with the Clinton administration's announcement Tuesday that it intends to loosen, if only a little, certain aspects of the American economic embargo on the island.

Still, the timidity of the measures—in apparent deference yet again to Miami's hysterically anti-Castro lobby—is a serious disappointment to those who hoped the president would launch a far more dramatic overhaul of our bankrupt policies toward Cuba.

Recently the administration has been offered several political covers for such an overhaul. A bipartisan commission, including such Republican heavyweights as former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, has volunteered to study this nation's Cuba policy and offer alternatives. The prestigious Council on Foreign Relations presented its own plate of policy options, well short of abrogating the constrictive Helms-Burton Act.

Before that, a bipartisan Congressional group had proposed a partial lifting of the embargo, while the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—hardly a coven of Castro sympathizers—urged the administration to make a move to lift some trade restrictions.

Moreover, Clinton's lame-duck status—and his search for a legacy amid all the scandals—also would have suggested bolder moves were in the works.

But for now, the biggest changes will be to allow United States citizens to send money to Cuba, to increase the number of direct flights to the island and to allow direct mail service, along with freer artistic and academic exchanges. Independent Cuban farmers and restaurant owners—an infinitesimal group—will be allowed to buy fertilizer and other goods directly from the U.S.

Administration officials argue that any opening between the two countries will undermine the grip of the Castro regime. In fact, hundreds of millions of legal and illegal dollars already flow to Cuba yearly from the U.S. This particular policy change is so limited that it's unlikely to accelerate any democratic transition in Cuba.

A bolder policy shift, even without completely lifting trade sanctions, would have deprived Castro of his most potent propaganda weapon—his litany of complaints about U.S. aggression—and forced him to confront his own people's most urgent question: After 40 years of revolution, why are things in our country still so miserable?

Chicago Tribune

Thursday, January 7, 1999

FRANCE

Complaint accuses Castro of drug links

PARIS—The daughter of an executed Cuban colonel filed a complaint against Fidel Castro in a French court Wednesday, accusing the Cuban leader of international drug trafficking.

Two men, represented by the same lawyer, also filed two other complaints charging Castro with crimes against humanity in the Investigating Magistrates Office of the Paris Court.

Ileana de la Guardia, the exiled daughter of Cuban Col. Antonio de la Guardia, said she hopes to clear her father's name and have Castro charged with involvement in drug

smuggling. Her father was convicted and executed by Cuba in 1989 with three other military officers for smuggling drugs into the United States.

Cuban drug trafficking "was a matter of state, organized by the highest echelons of power in the country," de la Guardia told reporters at the Palais de Justice. "It's impossible that Fidel Castro was unaware of this."

Judicial officials said a judge would open an investigation because of the complaint and that the probe could eventually lead to criminal charges.

5TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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January 7, 1999, Thursday, CONSTITUTION EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. 18A

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Try loosening screws on Cuba

BODY:

One of the enduring peculiarities of Bill Clinton's presidency is his blindspot regarding Cuba. While his positions on other world trouble spots are reasonably well thought out, he is in denial about Cuba. Intent on perpetuating 40 years of official hostility toward Fidel Castro's regime, he appears oblivious to the policy's utter failure.

Clinton first made a play for Cuban-American rightwingers' support when he campaigned in Florida's Democratic primary in 1992. As chief executive, he has never strayed far from their hard line --- not even this week when he riled the fiercest of Castro's exile enemies by announcing a handful of steps to strengthen people-to-people contacts between Americans and Cubans.

These measures, intended to open access to Castro's closed society and improve the lives of ordinary Cubans, are fine so far as they go. Unfortunately, Clinton declined to take an even more meaningful step --- the creation of a bipartisan panel to review U.S. policy on Cuba and hopefully to give it a much-needed overhaul.

Clinton's timidity on the point is inexplicable. He had ample political cover to set a bolder course. Three former secretaries of state from Republican administrations --- Kissinger, Schultz and Eagleburger --- had urged him to initiate the review, as had more than a dozen GOP senators, many of them of the extra-conservative persuasion.

So why cling to a failed policy? To placate Castrophobes in south Florida and their mossback champions in Congress like Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.)?

For 40 years this crowd has concentrated solely on Castro's downfall; never mind the bitter consequences of isolation and embargo on the Cuban people. To illustrate the point, Diaz-Balart objected immediately this week to the modest Clinton proposal that would make more food available to malnourished Cubans.

What can he and his cohorts be thinking? The way to hasten the end of Cuba's long night is not to extend the darkness but to open up the country to trade and visitors and ideas. The only thing to thrive in Cuba after 40 years of U.S. enmity is Castro's tyranny. Isn't it time Washington tried a different

tack?

GRAPHIC: Graphic :

CLINTON'S NEW PLAN FOR CUBA

Would permit any U.S. resident to send up to \$ 1,200 annually to needy Cubans.

Would allow sale of food and agricultural supplies to private Cuban groups.

Would improve direct mail service between U.S. and Cuba.

Would expand charter flights to Cuba, extending service to U.S. cities beside Miami.

Would let the Baltimore Orioles and Cuba's national team arrange exhibition baseball games.

Photo :

Iliana Lopz (left) buys stamps in Havana. / JOSE LUIS MAGHANA /
Associated Press

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 1999

Back to the future

The Clinton administration yesterday adroitly tiptoed along a fine line in ordering overdue changes in Cuba policy designed to encourage more

people-to-people (and baseball player-to-baseball player) contact while still enforcing the 37-year-old trade embargo. Anyone expecting (or fearing) some dramatic new overture to emerge from the ballyhoo might be disappointed, which we believe is good. In the main, the changes put into practice mirror positions that The Herald long has supported, with the single exception of a suspicious idea to allow the sale of fertilizer and other agricultural supplies to Cuban farmers.

There are obvious reasons for moving slowly here. Cuba "has always been a 'third rail' of U.S. policy," as former White House adviser Richard Nuccio says. "Touch it and you die." That's because of the political clout of South Florida's Cuban exiles, most of whom support the embargo. Any administration that dares tamper with it risks losing valuable allies in Florida, not to mention elections.

For the record, The Herald *always* has supported the ban on U.S. business dealings with or in Cuba. The idea, of course, is to prevent needless enrichment of Cuba's totalitarian government. But we just as vigorously support the so-called Track II of the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act, developed by Mr. Nuccio. While Track I choked off trade, Track II attempts to promote civil society by allowing private groups to provide humanitarian aid to people in Cuba and by encouraging cultural and academic exchanges.

We welcome yesterday's proactive Cuba initiatives because they enhance the Track II approach. Among them are: allowing any U.S. resident, not just relatives, to send cash to families and non-governmental groups in Cuba; increasing direct passenger flights; restoring direct-mail service; and encouraging cultural exchanges, including two exhibition baseball games where profits would go to charity. Of course the measures' impact will depend on the Cuban gov-

FOR A FREE CUBA Policy changes build on old idea: Cuba's future depends on its people.

ernment's willingness to agree. But Castro might be hard pressed to tell his people that they cannot enjoy money from U.S. relatives, or a good pro-baseball game.

That said, letting U.S. companies sell agricultural supplies in Cuba makes little sense. Any such sales could bolster the state, which virtually controls all food production. The measure smacks of some corporate lobby's sneaky way to get a foot in the door on Cuban trade.

The Clinton initiative — pushed by U.S. Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla. — also accomplishes one other thing: It torpedoes a request by Henry Kissinger and other former policymakers turned lobbyists to create a commission to review U.S. Cuba policy. That commission was a transparent attempt to end current sanctions by people whose interests in Cuba are more mercenary than democratic or humanitarian.

LOS ANGELES TIMES EDITORIALS



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Glacial Change in Cuba Policy

Washington's cautious easing of restrictions on Cuba represents welcome incremental progress. This week's announcement falls well short of a dramatic move that could nudge Cuba toward democracy and lead to more normal relations, but it has the virtue of being politically realistic.

The new U.S. policy—easing the flow of money into Cuba and of people both ways—will reduce the isolation of the Communist country. Out-and-out tourism, Cuba's biggest moneymaker, is excluded. But people-to-people exchanges will be allowed in the arts, sciences, religion, education and sports. The last could lead to a little baseball diplomacy. The Baltimore Orioles organization is seeking permission to play an exhibition game in baseball-crazy Cuba in March, with the Cuban national team later playing in Baltimore. Cuban charity would get the proceeds, a big help in one of the Caribbean's poorest countries.

An easing of restrictions on sending money

to Cuba will also help, as will more charter flights, direct mail service and the sale of food and agricultural supplies to Cuba's private restaurants and farmers.

The White House rejected a bolder recommendation from four former secretaries of State to create a bipartisan commission to review U.S.-Cuba policy. That commission, endorsed by Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William P. Rogers and Lawrence Eagleburger, could have set the stage for ending the punishing trade embargo in place since 1960, when Cuba, then a Soviet satellite, represented a real security threat to the United States.

Times have changed and Cuba has diminished in the 40 years since then. But as long as the aging Fidel Castro remains dictator, and the Cuban Americans who so despise him continue to wield political power in the United States, no big turnaround in Washington's policy is likely. The waiting game goes on.

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In a welcome move toward resuming relations with Cuba, President Clinton has approved measures to increase trade with the communist island. Typically, the administration has settled for a halfhearted policy designed to appease staunch opponents of Fidel Castro.

Recommended by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the changes will allow any U.S. citizen -- not just relatives -- to send up to \$ 1,200 a year to Cubans, and permit more direct flights and mail service to the island. And for the first time since the early 1960s, the Baltimore Orioles would be allowed to play two exhibition baseball games in Havana with Cuba's national team.

Those changes are all well and good, designed to ease the harsh impact of 37 years of trade sanctions on the Cuban people. But they do not go far enough. The Clinton administration rejected a wider proposal supported by 24 Democratic and Republican senators to review and revise all aspects of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Clinton has been rightly criticized for a foreign policy that changes with the political winds. Using the excuse of spreading democracy and increasing U.S. business opportunities abroad, the White House has removed sanctions against the former Soviet Union, Vietnam and that most brazen of human rights violators, China. To leave tough sanctions in place against Cuba smacks of hypocrisy.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 1999

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Don't just sit there.

Updated: Tuesday, Jan. 5, 1999 at 13:43 CST

Progress on Cuba

Star-Telegram editorial

It's about time.

The Clinton administration's announcement yesterday that initiatives designed to allow more direct contact between Americans and Cubans is long overdue.

We have long postulated that the best way to alter the minds and hearts of Cubans who remain committed to a communist dictatorship is to expose them to the benefits of a democratic lifestyle. What better way of accomplishing that than through the power of the almighty U.S. dollar?

Under present rules, cash transfers to Cuba can only be sent by family members in America. The new program would allow anyone in the United States to send as much as \$1,200 a year to any individual or group in Cuba, with the exception of high-ranking Cuban officials.

Cuba represents one of those strange disconnects in U.S. foreign policy that are so hard for the American people to understand. Trying to compare how we relate with, say, China and Cuba is like trying to compare apples to aircraft parts.

In China, where a Roman Catholic priest was just this week arrested and subjected to torture reminiscent of the brutal Cultural Revolution days, the U.S. trades highly sophisticated missile technology. In Cuba, where the pope was welcomed warmly last year and Christmas was once again openly celebrated, the United States has restricted the importation of food and medicine.

Substantive change is always a slow process, but in the case of Cuba it has been artificially slowed by a foreign policy that stopped making sense the day the Cold War ended. We hope this week's announcements are just the first of many to eliminate the embargoes on trade with Cuba.

Send your comments to letters@star-telegram.com

Don't just sit there.

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No hay un cambio de política de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba

Afirma Sebastián Arcos Casabón

Por ENA CURNOW

Sebastián Arcos Casabón, activista del Comité Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos, enfoca las medidas de la Casa Blanca hacia Cuba de una manera positiva. Para él, lejos de debilitar el embargo económico, las medidas fortalecen la Ley Torricelli y la Ley Helms-Burton. Y considera, además, que favorecen específicamente a la oposición interna dentro de la isla.

P: ¿Alteran estas medidas el curso de la política de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba?

R: No. Esto no se puede considerar de ninguna manera un cambio de política. La política sigue siendo la misma y el que crea que esto no es así, le recomiendo que se refiera al carril número 2 de la Ley Torricelli que se pasó en el año 92 y que fue adoptado por la Ley Helms-Burton. Considero que el embargo queda intacto y lo que sucede es que se flexibiliza, se amplía el carril número 2 de la Ley Torri-



ARCOS CASABON

celli que está dentro de la Ley Helms-Burton, instrumento jurídico que forma parte importante de la política hacia Cuba y que precisamente establece aumentar los contactos a nivel personal, incrementar el flujo, la co-

de ambos lados del Estrecho de la Florida, sin pasar por el gobierno cubano.

P: Una de las medidas más controversiales es la de facilitar productos a entidades privadas en la Isla. ¿Qué opinas?

R: Primero es muy difícil definir para quienes no manejan bien la situación cubana, quienes son no gubernamentales dentro de Cuba. Por ejemplo, el gobierno cubano arguye que la Federación de Mujeres Cubanas o los CDR lo son. Espero que el Departamento de Estado tenga en cuenta esto y actúe con mucho cuidado. Por otra parte, aún cuando el gobierno cubano acepte esto (hay declaraciones ya de disidentes internos, entre ellos mi tío Gustavo Arcos, en el sentido de que es muy difícil que el gobierno cubano acepte este tipo de medida) pero aún cuando la aceptara, su implementación en la práctica va a ser complicada. Esto no quiere decir que

(Pasa a la Pág. 2-B Col. 2)

No hay un cambio de política de EE.UU. hacia Cuba

(Viene de la Pág. 1-B)

yo esté en desacuerdo, sino que hay que trabajarla con mucho cuidado para no equivocarse y seguir en este camino que me parece muy inteligente de flexibilizar la política, los contactos por debajo del gobierno, sin tocar la parte principal del embargo, que es precisamente la presión económica y que, repito, considero que queda intacto. Todo esto me parece inteligente. Me parece que se debe seguir trabajando en esa dirección.

P: ¿Cómo acogerá la oposición interna estas medidas?

R: Creo que las acogerá con agrado. Mi tío Gustavo que no es de los más liberales entre los disidentes, reaccionó favorablemente. Me imagino que los demás las

verán también con buenos ojos. Esto redundará positivamente en los disidentes. El hecho de que se pueda enviar dinero a Cuba directamente sin necesidad que lo haga un familiar, aumenta el número de personas beneficiadas, las que entenderán así que los exiliados de Miami no queremos matarlos de hambre, al contrario, ayudarlos. Esta es una forma específica de cómo se debe trabajar con las nuevas medidas.

P: ¿Cuál será la reacción de Castro?

R: Sería muy interesante que el gobierno cubano dijera que no, por ejemplo a la posibilidad de que entidades privadas puedan comprar en el mercado norteamericano. Si

el gobierno cubano dijera que no, habría que ver como entonces va a justificar su actitud ante el resto del mundo, cuando ellos precisamente están diciendo que el pueblo cubano pasa necesidades por culpa del embargo.

P: De todas maneras el régimen de Castro va a recibir más divisas con estas medidas...

R: Eso es indiscutible. Todo el dinero que vaya a Cuba, de una manera u otra va a terminar en las arcas del gobierno. Esa es una realidad con la que tenemos que trabajar, pero lo que está tratando de hacer es que ese dinero pase primero por otros sectores de la sociedad cubana y los beneficie antes.



Caritas califica de "positivas" las medidas de EE.UU.

LA HABANA (EFE).- Mientras las autoridades de La Habana guardan silencio sobre las medidas respecto a Cuba anunciadas por Estados Unidos, la organización humanitaria católica "Caritas" las calificó de positivas.

La oficina del portavoz del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores declaró a la prensa que el Gobierno "estaba analizando" el mensaje del presidente norteamericano, Bill Clinton, y que posteriormente haría una declaración.

Por su parte, el presidente de "Caritas Cuba", Rolando Suárez, dijo que "las medidas son muy positivas aunque falta ver su des-

arrollo y los días posteriores son muy importantes".

Suárez recordó que su organización ya ha recibido en el pasado donaciones de material médico por parte de la "Catholic Relief Services", su correspondiente en EE.UU., que fueron distribuidas a través de los organismos oficiales pues se trataba de equipo avanzado para el tratamiento de enfermos graves.

"Lo que nos gustaría aplicar sería un programa de ayuda humanitaria en alimentos que vaya destinado a las personas con menos recursos, y que podría derivarse de estas medidas", señaló.

Publicado el sábado, 9 de enero de 1999 en El Nuevo Herald

Critican medidas de la Casa Blanca

WILFREDO CANCIO ISLA
Especial para El Nuevo Herald

Representantes de organizaciones de Miami que favorecen la normalización de relaciones con Cuba, criticaron el viernes las medidas anunciadas recientemente por la administración Clinton para aumentar los contactos con la isla, calificándolas de "inocuas" e "ilusorias".

"Ningún proceso de distensión o normalización puede ser conducido por dictados unilaterales, especialmente cuando las decisiones son anunciadas en espíritu de confrontación y con la finalidad de subvertir el orden institucional cubano", afirmó Andrés Gómez, presidente de la Brigada Antonio Maceo.

Las declaraciones de Gómez se produjeron durante una rueda de prensa, que reunió además a miembros de la Alianza de Trabajadores de la Comunidad Cubana (ATC) y del grupo Rescate Cultural Afrocubano, así como a Kay Sedam, representante de la Coalición de Miami contra el embargo a Cuba. De acuerdo con Gómez, el propósito principal de las medidas anunciadas por la Casa Blanca es apaciguar el creciente llamado de importantes grupos y sectores de opinión de Estados Unidos de terminar con "el infame bloqueo mantenido durante 38 años contra el pueblo cubano".

El pasado martes el gobierno de Bill Clinton anunció que permitirá ampliar hasta \$1,200 el envío de remesas anuales, vender productos alimenticios al sector privado de la isla, e incrementar los vuelos directos desde Estados Unidos hacia varias ciudades cubanas, entre otras medidas.

Pero según Gómez, las medidas no son más que "una cuestión de trucos" para dar una impresión de cambios.

A una pregunta de El Nuevo Herald sobre el impacto que tendría el aumento de los envíos de dinero a personas en Cuba, Gómez ratificó que los verdaderos beneficiados serán "los contrarrevolucionarios y los delincuentes".

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Contactos

@ Cuban American groups that support the lifting of the embargo critical of new measures.

@ They claim the measures subvert National Institutions Order

@ Claim only criminals and counter revolutionaries will benefit

Publicado el sábado, 9 de enero de 1999 en El Nuevo Herald

Elogia anuncio de EU el canciller canadiense

ANDREW CAWTHORNE

Reuters

La Habana -- El ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de Canadá, Lloyd Axworthy, se reunió el jueves en La Habana con el gobernante cubano, Fidel Castro, y elogió los pasos recientes de Estados Unidos de ampliar los canales con la isla.

"Creo que hay una cierta tendencia de Estados Unidos a una actitud más abierta y la apoyamos", dijo Axworthy a la prensa al terminar una breve visita a Cuba que inició un recorrido de seis días por América Latina y el Caribe.

El canciller se refería al anuncio de Washington esta semana de que permitirá más vuelos directos a Cuba y mayores envíos de dinero, y aumentará los contactos individuales, todo dentro del embargo económico de Estados Unidos a la isla.

Las medidas, interpretadas por algunos como pequeñas acciones dentro del embargo, pero por otros como un alivio significativo de las sanciones, que duran 37 años, incluyeron también el correo directo a la isla y la autorización de envíos de alimentos y ventas de productos agrícolas a entidades no gubernamentales.

En breves comentarios, Axworthy declaró que Canadá percibió que el lenguaje del anuncio de Estados Unidos mostraba "algún grado de vínculo constructivo", un término que el gobierno del primer ministro Jean Chretien utiliza para definir sus relaciones con Cuba.

"Esperamos que haya una disposición a emprender nuevos pasos que permitan cambios y una apertura de las relaciones entre Cuba y Estados Unidos, y hasta ese punto los alentaremos", agregó.

Con Chretien, Canadá ha sido un abierto oponente a los esfuerzos estadounidenses de aislar a Cuba y presionar a Castro para que emprenda reformas democráticas.

Canadá, que ha sido la primera fuente de turismo e inversiones extranjeras desde que la isla se abrió en los últimos años, insiste en que el acercamiento es el mejor método para promover las reformas democráticas.

Axworthy discutió sobre derechos humanos con Castro en un almuerzo y en la entrevista posterior en la sede del gobierno cubano, el Palacio de la Revolución, en la que también estuvieron presentes el vicepresidente Carlos Lage y el ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Roberto Robaina.

"Sí, lo planteamos", respondió el canciller canadiense en la conferencia de prensa a una pregunta sobre si habló del caso de cuatro conocidos disidentes cubanos encarcelados sin juicio desde hace 18 meses.

Lloyd Axworthy
④ *Praises new measures undertaken by U.S.*

④ *Meets with Castro*

④ *Raises the issue of the "Four dissidents"*

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DIARIO LAS AMÉRICAS

Exclusivas

Edición del 9 y 10 de Enero, 1999

Las nuevas medidas para ayudar al pueblo cubano

Por Madeleine K. Albright, Secretaria de Estado

Los pasos anunciados por el Presidente el 5 de enero ponen énfasis en el permanente compromiso de parte de la Administración Clinton de apoyar al pueblo cubano. Ampliando los contactos de pueblo a pueblo, aumentando las remesas de fondos, aumentando los vuelos directos por contrato, estableciendo el correo directo y autorizando la venta de alimentos y productos para la agricultura a particulares se ayudará al pueblo cubano y facilitará el desarrollo de actividades cívicas pacíficas independientemente del régimen cubano. Esto ayudará al pueblo cubano a prepararse para el día en que su país sea nuevamente libre.

Estas medidas son cónsonas con nuestra política de promover una transición democrática pacífica y respetar los derechos humanos. No están encaminadas a beneficiar al gobierno cubano o a mejorar las relaciones con el mismo. El gobierno cubano necesita comprender que la única manera de normalizar relaciones con los Estados Unidos es si lleva a cabo cambios democráticos y deja que el pueblo cubano ejerza sus libertades fundamentales.

Desgraciadamente, la situación de los derechos humanos sigue siendo horrible. Es por esto que el Presidente también anunció nuestra intención de ampliar los esfuerzos diplomáticos encaminados a llamar la atención internacional sobre los abusos que se siguen cometiendo y continuar los esfuerzos para trabajar con amigos y aliados para hacer más a fin de presionar en favor del respeto a los derechos humanos. También daremos los pasos necesarios para mejorar la efectividad de las transmisiones de Radio y TV Martí a fin de llevar la verdad al pueblo de Cuba.

Yo creo que estamos viendo una emocionante dinámica desarrollándose dentro de Cuba: A pesar de la mantenida represión del régimen, el pueblo cubano está buscando cada vez más formas creativas para actuar independientemente y prepararse para la inevitable transición que le espera. La exhortación del Sumo Pontífice de "no tengáis miedo" ha resonado a través de la isla.

Las medidas que anunciamos están encaminadas a fortalecer esta dinámica y trabajar sobre las medidas que anunciamos en marzo. La ampliación de las remesas les dará a los cubanos mayor oportunidad de una actividad cívica independiente y les hará menos dependientes del régimen. El aumento de los

contactos de pueblo a pueblo **demostrará** al pueblo cubano los valores democráticos y las realidades de cómo funciona una sociedad civil libre. Las ventas de alimentos ayudarán a fortalecer al naciente espíritu empresarial privado. Y todo esto beneficiará directamente a la familia cubana que, como nos dijo un líder cubanoamericano, es realmente la más fuerte y más importante organización no gubernamental.

Pondremos en marcha estas medidas sin darle ayuda y alivio al gobierno cubano. Y sobre la marcha recordaremos las sabias palabras de José Martí de que "sólo la opresión ha de temer el ejercicio pleno de las libertades."

La Secretaria Albright y la Nueva Política Hacia Cuba

Es muy importante, es muy conveniente, que se haga un esfuerzo coordinado, inteligentemente razonado, en torno a los altos funcionarios del gobierno estadounidense, concretamente de la Casa Blanca y del Depto. de Estado, en lo que respecta a esta nueva etapa de relaciones entre el gobierno de Washington y la tiranía totalitaria comunista de Fidel Castro. Y es conveniente hacerlo con esos altos funcionarios que hayan dado muestras de ser los más favorables, o los menos desfavorables, para la causa de la libertad de Cuba. Por supuesto, seguramente esto lo están haciendo muchos o algunos dirigentes del exilio que conocen en mayor o en menor grado, pero siempre en un grado importante, la realidad de la política internacional estadounidense, particularmente en lo relacionado con el caso de Cuba.

Dentro de esos círculos aludidos en el párrafo anterior, hay funcionarios que pueden estar equivocados o se ven obligados a seguir las pautas de la política tradicional estadounidense, pero que hacen lo que les es posible por reducir la efectividad de las proposiciones de quienes, por cualquier motivo, siempre están del lado de lo que conviene, directa o indirectamente, a la tiranía de Castro. Y hay que comenzar por razonar cuando se habla con esas personas manteniendo la firmeza del criterio del genuino exilio que es noble y patrióticamente intransigente, pero que debe ser prudente y hábil para despertar, mantener o acrecentar la voluntad política de ese pequeño grupo de funcionarios que es más hostil a Castro y que dentro de las gestiones internas y privadas de las altas esferas del gobierno quieren una genuina libertad para Cuba.

Entre los altos funcionarios aludidos está una de las dos personas de las posiblemente más determinantes o influyentes en relación con este asunto, la Secretaria de Estado Madeleine K. Albright. Esto no quiere decir que en las declaraciones públicas ella no defina la política del gobierno de acuerdo con lo que, en última instancia, ha decidido el Presidente de la República, Bill Clinton. Sin embargo, a la luz de muchos pronunciamientos de ella, cabe presumir que en el seno de los planteamientos secretos, confidenciales o privados de la alta jerarquía del gobierno, su opinión ha sido, dentro de las circunstancias, la menos desfavorable o la más favorable para la lucha contra la tiranía de Castro. Si se revisan los pronunciamientos de muchos Secretarios de Estado envueltos en la tragedia cubana, se encontrará que ella ha sido la más firme en el enfrentamiento con la tiranía totalitaria de Cuba. Y mucho influye en su persona el hecho de haber sido ella víctima del totalitarismo comunista en su noble patria checoslovaca de la cual tuvo que huir con su familia.

Secretary Albright and the New Policy Toward Cuba

It is important, very convenient, that a coordinated effort, intelligently reasoned, be undertaken near high officials of the American government, specifically in the White House and the State Department, regarding this new stage in the relations between Washington and the totalitarian communist tyranny of Fidel Castro. And this should be done with those senior officials who have indicated that they are most inclined, or at least disinclined, to help the cause of Cuba's liberty. Naturally, this is surely already being done by many or some exile leaders who know, to a greater or lesser degree, the realities of the U.S. foreign policy, particularly concerning Cuba.

In those circles alluded in the previous paragraph, there are officials who might be mistaken or who are forced to follow the guidelines of traditional American politics, but who do whatever they can to reduce the effectiveness of the proposals of those who, for any reason, are always on the side of what is best, directly or indirectly, for the Castro tyranny. And they should start by reasoning when speaking to those individuals upholding the firmness of the genuine exile that is nobly and patriotically adamant, but that must be prudent and skillful to awaken, maintain, or augment the political williness of that small group of officials who is less pro-Castro and who in the internal and private high level government deliberations want true freedom for Cuba.

Among the alluded senior officials is Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, one of the two persons who are possibly more determining or influential regarding this matter. This does not mean that in her public statements she does not define the policy of the administration according to what, in the final analysis, has been decided by the President of the Republic, Bill Clinton. However, based on many of her statements, it is safe to assume that in the secret, confidential, or private discussions at the upper levels of government, her opinion has been, albeit depending on the circumstances, the least unfavorable, or the most favorable, for the fight against the Castro tyranny. If we go over the statements of the many Secretaries of State who have been involved in the Cuban tragedy, we will realize that she has been the one most firm in her stand against the totalitarian tyranny in Cuba. Probably the fact that she and her family were victims of communist totalitarianism who had to flee their noble native Czechoslovakia has influenced her.

(Viene de la Pág. 1-B)

• "La nueva estrategia del gobierno de Clinton sobre Cuba (si eso es estrategia) tiene tres objetivos esenciales, a mi juicio. 1. Entrar en la pachanga universal de manichismo con Castro (la apertura hacia Cuba del Papa). 2. Asegurarse los votos de los cubanos de New Jersey y la Florida frustrando el plan de Kissinger y sus asociados. Y 3. Darle a

La posición del representante del exilio Carlos Arboleya es de

Por todo lo anterior, el conocido activista precisa "Creo que nada de esto va a beneficiar verdaderamente al pueblo cubano. Por ejemplo, con respecto a la venta de alimentos, hay que ser muy ingenuo para pensar que los Estados Unidos logren negociar libremente con empresas privadas si en

car las divisas que tanto necesita. Fidel no ha cambiado, el que piense que él ha cambiado está equivocado. Veamos que el discurso que hizo en Santiago por el aniversario de la revolución fue transmitido a todo el país y, sin embargo, las pa-

labras del Cardenal Ortega no se transmitieron en los medios públicos. Señores, que engaño, que ingenuidad o que mala fe existe en los líderes de esta nación en estos momentos para querer restablecer relaciones con Cuba"

Por ENA CURNOW



DE ARAGON

ARBOLEYA

TAMARGO

los cubanos de Miami.

"Las medidas son positivas. Siempre estoy a favor de todas las cosas que puedan contribuir a los contactos entre los cubanos

Estudios Cu-
banos de la Universidad Inter-
nacional de la Florida, ante las
propuestas de la Casa Blanca.

En cuanto a si estas medidas alivian o no el embargo, Aragón

señala que quizás sí, pero aclara que según entiendo el espíritu del embargo no es aislar al pueblo cubano, ni contribuir a distanciar a las familias cubanas. "Es más la Ley Torricelli, la Ley Helms-Burton tienen acápites que favorecen los intercambios académicos, y todo lo que pueda promover los cambios democráticos en Cuba".

Profundizando en los intercambios académicos previstos ahora que se incrementen, subraya la también escritora y pe-

(Pasa a la Pág. 2-B Col. 1)

Diários das Américas
1/8/99.

1/8/99.
Debate Continues About New Measures. Three Cuban
American Leaders spoke 1 in favor (a college
professor)
two against (a news commentator & retired businessman)

Publicado el viernes, 8 de enero de 1999 en El Nuevo Herald

La Habana rechazará comercio con EU

PABLO ALFONSO
El Nuevo Herald

Gustavo Arcos Bergnes, secretario general del Comité Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos, afirmó que el régimen de Fidel Castro rechazará la propuesta de la Administración Clinton por la que empresas norteamericanas puedan comerciar con sectores privados en Cuba, porque esa medida abriría las puertas a la democracia en la isla.

"Si ellos aceptan ese comercio perderán el poder político", subrayó Arcos. "Eso no lo pueden permitir porque irían perdiendo el poder económico, y luego irían perdiéndolo todo".

Arcos, de 72 años, quien habló por teléfono con El Nuevo Herald el jueves desde La Habana dijo que si el régimen castrista autoriza el comercio del sector privado con empresas estadounidenses "sería como aceptar que están cediendo ante las demandas de nosotros aquí, de los disidentes internos, que desde hace años estamos abogando por aperturas políticas y económicas".

Según Arcos, el auge que alcanzaría el sector privado, los pequeños agricultores, los dueños de paladares, las cooperativas y trabajadores por cuenta propia, sería inmenso si pudieran comerciar con empresas norteamericanas y el régimen castrista, "que lleva 40 años en el poder no le interesa eso", a pesar de la difícil situación económica que atraviesa la población.

En el país se abre cada día más un abismo entre el beneficio del trabajo, el salario y el costo de la vida, dijo Arcos, quien añadió que los alimentos que vende el Estado a través de la libreta de racionamiento, vigente desde hace ya 37 años, son mínimos, "y es imposible sobrevivir con ellos". Esa situación origina el mercado negro, la corrupción, el robo y la prostitución.

"Sólo los que recibimos dólares de nuestros familiares y amigos del exterior podemos alimentarnos y vestimos un poco mejor que el resto de la población." Pero la mayoría de los trabajadores, gente del pueblo que no tiene esa posibilidad, está sumido en la miseria", afirmó Arcos. "Eso ha dado lugar al fenómeno de dos grandes clases dentro del pueblo: los que sólo cuentan con su salario y los que reciben dólares".

Arcos reconoció que las nuevas medidas anunciadas por la administración Clinton, en general, son beneficiosas para la población cubana, pero se mostró escéptico en cuanto a la posibilidad de que el gobierno cubano permita el comercio del sector privado con empresas norteamericanas. "Eso conspira contra sus intereses políticos, y a este gobierno le importa poco anteponer sus intereses políticos a las necesidades económicas de la población, de la nación cubana", subrayó Arcos. "A fin de cuentas, eso es lo que ha hecho hasta ahora".

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@ Doubts the Cuban Govt will allow the sale of food because it would take control away from them.

<http://www.elherald.com/cuba/digdocs/078631.htm>

Justine
Arcos Bergnes,
head of
the Cuban
Committee
Pro Human
Rights
(a respected
dissident)

@ Predicts
Castro will
reject new
measures

@ Claims that
only those
Cubans that
get dollars
from U.S. are
getting by

@ Feels the
measures will be
beneficial to
all Cubans

Publicado el viernes, 8 de enero de 1999 en El Nuevo Herald

PABLO ALFONSO

El turismo no genera tanta divisa

El turismo extranjero que en 1998 llevó a la isla 1.4 millones de viajeros que aportaron \$1,800 millones de ingresos brutos, está recibiendo veladas críticas en medios oficiales de prensa, que le atribuyen pocos beneficios económicos y altos costos políticos y morales.

"La industria turística no vive del aire. Se traga alrededor de tres cuartas partes de sus ingresos", afirmó en días pasados en La Habana el periodista Ariel Terrero.

Según datos oficiales en 1998 cada dólar de ingreso en el sector turístico significó una inversión de \$0.71 centavos de dólar, y el ingreso promedio diario generado por cada turista fue de \$88.40 dólares.

Advirtiendo que los turistas "con su cachetes colorados se han convertido en parte del paisaje cubano", Terrero indicó que en 1997, la industria turística sólo obtuvo un 25 por ciento de utilidades.

"En opinión de expertos, todavía anda por el sótano la eficiencia global de esta rama en Cuba", indicó Terrero.

La industria turística ha sido vinculada al incremento de la prostitución, la corrupción, el robo y otros males sociales que el gobernante cubano Fidel Castro señaló el martes durante un discurso pronunciado para conmemorar el 40 aniversario de la Policía Nacional Revolucionaria.

Con la esperanza de disminuir sus efectos negativos, los dirigentes de la industria turística cubana están alentando el turismo alemán que en 1998 tuvo un incremento de 71.6 por ciento con respecto al año anterior. Un total de 130,000 alemanes visitaron Cuba, ocupando el tercer lugar en importancia turística en la isla, tras canadienses e italianos.

Los expertos de la industria turística cubana han llegado a la conclusión de que las costumbres veraniegas de los alemanes son más compatibles con los objetivos del gobierno cubano que quieren promover un turismo familiar y deportivo, en lugar de "las vacaciones de solteros de muchos italianos, afectos a los amores tarifados, que hacen caso omiso de la moral socialista", indicó la Agencia Francesa de Prensa.

Además, según las autoridades cubanas, los turistas alemanes se quedan más tiempo y disponen de un poder adquisitivo superior al de otros países.

Este año, el Ministerio de Turismo se prepara para un nuevo aumento de un 70 por ciento en el flujo de ciudadanos germanos. Si ese cálculo se cumple, los visitantes alemanes sumarán unos 220,000, más que los canadienses y los italianos que durante los últimos tres años representaron los principales contingentes de turistas a Cuba, con cerca de 200,000 visitantes por país, pero cuyo número parece estancarse, según AFP.

Para este año, Cuba planea recibir a cerca de 1.7 millones de turistas, un 20 por ciento más que en 1998. El 84 por ciento de esos visitantes procederá, por orden de importancia numérica, de Alemania, Canadá, Italia, España, Francia, Gran Bretaña, México, Argentina, los países escandinavos, Colombia y Suiza, según las previsiones oficiales.

① Tourism in Cuba is not so profitable

② of each \$1 spent by tourist, .71¢ go to costs.

③ Tourism Industry only generates 25% Profit

④ Tourism has increased crime, prostitution and corruption

⑤ Germans, Canadians and Italians are the largest numbers of tourists

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Jueves 7 de Enero de 1999

Que Washington no Subestime la Habilidad Política y Dictatorial de Castro

Al margen de posibles negociaciones habidas entre el gobierno de los Estados Unidos de América y el régimen totalitario de Fidel Castro en relación con las últimas medidas tomadas por la Casa Blanca con respecto a la situación política y económica de Cuba, es preciso poner énfasis en que Fidel Castro se ha especializado durante más de cuarenta años en burlarse del mundo democrático y, especialmente, del gobierno estadounidense de distintos partidos y administraciones. Cabe decir, en honor a un hecho, que el Subsecretario de Estado estadounidense Stuart Eizenstat personalmente afirmó a la Dirección de DIARIO LAS AMERICAS que no ha habido negociaciones previas entre Washington y Castro.

Es indispensable no perder de vista la realidad de que Castro ha adquirido una inmensa experiencia de habilidad diabólica en el sentido de —repetimos— burlarse del mundo y de salirse siempre con la suya, por lo menos hasta el momento. Especular con la desaparición de su tiranía sobre la base de su muerte más o menos inmediata es algo aventurado cuando hay en juego problemas muy serios, muy graves, en torno a el caso de ese totalitarismo implantado en Cuba a sangre y fuego desde hace cuarenta años. Ya se sabe que después que una persona nace lo único seguro alrededor de ella es la muerte. Por supuesto, existen una serie de factores que determinan la creencia o la seguridad de que puede ser inminente la muerte de alguien. Entre esos factores están una edad sumamente avanzada o una enfermedad sumamente grave de carácter terminal.

Oficialmente ha dicho Washington que estas concesiones hechas unilateralmente con respecto a Cuba son en función de la transición que se presume más o menos inminente por la supuesta muerte o incapacidad de Fidel Castro. Hablando en términos comerciales podría decirse que se está extendiendo un crédito peligroso, arriesgado, sobre la base de una transacción más o menos imaginaria en lo que respecta al vencimiento del plazo. La creencia de que cualquiera de estos arreglos si Castro los acepta plenamente, lo cual puede ser que así sea o en parte, según a él le convenga, creencia que se enfoca en lo relativo al "beneficio del pueblo de Cuba", no está avalada por la realidad histórica de estos cuarenta años. Ese pueblo recibirá lo que Fidel Castro quiera que reciba aunque se trate de beneficios otorgados por el gobierno de Washington, el cual no manejará esos asuntos dentro de la isla. Por otra parte, si hay algunos beneficios para el pueblo, Castro se encargará de demostrarle al pueblo que por la manera de ser de su gobierno y de su personalidad es que está recibiendo esas ventajas y que si él desaparece o su dictadura se debilita, desaparecerían el motivo y la necesidad de mandar a la isla desde los Estados Unidos todo lo que ahora se está ofreciendo.

Si es un grave error subestimar a los comunistas en general, lo es en muchísimo mayor grado subestimar a Castro.

Washington Must not Underestimate Castro's Political and Dictatorial Skills

Notwithstanding negotiations that might have taken place between the government of the United States of America and the totalitarian regime of Fidel Castro regarding the latest measures taken by the White House regarding the political and economic situation in Cuba, it is indispensable to insist in saying that Fidel Castro has specialized for over forty years in deceiving the democratic world and, especially, the American government under different parties and administration. We should mention, because it is a fact, that the Assistant Secretary of State, Stuart Eizenstat, personally stated to the Editorial Board of DIARIO LAS AMERICAS that there have been no previous negotiations between Washington and Castro now.

It is indispensable to bear in mind that Castro has tremendous experience and diabolic cleverness in the sense of —we repeat— deceiving the world and always getting his own way, at least up to the present. To speculate about the disappearance of his tyranny based on the more or less nearness of his death is somewhat risky when what is at stake are serious, very grave problems, surrounding the case of the totalitarianism entrenched in Cuba mercilessly for the last forty years. Everyone knows that after birth, the only thing that is certain is death. Naturally, there are a number of factors that determine the belief or the certainty that someone's death might be imminent, such as a very old age or a terminal sickness.

Washington has officially said that the unilateral measures it has taken toward Cuba take into consideration a transition that is presumed more or less imminent due to the death or disability of Fidel Castro. To put it in business terms, it could be said that a dangerous, risky, credit is being granted based on a more or less imaginary transaction regarding its terms. The idea, based on helping the Cuban people, that any of these measures if Castro accepts them in full, something which might happen, or partially, depending on what he feels is better for him, is not warranted by history over the last forty years. The Cuban people will get what Fidel Castro wants them to get even if it is benefits granted by the American government, which has no say inside the island. On the other hand, if the people do get some benefits, Castro will take care of telling them that they are receiving these benefits because of his government and his personality, and that if he were to disappear or his dictatorship were to weaken, there would be no reason or need for the United States to send what it is now offering.

If it is a serious mistake to underestimate the communists in general, it is even more serious to underestimate Castro.

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La apertura de Cuba, gran negocio para la Florida

Tallahassee —(Reuters)— La apertura del comercio con Cuba podría ser un buen negocio para las empresas de la Florida, el bastión de la poderosa comunidad de exiliados en Estados Unidos, indicó un estudio divulgado el miércoles.

El estudio, realizado para la legislatura estatal por la firma Arthur Andersen, fue presentado un día después de que el presidente estadounidense Bill Clinton, anunció que suavizaría un embargo comercial impuesto hace 36 años por Washington sobre la isla.

Las nuevas medidas incluyen menos restricciones para envíos de dinero, servicios directos

de correo entre Cuba y Estados Unidos, y un incremento de las ventas directas de alimentos a compradores privados en la isla.

Según el informe, si el mercado cubano se abriera exigiría capital, tecnología de telecomunicaciones y unas 500,000 casas, desplazando, potencialmente, a otros mercados latinoamericanos para compañías de Miami y de otras partes de Estados Unidos.

Cuba, con unos 11 millones de habitantes, está a sólo 145 kilómetros de Florida.

El estudio advierte que las compañías de Florida deben estar preparadas para una eventual apertura y democratización de Cuba.

Medidas de EU dan que hablar

RAUL RIVERO

Especial para El Nuevo Herald

Las medidas anunciadas esta semana en Washington por el presidente Bill Clinton que favorecen la ampliación de contactos y ayuda al pueblo cubano suscitaron diversas reacciones en la isla.

Hector Palacios Ruiz, de 55 años, director del Centro de Estudios Sociológicos, dijo a El Nuevo Herald: "Siempre voté a favor del embargo como un mal necesario pero sé que después de la visita del Papa, el mundo ha tenido mayor interés por Cuba, y Estados Unidos como potencia ha dado un paso positivo para tratar de resolver la crisis cubana".

"Estoy a favor de esas medidas, y que con ellas le quiten al gobierno cubano un pretexto para sentirse sitiado, y les obliguen a iniciar la democratización del país antes de la visita del rey de España".

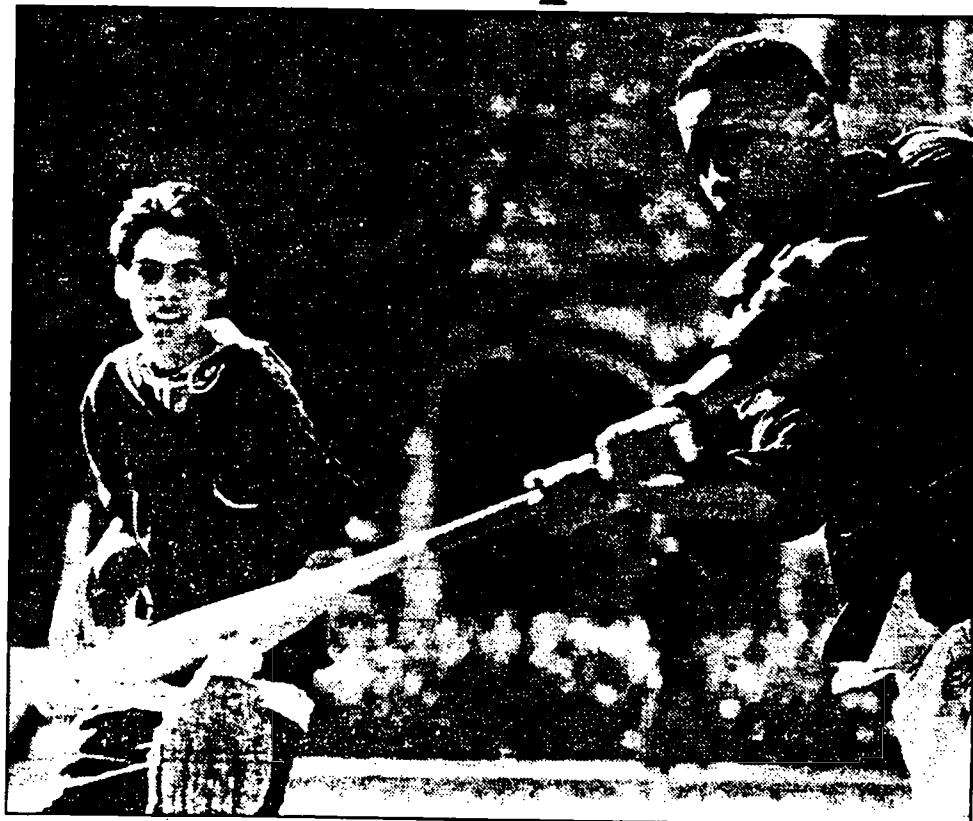
El tema estuvo ausente de los medios de comunicación este miércoles, y tampoco apareció entre los trascendidos de un discurso de Fidel Castro el martes, cuando habló por cinco horas sobre la lucha contra el delito.

Un punto que causó disgusto en sectores de La Habana, según la agencia Agence France Presse, es la decisión de aumentar los recursos a las emisiones anticas-tristas de Radio y Televisión Martí, porque —incluso según sectores de la oposición interna— esto no aportaría nada al relajamiento de las tensas relaciones entre ambos países.

El resto de las medidas que facilitan el envío de dinero a Cuba desde Estados Unidos, incrementan los vuelos charter directos, restablecen el correo hacia la isla y permiten intercambios culturales, científicos y deportivos, parecen estar siendo estudiadas en La Habana antes de emitir una reacción.

El ayuno informativo en medios de prensa oficiales no impidió, sin embargo, que el cubano de la calle recibiera filtraciones de emisoras radiales extranjeras.

Según Adolfo Fernández Sainf, vocero del Partido Solidaridad Democrática, el gesto "es positivo en general. Es bueno que se establezcan vínculos directos



Jóvenes cubanos juegan béisbol en las calles de la Habana. Muy pronto un equipo de las Grandes Ligas podría visitar Cuba. Associated Press

entre el pueblo cubano y el estadounidense. Es una comunicación normal entre personas que se aman, que se han visto interrumpidas por las malas relaciones entre los gobernantes".

Otro aspecto muy discutido en la isla, fue la negativa por parte de la Casa Blanca de crear una comisión bipartidista con el fin de revisar la política de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba.

Manuel Morúa, secretario general de la Corriente Socialista Democrática Cubana, lamentó que se rechazara la creación de dicha comisión. "Lo que se impone a fines del milenio es una revisión de la política norteamericana hacia Cuba".

"Las medidas son globalmente positivas porque ayudan a

aliviar la situación de la sociedad cubana y sustituye la diplomacia entre Estados por una diplomacia entre ciudadanos. Hay algunas medidas no viables como las que hablan de agencias gubernamentales ayudando a los independientes".

La estudiante Jamile Gorgoy, de 18 años, le dió la bienvenida a las medidas. "No entiendo mucho de leyes y embargo, pero si creo que hace falta aceptar cualquier tipo de ayuda. Estamos pasando mucho trabajo y necesidad. Nos hace falta medicina y comida. Ambos gobiernos deben pensar en eso".

La agencia France Presse señaló que la iglesia católica cubana se abstuvo de realizar comentarios sobre el tema. "De

inmediato, por parte de la Conferencia de Obispos, no hay ninguna declaración al respecto", dijo el padre José Félix, secretario adjunto de ese órgano.

La autorización de importar alimentos y productos agrícolas a entidades independientes no gubernamentales, y al emergente sector privado fue una de las medidas que más extrañeza, dudas y hasta bromas generó entre los cubanos.

La posibilidad de que los propietarios de los pequeños restaurantes privados cubanos de doce sillas, conocidos en la isla como paladares, o que los vendedores ambulantes de fiambres, puedan importar sus insumos de Miami, provocó interrogantes, dudas y hasta sonrisas.

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DIARIO LAS AMERICAS

Exclusivas

Edición del 6 de Enero, 1999

La política hacia Cuba ha sido alterada y el embargo debilitado

Afirma el profesor Antonio Jorge

Por ARIEL REMOS

"La política norteamericana hacia Cuba ha sido alterada cualitativamente, y el espíritu del embargo, parte esencial de la política de la contención, que consistía fundamentalmente en el aislamiento del régimen castrista, resulta debilitado", afirmó el Dr. Antonio Jorge, profesor de economía y relaciones internacionales de la FIU, comentando las nuevas medidas que anunciaron el martes el Presidente Clinton y la Secretaria de Estado Madeleine Albright.

Por lo que se desprende de las medidas anunciadas en relación con el embargo, para el profesor Jorge EE.UU. se ha resignado a que el proceso de la transición a la democracia y al libre mercado en Cuba no habrá de tomar lugar hasta después de la desaparición o inhabilitación de Fidel Castro, como han confirmado en repetidas ocasiones la Secretaria de Estado Albright y el Subsecretario Stuart Eizenstat. Y, en consecuencia, la nueva política hacia la Isla, que recuerda la estrategia del pin-pon que precedió la apertura con China, está basada en concesiones unilaterales tendientes al reforzamiento de la sociedad civil con la esperanza de que ésta pueda eventualmente constituir un frente de oposición al régimen.

El profesor Jorge fundamentó sus afirmaciones del modo siguiente: la política de EE.UU. hacia Cuba ha pasado por varias etapas desde el comienzo de la revolución castrista hasta el presente. La primera consistió en diversos esfuerzos por desestabilizar al régimen. La segunda fue una variante de la política de la contención de EE.UU. hacia la URSS a partir del final de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Y la tercera se caracterizó por la inauguración de la política llamada de los "pasos calibrados", que hubiera consistido en el intercambio gradual de concesiones de ambas partes para lograr una lenta transición de la sociedad cubana.

"Obviamente, la política actual está basada en los esfuerzos por parte de EE.UU. de ayudar a la creación y el fortalecimiento de la llamada sociedad civil en Cuba", dice Jorge. "Esta política ha sido adoptada en vista de la negativa del régimen a aceptar los términos de la estrategia de los 'pasos calibrados'".

Como consecuencia, sigue diciendo Jorge, "EE.UU. ha decidido hacer concesiones unilaterales sin contrapartida alguna, con la esperanza de que a plazo extendido, esto pueda contribuir a la creación de focos autónomos de oposición al régimen.

Según Jorge, estos acontecimientos eran claramente previsibles y, de hecho, con la excepción de la venta de alimentos y equipo agropecuario a las llamadas entidades independientes en Cuba, el resto de las medidas propuestas se ajustan al contenido de los dos leyes que regulan el embargo: la Ley Democracia (Torricelli) de 1992, y la Ley Libertad (Helms-Burton), de 1998.

"En otras palabras", precisa, "el propuesto aumento de las remesas de recursos económicos a Cuba, la intensificación de contactos entre diversas personas y grupos de ambas sociedades, el establecimiento del servicio de correos directo, y la autorización de vuelos de pasajeros desde distintas ciudades, forman parte de la estrategia de fomento de la sociedad civil, y encaja dentro de las dos leyes antes mencionadas".

En lo que se refiere a la venta de equipo agropecuario a organismos no gubernamentales (ONG), Jorge coincide con los comentarios hechos por los congresistas Díaz-Balart y Menéndez, sobre que violaría el espíritu o la intención del embargo, "y, por demás, en forma indirecta habría de beneficiar al régimen, ya que las ONG simplemente no existen en un régimen totalitario y colectivista como el de Cuba".

Como detalle adicional, afirma Jorge que "sin duda, los anunciados juegos de pelota de exhibición entre los Orioles y un equipo cubano, recuerdan la famosa estrategia del pin-pon que precedió a la apertura a China comunista". Desde luego, añade finalmente, "queda por ver hasta qué punto el régimen castrista está dispuesto a comprometerse a la estrategia del pin-pon".

*El Mundo está
en Sus Manos*



DIARIO LAS AMERICAS

Comentario sobre Cuba

Ediciones
Anteriores

Edición del 6 de Enero, 1999

Cuba: ¿Amenaza nacional o ficción?

Por Manuel Cereijo

El régimen se encuentra en su momento más débil, y por lo tanto en el momento de mayor peligrosidad.

OPCIONES

Específicamente existen tres opciones, desarrolladas por Cuba desde hace varios años, que le permite desarrollar un ataque no convencional contra los Estados Unidos causando un posible daño cuantioso en vidas humanas. Estas tres opciones, o sectores ofensivos, son:

1.- Entrenamiento militar de un cuerpo élite

2.- Espionaje e interferencia electrónica de las telecomunicaciones y redes de computación

3.- Guerra bacteriológica y química

El reporte reciente del Pentágono, presentado por el Secretario de Defensa William Cohen menciona solo brevemente, y esto después de ser revisado por las presiones del Senado, estas opciones. Sin embargo, el informe pone un énfasis mayor en el hecho que Cuba, dado que sus fuerzas militares están diezmadadas, ya no representa un peligro militar para Estados Unidos. Pero es que, aun cuando Cuba estaba en el cenit de su poderío militar convencional, nunca represento un peligro militar convencional contra este país. Cuba es un peligro "no convencional" contra la seguridad de los Estados Unidos, y para ello se ha estado preparando hace unos 15 años. Y acabamos de comprobarlo con la detención de este red de espionaje en Miami, donde algunos de los supuestos espías tienen una alta calificación técnica.

A continuación describiremos brevemente cada uno.

1. Entrenamiento militar de un cuerpo élite

Desde mediados de la década de los 80' s, Cuba creó en Los Palacios, Pinar del Río, en la zona conocida como el Cacho, una escuela militar, Baraguá, donde se entrenan, muy profesionalmente, personal militar, especializado en ataques comandos, ataques militares relámpagos, y cuerpos de infiltración y

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de espionaje. El asesoramiento militar proviene principalmente de Vietnam.

Este grupo está compuesto de unos 3,500 soldados, todos entre 20 y 30 años, hablan inglés perfectamente, y pueden pasar por hombres de negocios o ejecutivos, si así lo requieren sus actividades. El grupo está capacitado, desde luego, para ser portador de armas bacteriológicas y químicas, e introducirlas en los Estados Unidos. Así como de interferir electrónicamente las redes de computación de bases militares, aeropuertos, industrias, etc.

Pregunta: ¿Si Cuba es una isla, sin conflictos fronterizos, por qué mantiene esta base especial de guerra ofensiva a tan alto costo?

2. Espionaje e interferencia electrónica

Las conversaciones telefónicas, los faxes y las intercomunicaciones vía computadoras realizadas en los Estados Unidos, siempre que utilicen como medio de transmisión tramos aéreos, no soterrados, pueden ser interceptadas por la base de espionaje de Lourdes. Esta base, de 28 millas cuadradas, está situada al sureste de La Habana, y trabajan en la misma 800 técnicos rusos. Rusia se ha gastado más de \$3,000 millones en esta base, y desde noviembre de 1996 ha mejorado los instrumentos y equipos por un valor de \$85 millones.

Por el alquiler de esta base, Rusia le paga a Cuba \$200 millones al año. La base tiene dos grupos de platos o discos rastreadores y un sistema de satélites. Un grupo es para interceptar las llamadas telefónicas en general, y el otro grupo está designado a funciones y números específicos. Desde 1995, Rusia comenzó la construcción de una base similar en Bejucal, está para ser operada por los cubanos. Esta base fue terminada en febrero de 1997. Pero la base de Bejucal tiene una capacidad aún más importante que la de espiar o interceptar las telecomunicaciones. Y este función es la de poder interferir las comunicaciones civiles, y aun militares de los Estados Unidos, en caso de un ataque comando o de un ataque bacteriológico. Antes del fallido golpe de estado de agosto de 1991, la KGB estaba desarrollando virus para introducir en las computadoras, con el objetivo de interrumpir los sistemas de redes computacionales durante un momento de crisis o de guerra. En 1991, un proyecto altamente secreto fue empezado en Cuba por el directorio Militar de Inteligencia de las Fuerzas Armadas de Cuba.

El grupo se dedicó al desarrollo de virus que pudiesen infectar las computadoras de los Estados Unidos. Al principio, se le asignó al grupo \$50,000 para la adquisición de datos sobre redes de computación, SATCOM, y tecnología en general. Esto se conoce como guerra tecnológica informativa. Es una nueva fase del terrorismo internacional. Es muy difícil de detectar su procedencia, y además de la introducción de virus, se introducen códigos erróneos, distorsión, etc. que representan una amenaza a los Estados Unidos. Esto puede causar desde pérdida de productividad, files erróneos, hasta confusión en operaciones militares en caso de una guerra.

Cada día esta sociedad aumenta la concentración de información, y dependencia en general, de las computadoras, desde el aspecto militar, a todos los aspectos civiles. Las computadoras con acceso a líneas telefónicas pueden ser penetradas por intrusos desde cualquier lugar del mundo. Esto se realiza en una forma bastante simple, poco costosa, y muy difícil de detectar.

Existen ya muchos ejemplos de intromisión de este tipo en redes

computacionales de este país. Por ejemplo, en 1989, un grupo de Alemania, usando líneas telefónicas tuvieron acceso a 250 sistemas de computación de este país, incluyendo por lo menos 90 sistemas relacionados, directa o indirectamente, con sistemas de defensa. Otro ejemplo lo es el de un grupo de jóvenes holandeses que obtuvieron acceso a los sistemas de computación de 34 localizaciones del DOD, incluyendo el Air Force Weapons Lab., y todo esto durante la Guerra del Golfo.

Este desarrollo electrónico continúa en forma intensa, y presenta un peligro enorme en caso de un ataque dada la confusión y caos que tendría como resultado este tipo de interferencia electrónica que afectaría todas las telecomunicaciones, las intercomunicaciones a través de computadoras, los correos electrónicos, etc. El desarrollo de esta capacidad requiere poco en cuanto a recursos monetarios.

3. Desarrollo bacteriológico y bioquímico

Desde principios de la década de los 80' s comienza Cuba sus esfuerzos en el campo de la investigación bacteriológica y química, estableciendo los centros de Biotecnología, de Ingeniería Genética, de Medicina Tropical, de Inmunología, de Cría de Animales de Laboratorio, el Biocen, el Instituto Finlay, la Academia de Ciencias, el Instituto de Oceanografía, y el centro de Preparaciones Biológicas, el Centro de Neuro Ciencias, así como La Fabriquita, o centro de desarrollo de pienzo.

Numerosos ingenieros y científicos cubanos han recibido educación y entrenamiento en la antigua Alemania Oriental, Rumanía, China, Corea del Norte, Vietnam, así como en Irán y en Iraq. Ha habido una cooperación intensa desde 1992 con Vietnam y con China.

Desde 1991 hasta la fecha, Cuba ha invertido aproximadamente \$2,800 millones en equipos, instrumentos, materiales, para todos estos Centros, con una aplicación comercial mínima, ya que sólo ha comercializado ciertos productos, como vacunas contra la meningitis, vacunas contra la hepatitis, interferón, y otros productos menores, con un valor comercial de sólo \$80 millones, producidas esporádicamente, con ventas a Chile, Brasil, Argentina.

Un ejemplo es el posible desarrollo de una toxina paralizante del sistema nervioso, desarrollado de investigaciones marinas. Este producto puede ya estar terminado y almacenado, listo para ser utilizado. Otro ejemplo es cuando en conjunción con el Instituto Cubano de Oceanografía, y la Academia de Ciencias, realizaron un experimento que consistió en lanzar botellas desde las costas cubanas, con un mensaje que pedía a quienes la recibieran se comunicaran con la Academia de ciencias, pues era un estudio científico sobre la contaminación de las aguas oceánicas. De esta forma, después de dos años de estudio, se determinó el lugar de la costa cubana más factible de enviar objetos flotantes que llegarán a las costas de Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, con más rapidez y en mayor cuantía.

No olvidemos que para una guerra bacteriológica o química, no hacen faltas cohetes, ni portadores sofisticados. Botellas, contenedores, cajas, etc. pueden ser portadores de sustancias mortíferas que pueden causar daño o la muerte a miles de personas en una zona determinada. Productos bacteriológicos o químicos, toxinas, etc. que pueden transportarse en un maletín, pueden causar la muerte, por ejemplo, a 50,000 personas.

droga que se vende en el país, que forman parte de un ciclo de consumo que comenzó cuando eran adolescentes y que continúa hasta la muerte, "a menos que algo intervenga" en su favor.

Asimismo, anunció que el presupuesto antidrogas para el año fiscal 1999, que empezó el pasado 1 de octubre, ha tenido un aumento sustancial a 17.800 millones de dólares, y que se usará una cantidad "significativa" para combatir el consumo de estupefacientes en los centros penales.

El principal asesor antidrogas del presidente Clinton, dijo que el nueve por ciento de los presos del país -900.000 en las cárceles estatales, alrededor de 500.000 en las de los condados y 105.000 en prisiones federales-, dieron positivo en pruebas de narcóticos.

Clinton ha destinado un buen porcentaje de los nuevos fondos para la lucha contra las drogas, a programas de prevención del consumo en los centros penales, tratamiento sanitario a los adictos y planes educativos.

McCaffrey informó, además, de que se usará toda la tecnología disponible para evitar que se introduzca drogas en las penitenciarías, y desveló que este problema es más frecuente en las cárceles estadounidenses.

Rey Husein hace escala en Washington tras salir de Clínica Mayo

WASHINGTON -- El rey Husein de Jordania hizo escala en Washigton para visitar la Casa Blanca y el Departamento de Estado, tras salir de la clínica Mayo donde se sometió durante seis meses a un tratamiento contra el cáncer.

En una entrevista de media hora en la Casa Blanca, el rey y el presidente estadounidense, Bill Clinton, hablaron del último pulso de Estados Unidos con Irak y de las dificultades del proceso de paz para Oriente Medio, así como de las perspectivas económicas para la región.

El presidente prometió al monarca más ayuda para Jordania, cuya economía se ha resentido de las sanciones económicas internacionales contra el vecino Irak.

Clinton, según un portavoz de la Casa Blanca, indicó a Husein que Estados Unidos considera a Irak una amenaza para la estabilidad en la región.

Precisamente hoy volvió a producirse un incidente entre los aviones de EEUU que patrullan la zona de exclusión en el sur de Irak y aparatos iraquíes.

Clinton y Husein hablaron también del programa por el que la ONU permita a Irak vender crudo para comprar alimentos y medicinas, ya que Jordania es uno de los principales países que participan en esa transacción.

"Queremos asegurarnos de que esto no se convierte en una forma por la que (el presidente iraquí) Sadam Husein consiga ingresos de manera indebida", dijo el portavoz del Departamento de Estado, James Rubin.

Después de visitar la Casa Blanca, el rey Husein se entrevistó en el Departamento de Estado con la secretaria de Estado, Madeleine Albright.

Tras la entrevista, el portavoz expresó la satisfacción con la que el Gobierno de EEUU ha recibido la noticia de que el rey "ha completado su tratamiento".

El rey Husein de Jordania estuvo ingresado en la clínica Mayo, en Rochester, Minnesota, desde mediados de julio, sometido a un tratamiento contra el cáncer linfático que ha dado buen resultado.

Mientras estaba en la clínica, el rey recibió algunas visitas de carácter político e incluso se desplazó a Wye, Maryland, en el momento crítico de las negociaciones de paz para Oriente Medio con el fin de ayudar a conseguir el acuerdo de octubre pasado.

El rey visitó Washington acompañado por su esposa, la reina Noor, que se entrevistó con Hillary Clinton mientras su marido se encontraba con el presidente.

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¿A go r evo e cuanto a Cuba?

Por Julio Estorino

El año ha comenzado, en lo que a Cuba se refiere, con gran animación. Apenas estrenado el mes de enero, la Casa Blanca anunciaba dos noticias a un tiempo. Una, la negativa por parte del presidente Bill Clinton a nombrar, según le había sido sugerido, una comisión bipartidista que evaluaría la política de Washington hacia La Habana, para hacer recomendaciones al respecto. La sugerencia había partido de prominentes políticos y prominentes ex funcionarios de estado, con abundancia, entre ellos, de destacados miembros del Partido Republicano, lo que ponía un ingrediente peculiar e intrigante en la propuesta.

Como bien se hizo notar al conocerse este asunto, varios de los proponentes están en la actualidad muy comprometidos con grandes intereses mercantiles, ansiosos de hacer negocios con los castristas, a como dé lugar, y ello, lógicamente, levantó por acá justificados temores.

Esos temores, al parecer, obnubilaron el juicio de algunos y, dados a lo rotundo y lo categórico, le dieron rango de axioma a sus propias conjeturas, aseverando **enfáticamente** que era indefectible el nombramiento de la comisión de marras y añadiendo que la misma formaba parte, supuestamente, de una secreta conjura en la que ya estarían de perfecto acuerdo Bill Clinton, el Papa, y Fidel Castro. Todo ello, seguía la trama, encaminado a "salvar" a este último.

El caso es que la terminante predicción no se cumplió y el presidente Clinton dio por liquidada la idea de la comisión, diciendo que ya hay consensus en Washington en cuanto a la política a seguir con Cuba.

La otra noticia consistió del anuncio de una serie de medidas que Estados Unidos pretende implantar en sus relaciones con Cuba. Digo "pretende implantar", porque algunas de ellas requerirían consentimiento del propio régimen al que se intenta debilitar con ellas y ese consentimiento aún está por ver. Las medidas anunciadas incluyen mayores facilidades para el envío de dólares y expansión de los de los vuelos a la isla, aumento de intercambios culturales, académicos, científicos y deportivos, el restablecimiento del servicio de correos directo entre los dos países y la autorización de ventas de alimentos e implementos agrícolas a entidades no gubernamentales de Cuba.

Para poder calibrar estas iniciativas, con todas sus posibles implicaciones, habría que tomar en cuenta la reacción de la dictadura, que, hasta el momento en que escribo estas líneas no se ha producido. Entretanto, solamente podemos evaluarlas a prima facie:

Los dólares están yendo ya, desde hace tiempo y en abundancia muy superior a lo que la ley permite, prácticamente con cada pasajero que va a Cuba. Los que allá quieren viajar, lo han hecho siempre y lo continuarán haciendo, aun cuando no hubiera vuelos directos, como ya lo ha demostrado la experiencia.

Los intercambios, habría que equilibrarlos para que fueran, de verdad, algo parejo para ambos lados, pero no deben preocuparnos demasiado, porque lo cierto es que todo el que de aquí va allá regresa horrorizado y todo el que de allá viene aquí, vuelve allá maravillado.

Lo del correo no va a funcionar mu-

cho en el orden de las comunicaciones, pues todos utilizamos mucho más el teléfono, pero presenta la posibilidad, si llegara a concretarse, de convertirse en una vía alterna para el envío de paquetes de ayuda a la isla, vía que sería más económica para los remitentes y menos lucrativa para Castro y para las agencias que aquí se dedican a esos envíos. De paso, hay que acotar lo mucho que ha tenido de positivo la expansión de las comunicaciones telefónicas, anteriormente aprobada.

Lo de las ventas a entidades no gubernamentales es lo único realmente de cuidado, pues sería compleja y riesgosa su implementación. Dada la pequeñez notoria de lo que pudiera llamarse el sector económicamente independiente del gobierno en Cuba, habría que ver cómo se aseguraría nadie de que el comprador no resultase ser, en realidad, un agente del régimen. Y hay que ver, repito, lo que dicen por allá de todo esto. No me sorprendería que algunas de estas iniciativas de Washington muriesen al nacer, liquidadas por la arrogancia y el miedo de los castristas.

Lo de la negativa a la comisión es lo verdaderamente importante. Si el presidente Clinton estuviese tan interesado en promover la eliminación del embargo unilateralmente, como algunos afirman, ¿qué mejor oportunidad que la que presentaba la petición de un grupo de "notables" integrado mayormente por ex funcionarios republicanos? Me parece pues, que el mensaje es claro y va directo a La Habana: no habrá cambios sustanciales por acá, si no hay cambios sustanciales por acá. Digo, al menos eso es lo que parece.



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Acusan a Clinton de ignorar al Congreso

Por ARIEL REMOS

Las nuevas medidas relacionadas con el embargo comercial a Cuba, anunciadas el martes por el Presidente Clinton y la Secretaria de Estado Madeleine Albright, fueron hechas de espaldas al Congreso y a la Ley y podrían provocar una seria confrontación con el Poder Legislativo, fue el mensaje enviado este miércoles al Presidente Clinton por un grupo de congresistas que se reunió con altos funcionarios de la Administración.

Ben Gilman, presidente del Co-

Está actuando la Administración de espaldas al Congreso y la Ley, dicen congresistas, y las nuevas medidas sobre Cuba podrían provocar una confrontación

mité de Relaciones internacionales; Dan Burton, presidente del Comité de Reforma y Supervisión Gubernamental, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen y Lincoln Díaz-Balart, congresistas por la Florida, y Chris Smith, por New Jersey, todos republicanos, se entrevistaron en la oficina de Ros-Lehtinen con los funcionarios Michael E. Rannenberg, a cargo del Buró de Cuba

del Departamento de Estado, y Richard Newcomb, director de la Oficina de Control de Bienes Extranjeros del Departamento del Tesoro, para expresarles sus puntos de vista sobre las medidas anunciadas.

"Nuestro mensaje fue que la

(Pasa a la Pág. 10-A Col. 1)

Acusan a Clinton de ignorar al Congreso

Administración está (Viene de la pág. 1-A) actuando sin contar a las reglas y procedimientos, asintiendo ellos en que ese es también su deseo", dijo Rannenberger. "Les expresé después que tenemos las mismas metas en relación con Cuba, que es una transición pacífica a la democracia y el respeto a los derechos humanos y que, apesar de las diferencias que puedan existir, podemos actuar conjuntamente para avanzar esos objetivos".

El representante Burton destacó a los periodistas que la Administración Clinton encubrió un cargamento de cocaína descubierto recientemente en Colombia en el que el régimen cubano estaba involucrado, precisamente para no estropear el anuncio de las medidas hecho el martes.

Díaz-Balart les planteó a los altos funcionarios que la Administración puede escoger dos caminos: uno, el de la confrontación con el Congreso. "Burton ha dicho que no va a permitir la venta y financiamiento de equipos agropecuarios, y estamos dispuestos a usar todos los poderes del Congreso e inclusive ir a los tribunales de justicia para evitarlo". El otro es "trabajar juntamente con nosotros para acabar con la tiranía de Fidel Castro, mediante el plan que tenemos, semejante al que se puso en práctica con Hussein en Iraq".

Ranneberger expresó a DIARIO LAS AMERICAS que él había informado a los congresistas sobre las medidas y que comprendía su preocupación de que la venta de alimentos y equipo agrícola a entidades privadas no estuviera de acuerdo con la ley; pero que él les indicó que la Administración estudió muy cuidadosamente el asunto y que es completamente legal, porque si bien la Ley Helms-Burton había codificado el embargo, codificó también la facultad del Presidente de autorizarla.

"Les dije asimismo que la Secretaria de Estado quería implementar las nuevas medidas de manera legal y transparente y que queremos consultar y trabajar con el Congreso en cuanto

La Administración Clinton anunció el martes una serie de nuevas medidas que afectan el embargo a Cuba, dando como razón que persigue reforzar la sociedad civil en la Isla y disminuir la dependencia del cubano del gobierno, pero muchos las ven como un debilitamiento del embargo y una violación a la legislación que lo regula.

Entre las medidas figuran el aumento de remesas económicas, de vuelos de pasajeros, de intercambios académicos, científicos, culturales y atléticos, y la venta de alimentos y equipo agrícola de sector privado a sector privado.

Los congresistas Díaz-Balart, Ros-Lehtinen y el demócrata por New Jersey Bob Menéndez, expresaron inmediatamente su desacuerdo sobre todo con la venta de alimentos y venta y financiamiento de equipo agrícola, partiendo de la base de que violan la ley del embargo, punto de vista que Díaz-Balart expuso a la Secretaria de Estado señora Albright antes del anuncio, para que la decisión fuera reevaluada.

Clinton con medidas que ayudan al pueblo cubano

AP/Washington

El presidente Bill Clinton anunció ayer medidas destinadas a incrementar los contactos entre cubanos y norteamericanos, así como a aumentar significativamente las transferencias de dólares de Estados Unidos a Cuba.

La iniciativa también contempla por primera vez la venta limitada de comestibles de Estados Unidos a Cuba, así como el establecimiento de un servicio directo de correos y el aumento de los vuelos fletados también directos a la isla.

"Estas medidas están destinadas a brindar ayuda al pueblo cubano sin fortalecer al gobierno" de la isla, dijo Clinton en una declaración.

Las medidas "están de acuerdo con nuestra política de mantener la presión sobre el gobierno para lograr cambios democráticos por medio del embargo y las iniciativas diplomáticas vigorosas, al tiempo que hallamos fórmulas para que nuestros esfuerzos humanitarios lleguen al pueblo de Cuba y lo ayuden a desarrollar una sociedad civil", agregó el mandatario.



Foto AP

EN LA BODEGA - Una mujer recibe su ración mensual de pescado en La Habana. Las transferencias de fondos de estadounidenses en beneficio de familiares o amigos residentes en Cuba, fue una de las medidas que autorizó la Casa Blanca

Nuevas disposiciones:

AFP/Washington

Las nuevas medidas anunciadas ayer martes por el presidente norteamericano Bill Clinton, destinadas a "incrementar los contactos con el pueblo de Cuba", son las siguientes:

- Extender a todo residente de Estados Unidos la posibilidad de enviar hasta 1,200 dólares anuales a familiares o amigos en Cuba. Actualmente sólo las personas de origen cubano podían enviar esa cantidad de dinero a sus familias.
- Facilitar la concesión de visas para ampliar contactos "de persona a persona", a través de intermediarios

bios en ambos sentidos de académicos, atletas y científicos.

■ Autorizar nuevos vuelos charter directos de pasajeros entre ciudades de los dos países, además de los existentes entre La Habana y Miami, para facilitar la visita a sus familiares de los cubanos exiliados.

■ Esfuerzos para restablecer el correo directo hacia Cuba.

■ Autorizar la venta de alimentos e insumos agrícolas a entidades independientes no gubernamentales, incluyendo grupos religiosos y el emergente sector privado de Cuba, como restaurantes familiares y granjas privadas

■ Fortalecer los recursos gubernamentales destinados a las antenas de Radio y TV Martí, que emiten desde Miami. Washington estudia además la posibilidad de transmitir programas desde otros puntos de Estados Unidos.

Las medidas de flexibilización se suman a las adoptadas por Washington en marzo de 1990 tras la visita a Cuba del papa Juan Pablo II. En esa oportunidad, Estados Unidos había reinstaurado los vuelos charter directos entre Miami y La Habana, autorizado el envío limitado de remesas por familiares radicados en Estados Unidos, y permitido un incremento de la venta de medicamentos a la isla.

La Fundación cubana ataca la política del presidente

JAVIER CASTAÑO

"El presidente Clinton está desmontando el embargo a Cuba, está suavizando la relación con el señor Castro y por eso nos oponemos a las nuevas medidas de la Casa Blanca", dijo ayer Alberto Hernández, presidente de la junta directiva de la Fundación Cubano Americana, con sede en Miami.

Hernández dijo a el diario LA PRENSA que está hablando con los congresistas estadounidenses que apoyan el embargo para atacar la estrategia del presidente Clinton. "Estas medidas son el primer paso para quitar el embargo a Cuba y por eso vamos a luchar con todas nuestras fuerzas para detenerlas".

Esta es la opinión de Hernández sobre los seis puntos más importantes de la estrategia de la Casa Blanca hacia Cuba.

—De ahora en adelante cualquier persona puede enviar anualmente 1,200 dólares a Cuba, ¿qué significa esto?

"No estamos de acuerdo con esta medida, pero tampoco nos oponemos puesto que no es importante. El Departamento del Tesoro nunca ha actuado con firmeza para regular el envío de dinero a Cuba".

—¿Cómo afectará el incremento del otorgamiento de visas a quienes quieran visitar Cuba?

"Es una medida que está en contra de la ley. Debemos impedir que los empresarios empiecen a comercializar con Cuba. Apoyamos el intercambio cultural y deportivo, siempre y cuando el gobierno cubano permita que la gente hable sin tapujos sobre la opresión y la falta de libertad que

vive el pueblo. La misma libertad que tiene cualquier persona cuando visita Estados Unidos."

—¿Qué importancia tiene el aumento de los vuelos a Cuba?

"Los vuelos directos sólo enriquecen a las empresas que controla Castro en Estados Unidos".

—¿Y cuáles son esas empresas?

"No quiero mencionarlas porque sería darles importancia y tampoco me interesa discutir con esa gente".

—¿Qué opina sobre los esfuerzos para restablecer el correo directo hacia la isla?

"Esta medida la apoyamos porque le otorga derecho al pueblo de comunicarse con los cubanos que vivimos en esta nación. Si Castro no acepta esta medida, entonces todo este paquete deberá ser desechado. Así es de importante que haya correo directo hacia Cuba".

—¿A quién favorece la venta de insumos agrícolas a entidades cubanas independientes?

"Esta es la medida más ridícula y estúpida: en Cuba no hay empresa privada. Ni siquiera restaurantes. Se negociará con Castro y su gente y no con el pueblo cubano. La Fundación apoya la ayuda humanitaria a través de organizaciones no gubernamentales, pero no este tipo de apertura comercial".

—¿Qué significa un mayor apoyo a Radio y Televisión Martí?

"Se debe apoyar si la programación se usa para informar y orientar al pueblo de Cuba sobre los procesos democráticos y sobre la libertad de prensa, la cual no existe en Cuba".

'Venta de comida y envío de dólares son políticas equivocadas': Menéndez

ROBERTO BUSTAMANTE

El anuncio de la venta de productos comestibles a Cuba y el aumento significativo en el envío de dólares a la isla, ha sido calificado ayer por el congresista Bob Menéndez como política equivocada de la administración Clinton.

Menéndez, quien hoy se reunirá con el vicepresidente Al Gore durante el homenaje de los representantes demócratas en el Congreso, mostró su descontento con las nuevas medidas tomadas por la administración Clinton en relación con Cuba, aunque hizo una sola salvedad: con la eliminación de la posibilidad de formar una comisión tipo Kissinger que estudie la política de los Estados Unidos hacia la isla.

"Me escucharon en que no se debe dar importancia a una comisión que no es elegida ni está respaldada, y es más que no hace ninguna falta", manifestó Menéndez, respecto a la referida comisión.

Precisó Menéndez que la medida de vender productos alimenticios a Cuba beneficiará de modo potencial al régimen de Castro.

"La única organización no gubernamental en Cuba es Caritas, y virtualmente no hay ningún otro grupo independiente, y eso de vender raciones es una política equivocada", indicó, refiriéndose a la nueva iniciativa en la comercialización de productos comestibles a la isla. "Este asunto de vender productos agrícolas es una presión de los senadores republicanos porque ellos son los que están más interesados en este tipo de comercialización".

El congresista por Nueva Jersey rechazó la apertura de la transferencia de dólares a cualquier cubano. "Eso da pie para que el partido socialista (en Estados Unidos) pueda enviar dinero a Cuba. Yo favorezco si el dinero es enviado a los disidentes y opositores del régimen, porque un dólar en Cuba es un dólar en cautiverio".

Reacción de exilio cubano

La Fundación Cubano Americana a través de su director en Nueva York-Nueva Jersey, Remberto Pérez, expresó su rechazo a la implantación de la comisión de estu-

dio que el líder del exilio cubano Jorge Mas Canosa, en vida calificó de "Caballo de Troya", porque su meta era desarticular el embargo.

"Siempre hemos estado de acuerdo con el envío de alimentos y ayuda humanitaria, pero debo indicar que no hacer falta vender, porque este país puede donar. Allí en Cuba no hay un sector privado y es muy difícil establecer quienes son los agricultores independientes, explicó el líder cubano-americano en Nueva Jersey, en clara oposición a la venta de productos alimenticios al sector privado que no existe en el régimen de Fidel Castro, según indicó.

Aclaró Pérez que las nuevas medidas difundidas por la administración Clinton no son el fin del embargo económico contra Cuba, y es importante que los cubanos no se sorprendan con los fines propagandísticos del régimen castro.

En opinión de Lionel Rodríguez, periodista del exilio cubano en Nueva Jersey, los anuncios de la administración Clinton no son nada nuevo, y por el contrario se está dando un cteno legal al asunto.

Hay que ir a la raíz del conflicto cubano

Richard Nuccio, que ocupó el cargo, en el pasado, de consejero de Clinton en el caso de Cuba, dijo algo muy interesante: "No hay ninguna oferta que nosotros podamos hacer que ellos no estén dispuestos a rechazar". Se refería a Castro y aludía a la película *The Godfather*. Más claro: cualquier cosa que le propongan los americanos a Castro va a ser rechazada. A primera vista se podría pensar que hay algo irracional en esto. Este hombre no acepta nada. Este hombre no quiere negociar. Este hombre es intransigente. Este hombre toma esto como pretexto para alejarse al poder. Este hombre es un bárbaro. No hay manera de entenderse con él.

Correcto. Es muy comprensible la reacción que produce en muchas gentes la conducta de Castro. Sin embargo, si Nuccio, y tantos otros funcionarios americanos que tienen una visión distorsionada del caso cubano, se adentraran un poco en el complejo mundo de la conciencia histórica del cubano, podrían entender mejor la situación. No me refiero al cubano de Miami, que es, en rigor, un mercenario, en el sentido más estricto, puesto que se ha puesto al servicio de los intereses americanos y no puede entender la posición cubana. Me refiero al cubano que no ha roto los lazos profundos con su origen, no importa si vive en Miami o en la isla. Y me refiero, sobre todo, al cubano que carga todavía viva la historia de su país, con todos los ingredientes marianos que ésta tiene.

La maniobra que realizaron los americanos en Cuba desde el 1 de enero de 1898 hasta el 20 de mayo de 1902 (Root y Wood) para escamotearle a los cubanos los 30 años de lucha por la indepen-

dencia y sepultar el ideario de Martí en el olvido dejó una huella profunda en la conciencia del cubano. Y no me refiero a la masa sino a los grupos más conscientes.

Hay que precisar. No fue necesaria la ocupación militar de la isla el 1 de enero de 1898. No fue necesaria la intervención militar de la isla por los americanos. Hubo un engaño en la Resolución Conjunta por la cual se reconocía por el Congreso americano el derecho de Cuba a ser libre e independiente. Elihu Root, con el respaldo de McKinley primero y Roosevelt después, manipuló y sobornó a los cubanos, empujando por el propio Gómez, que recibió dinero de Wood y se convirtió en cómplice de la farsa, tal vez por ignorancia. Hubo maldad americana en la difusión de la idea de que los cubanos eran salvajes e incapaces de gobierno propio. Hubo infamia en el desarme del ejército insurgente cubano. Hubo algo siniestro en la política para obligar a los cubanos a aceptar las condiciones que les ponían los americanos para retirarse del país: "O aceptan nuestras condiciones (Enmienda Platt) o no nos vamos", se decía. Hubo algo miserable en querer americanizar el país enviando maestros americanos a las escuelas para establecer el inglés como lengua oficial y por último enviar maestros cubanos a Harvard para que vinieran a las escuelas a americanizar a los cubanos. La mentalidad de Elihu Root y Leonard Wood, en 1899 era la misma que tienen hoy los Richard



LUIS ORTEGA

Nuccios de Washington. Es decir, negociar, imponer condiciones, forzar la mano, tratar a Cuba como una dependencia americana. Eso es irracional.

Cuando se leen en el *Miami Herald* los artículos de Carlos Alberto Montaner, en los cuales se plantea el caso de Cuba como si la isla fuera una dependencia de los Estados Unidos a la cual hay que imponerle reglas, uno entiende la conducta de Castro. Montaner representa la reaparición moderna del plattista del 1901. Cuando se leen los artículos de un editor del *Herald* llamado Jim Hampton, un hombre que ha logrado disimular un

caudal extraordinario de ignorancia sobre el tema de Cuba y que suele plantear la tesis de los "pasos calibrados", es decir, "tú haces esto y yo hago esto otro", O sease, que es lo mismo que en aquellos tres años y medio de 1899 a 1902. "Tú te sometes y aceptas nuestras condiciones o seguimos ocupando militarmente la isla y no nos vamos". Y ahora: "O te agachas o te aplastamos".

Ese lapso de tiempo de 1899 a 1959 durante el cual Cuba tuvo que vivir bajo la tutela de los Estados Unidos es, precisamente, lo que explica la conducta intransigente de Castro, que es compartida por el sector más lúcido de la población cubana. Ahí está la raíz del conflicto.

Mientras los Richard Nuccios y los Jim Hamptons estén hablando de imponerle condiciones a Cuba (pasos calibrados) tropezarán con un muro infranqueable. En la conciencia histórica del

cubano, va tan dolorida, lo que está vigente en estos tiempos, y sobre todo, después de 40 años de sufrimientos, es la convicción de que los Estados Unidos, como una reparación necesaria, deben sacar las manos de Cuba, deben suspender el embargo-bloqueo y hasta dar excusas al pueblo de Cuba por el crimen cometido, deben tratar a Cuba con respeto y aceptar lo que Cuba decida sobre su propio destino sin tratar de interferir en los asuntos de la isla. Y deben, sobre todo, dar los pasos necesarios para disolver, de algún modo, el bonche de mercenarios que han instalado en Miami para amenazar a Cuba. Ellos lo crearon y ellos deben licenciarlos. Ellos han sido siempre los agresores.

¿Que esto es exagerado? Claro que lo es. Pero también fue exagerado invadir a Cuba en 1898 y obligar a los cubanos a aceptar el status semicolonial. Fue exagerado pasarse tantos años, hasta 1959, tratando a Cuba como una simple dependencia informal. Fue exagerado declarar la guerra a Cuba a partir de 1959 y tratar de invadirla con un grupo de combatientes a sueldo. Ha sido exagerado y criminal el esfuerzo que han hecho para arruinar al pueblo de Cuba durante 40 años. Lo correcto es que rectifiquen y busquen la amistad y respeto de los cubanos. Eso no cuesta nada. Cuba es hoy el lugar más adolorido y angustioso de la América. Es una llaga para el prestigio americano. Y Castro, no se engañen, ha venido a representar ese dolor. Se ha elevado a la condición de símbolo.

Luis Ortega es un periodista cubano radicado en Miami.

El Presidente debe renunciar Insatisfecho con columnista

El presidente Bill Clinton, debe seguir el ejemplo del congresista Bob Livingston y renunciar, o el Senado debe enjuiciarlo y destruirlo de la Presidencia. Con su hipocresía y su falta de temor a Dios, Bill Clinton coge una Biblia debajo de sus brazos, se va a una iglesia a botar lágrimas, mientras que por el otro lado, faltando todo respeto a Dios y su Santa Palabra, firma la ley del aborto parcial, convirtiéndose así en el Herodes de nuestros tiempos cuando envía y firma la ley para que maten a los niños de aquel entonces.

Mientras que los políticos de hoy día al igual que Poncio Pilatos toman encuestas, y al ver que la mayoría de la nación desea perdonar los crímenes de Barrabás y crucificar a Jesucristo, y mientras aún muchos ministros del evangelio que su trabajo y deber es

predicar y enseñar la moral y la decencia, también olvidan su responsabilidad. Nosotros tenemos que darle gracias a Dios porque hay unos pocos de políticos que sin importarle la opinión del público están dispuestos a tomar decisiones serenas y honestas, y no se lavan las manos como Pilatos por miedo a perder sus posiciones.

Como presidente de la Organización de Ministros Hispanos de New York, estare organizando y motivando el cuerpo de Ministros Hispanos de la Ciudad y en los próximos días haremos una demostración pública de repudio al Presidente.

Rev. Ruben Diaz
Bronx, N.Y.

PIDO LA PALABRA

Quiero por este medio expresar mi insatisfacción por los escritos de Maniere Arce. Es más sensato reconocer que somos hijos de una patria invadida, pretender ejercer de Yankee por poseer una ciudadanía impuesta es algo un poco absurdo.

Nada tenemos en contra de la emigración ni de los que por necesidad adquieren la ciudadanía Yankee. Una cosa es la imposición y otra la adquisición. No solo en Puerto Rico se tienen las maletas preparadas para venir a este país.

Esto sucede donde quiera que existan necesidades. Pero nadie en su sano juicio puede pretender ser algo que no es, nosotros

los latinos no necesitamos que los anglos nos quieran, pero si que nos respeten. No tengo la más mínima intención de polemizar con la hermana Maniere, pero consideramos saludable aclarar algunas cosas que ella pasa por alto al referirse a nuestros pueblos, sin analizar con profundidad el "mogollito" político de la patria del maestro Albizu. Cuesta trabajo hacer este tipo de crítica, primero, porque no queremos enfiadar a nadie y segundo porque se corre el riesgo que no se le publique a uno por disentir con quien tiene la ventaja y la facilidad de los medios, aunque sabemos que esa no es la regla en el diario.

En el artículo, "La novela real que fue el 1988", Maniere nos narra escenas de todo el mundo

menos de Puerto Rico, que dicho sea de paso fue el sainete más hablado, comentado y repudiado tanto en Puerto Rico como en la diáspora; el mal llamado plebiscito de Pedro Rosselló gobernador colonial de Puerto Rico, donde el pueblo emitió su sufragio en contra de la anexión y cicipavería de los incondicionales a Washington.

Por último quisiera aclararle a la amiga Maniere que en Cuba, el día de Navidad fue sacado del calendario oficial de días feriados, pero no se le prohibió al pueblo festejar, el que diga lo contrario, es ignorante de la verdad o lo hace por complacer a alguien.

Franklin Flores Silva
Nueva York, N.Y.

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NUESTROS PAISES



Analizarán anuncio de EEUU sobre el bloqueo



AFP/La Habana
El gobierno de Cuba analizará oportunamente las medidas anunciadas ayer martes en Washington que flexibilizan el bloqueo económico sobre la isla, señaló la Cancillería cubana.

Alejandro González, vocero de la Cancillería, dijo a la prensa que que analizaremos oportunamente (la decisión estadounidense), no voy a adelantar ninguna reacción por el momento.

Las nuevas disposiciones facilitan el envío de dinero a Cuba desde Estados Unidos, incrementan los vuelos directos de pasajeros, buscan restablecer el correo hacia la isla y permiten intercambios culturales, científicos y deportivos.

Pero la Casa Blanca rechazó una propuesta bipartidista presen-

tada en octubre pasado por congresistas que reclamaban la creación de una comisión para reexaminar la política de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba, proyecto que era seguido con interés en La Habana.

Habla Premio Nobel

El premio Nobel de Literatura, el portugués José Saramago, afirmó ayer martes en La Habana que ningún país del mundo es un templo de respeto de los derechos humanos, pero que en Cuba se observan algunos de esos principios más que en países desarrollados y democratas.

Al aclarar unas declaraciones a una emisora radial portuguesa en diciembre pasado, afirmó que él no particularizó sobre Cuba, sino que se refirió

a todos los países del mundo.

Dijo que en naciones occidentales se promocionan mucho los derechos políticos, olvidando otros contenidos también en la Carta Universal, los que se han cumplido y se están respetando en Cuba mucho más que en países desarrollados, supuestamente cultos, supuestamente civilizados y supuestamente democratas.

El novelista comunista, que participó en un taller sobre Cultura y revolución a 40 años de 1959 que concluyó en la fecha, con la presencia de un numeroso grupo de intelectuales de izquierda iberoamericanos.

Saramago aclaró a la prensa que al decir que ningún país es una excepción, eso tiene que ver con atentados contra los derechos humanos, atentado contra la seguri-

dad personal e individual, atentados contra lo que debía de ser una convivencia pacífica de los ciudadanos.

Añadió que en Cuba, como en Portugal, España o Italia pueden producirse violaciones aisladas, pues no hay dirigentes santificados, no hay políticas celestiales, hay lo que hay y la realidad es la que es.

Al hablar sobre democracia, Saramago dijo que en el mundo se está produciendo un proceso de globalización que es fundamentalmente económico, que hace imposible ejercer la democracia por falta de control político ciudadano.

"El control de la economía está fuera del control político de los ciudadanos, mientras que eso no se resuelva, es imposible hablar de democracia", indicó.

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Las Nuevas Medidas de Washington Debilitan el Embargo Contra Castro

Sobre la base de que la proyectada y llamada Comisión Bipartidista tenía por objeto "revisar" la política de los Estados Unidos con respecto a la dictadura totalitaria de Fidel Castro, hubo justificadamente un rechazo del exilio cubano por considerar que era un peligro que de esa Comisión surgiesen una serie de fórmulas favorables a dicha dictadura. Ahora se ha dicho oficialmente por el gobierno de Washington que no se le da respaldo a esa iniciativa de una comisión revisora, pero se aprueban una serie de medidas sumamente alarmantes y peligrosas para el futuro democrático del pueblo de Cuba. Esas medidas serán —hablando en términos generales— las que propondría la tantas veces mencionada Comisión, de acuerdo con el criterio de sus integrantes o proponentes que, siendo de ambos partidos, coinciden en muchos puntos de vista que, queriéndolo o no queriéndolo, favorecerían a la dictadura de Castro.

Es decir, la amenaza de la Comisión Revisora ha desaparecido, al menos en estos momentos. Pero ha surgido algo que es lo que sustituye lo que en favor de Castro habría propuesto ese grupo. Las medidas que va a aprobar el gobierno harán casi inoperante en muchos aspectos el embargo económico —que día a día se ha venido debilitando— de parte del gobierno de Washington contra el régimen comunista de La Habana. Esas medidas favorecerán al pueblo cubano en lo que específicamente convenga y decida Fidel Castro que es el que en último análisis controla, en el teatro de las operaciones, todos estos casos.

El criterio de que el supuesto bienestar económico en el país va a perjudicar a Castro, no hace juego con las experiencias de Cuba y de otros países del mundo. Una buena situación económica fortalece la posición de los gobiernos, especialmente de las dictaduras, salvo las excepciones que confirman la regla. Excepciones determinadas por la ayuda de una fuerte conspiración comunista internacional, como fueron los casos de Cuba y Nicaragua. Los grandes inversionistas o inversores extranjeros son los primeros en tener un interés fundamental en que haya "estabilidad" en el país a base de un gobierno fuerte que les garantice sus inversiones de acuerdo con lo que ha pactado el capitalista con el régimen. Por consiguiente, eso de creer que las grandes empresas en una u otra forma van a alentar la disconformidad y posible rebeldía contra la dictadura es una simple ilusión. Además, los que trabajan para esos inversores son contratados por el gobierno cubano que es el que decide la cantidad que se paga y la moneda que se usa. La dictadura recibe dólares y les paga salarios bajos en moneda cubana.

La lista que hasta el momento se ha dado de los "cambios" incluye la autorización para que cualquier ciudadano estadounidense pueda enviar a cualquier persona en Cuba —de su familia o no— "excepto a altos funcionarios comunistas" hasta la cantidad de mil doscientos dólares al año, algo que es sumamente raro, posiblemente sin precedente en otros países. Ese dinero adicional que llegue a Cuba enriquecerá al Estado totalitario a través de impuestos o del tipo de cambio con respecto a la moneda nacional. Y las otras medidas son por el estilo...

Washington's New Measures Will Ease the Embargo Against Castro

The Cuban exile reacted strongly against a proposed bipartisan commission that would "review" American policy toward the totalitarian dictatorship of Fidel Castro because it considered that there existed the danger that such a commission would lead to a number of moves favorable to that dictatorship. Now, the Administration has said officially that there will be no such commission, but is approving a number of measures that are extremely alarming and dangerous for the democratic future of the Cuban people. Those measures will be —speaking in general— the same that would be proposed by the mentioned commission based on the criteria of its members who, although belonging to both parties, coincide in many things that, wittingly or unwittingly, would favor the Castro dictatorship.

In other words, the threat of a reviewing commission has disappeared, at least for the time being. But what has emerged is very much like what that group would have recommended and that ultimately favors Castro. The measures that the American government is about to approve would make the embargo against the Havana communist regime inoperative in many aspects. These measures will benefit the Cuban people only to the extent that Fidel Castro specifically decides will be good for him, since he is the one who actually controls everything in Cuba.

The idea that a comfortable economic situation in the country will hurt Castro is not warranted by the experience in Cuba and in other countries of the world. A good economic situation strengthens the governments, specially dictatorships, with the exceptions that confirm the rule. Exceptions determined with the help of a strong international communist conspiracy, as happened in Cuba and Nicaragua. Important foreign investors are the first ones to have a fundamental interest in the "stability" of the country based on a strong government that guarantees their investments in line with what the capitalist has agreed upon with the regime. Therefore, the thought that large business concerns will in one way or another encourage disconformity and possible rebellion against the dictatorship is simply a pipe dream. Furthermore, those who work for the foreign investors are employed by the Cuban government which determines how much they are paid and in what currency. The dictatorship receives dollars and pays them low salaries in Cuban currency.

The list of reported "changes" includes the authorization for any American citizen to send \$1,200 a year to anyone in Cuba —family or not— "except to senior Communist officials", a measure that is very strange, perhaps unprecedented in other countries. That additional money that Cuba will receive will make the totalitarian State wealthier through taxes or currency exchange rates. And the other measures are along those same lines...



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EE.UU.: más vuelos, y más dinero para Cuba

Washington busca aumentar contactos entre EE.UU y Cuba al margen del gobierno

Por ARIEL REMOS

Tal como informamos en nuestra edición de ayer, el Presidente Clinton anunció este martes una serie de medidas en relación con Cuba, que complementan las que autorizó en marzo pasado tras la visita del Papa a la Isla, para aliviar la situación del pueblo de Cuba sin beneficiar al gobierno, según la declaración presidencial.

Las medidas anunciadas por el Presidente Clinton, son:



Díaz-Balart

- Aumentar las remesas permitiendo a cualquier residente en EE.UU. (no solamente a los que tienen familiares en Cuba) enviar cantidades limitadas tanto a familiares como a organizaciones independientes del gobierno. (Actualmente se pueden enviar a familiares en Cuba \$300 trimestrales o \$1,200 año. Ahora podrá enviarse esa cantidad y posiblemente se autorice a aumentarla, a cualquier persona no familiar, siempre que no sea un funcionario o empleado



Graham

- Expandir el contacto de dos vías de persona a persona, a través de intercambios académicos, atléticos, científicos, culturales y otros.
- Autorizar la venta de alimentos y equipo agrícola a entidades independientes del gobierno, incluyendo a grupos religiosos y emergentes del sector privado, tales como restaurantes y campesinos dueños de tierra.



Menéndez

- Autorizar vuelos de pasajeros a otras ciudades además de La Habana, desde otras ciudades de EE.UU. además de Miami, con el propósito de facilitar la reunificación familiar a personas que no vivan en esas dos ciudades.
- Tratar de establecer el servicio de correos directo a Cuba, de acuerdo con la Ley Democracia de 1992. A la vez que la Casa Blanca emitió la anterior declaración del Presidente

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EE.UU.: más vuelos y más dinero para Cuba

(Viene de la pág. 1-A)

Clinton, la Secretaria de Estado, Madeleine Albright compareció ante la prensa para dar a conocer con más detalles las nuevas medidas, y las razones por las cuales se estaban tomando. Señaló la Secretaria que no obstante las esperanzas que había sembrado el viaje de Su Santidad Juan Pablo II a Cuba hace un año, el gobierno cubano no ha mostrado el menor interés en restaurar las libertades al pueblo. "Al contrario", dijo la Secretaria, "las autoridades han sido sumamente fuertes en aplastar esfuerzos para expresar discrepancias o para movilizar apoyo a los derechos humanos".

Además de las medidas anunciadas por el Presidente Clinton, y la Secretaria Albright, el Subsecretario de Estado Stuart Eizenstat dijo a DIARIO LAS AMERICAS que el gobierno norteamericano descartó la creación de una comisión bipartidista para revisar la política de EE.UU. hacia Cuba. La razón para ello, dijo, es que la política norteamericana en relación con Cuba es sana, clara y goza de respaldo bipartidista.

Informó asimismo que la Administración pedirá al Congreso aumente los fondos a Radio Martí y TV Martí. A Radio Martí por la gran penetración que tienen sus transmisiones a Cuba como fuente diaria de información clave al pueblo de la Isla, y a TV Martí para vencer la interferencia que mantiene el régimen de Cuba para que no entre su señal en Cuba.

Otra de las medidas autorizadas por el Presidente, es la de celebrar dos juegos de pelota de exhibición en marzo, uno en Cuba y otro en EE.UU., entre los Orioles del Baltimore y una selección nacional cubana, cumpliendo ciertas condiciones. Esta medida ocupa el primer cintillo del Washington Post de este martes.

que modificarla y no resolverla mediante una orden ejecutiva. Dijo haber recomendado a la secretaria de Estado Madeleine Albright revisar esa medida, que seguramente provocaría una confrontación con el Congreso.



Eizenstat

Por su parte, el congresista demócrata por New Jersey, Bob Menéndez se siente escéptico con el aumento de las ventas de alimentos y productos agrícolas a Cuba, por los beneficios potenciales que podrían representar al gobierno de Castro.

"No quisiera que los alimentos enviados al pueblo de Cuba sean racionados por el régimen. La única organización no gubernamental (ONG) en Cuba es Caritas, no existen virtualmente otras organizaciones independientes en la Isla capaces de hacer tales compras. Desde el momento en que estas medidas no incluyen el aumento de elementos para forzar el cumplimiento del embargo, la posibilidad de ONG creadas por el gobierno para adquirir esos alimentos, particularmente productos agrícolas, es muy real".

La Fundación Nacional Cubano Americana objetó también la idea de "vender" alimentos y equipo agrícola a grupos no gubernamentales mal llamados "negocios privados", ya que en Cuba no existen los negocios privados, que son emblema del libre mercado democrático, y lo que sólo se refuerza con ello es la percepción de que lo que mueve la política exterior de EE.UU. es la codicia y servir los intereses corporativos.

Para el sociólogo del Miami Dade Community College, Dr. Juan Clark, el conjunto de medidas anunciadas por el gobierno son una mezcla de querer quedar bien con la comunidad cubano-americana, y debilitar por otro lado el embargo. "Son, como se dice, una de cal y otra de arena", dijo.

Eizenstat hizo hincapié en que las medidas se tomaban en anticipación "al inevitable cambio a la democracia que sobrevendrá en Cuba cuando fallezca Castro, o quede incapacitado" y contribuirían a fortalecer la ayuda a su sufrido pueblo. Afirmó asimismo que no respondían a negociaciones con Cuba, sino que estarían adoptadas unilateralmente por el gobierno estadounidense, con el propósito, por otra parte, de fortalecer la sociedad civil en desarrollo, tan importante en una transición a la democracia.

Un vocero del gobierno de Cuba declaró a la CNN sobre el anuncio que se iba a hacer, que la única medida de EE.UU. que aceptaría sería la del levantamiento incondicional del embargo.

El senador de más antigüedad de la Florida, demócrata Bob Graham, dijo que las medidas tomadas por el gobierno norteamericano son saludables y consistentes con las leyes actuales que rigen las relaciones entre EE.UU. y Cuba. Graham se unió a los legisladores de la Florida y New Jersey que aplaudieron la decisión de la Administración Clinton, de no nombrar una comisión especial para revisar la política hacia Cuba. Graham concluyó diciendo que "estas medidas sirven para separar al pueblo cubano del gobierno brutal y autoritario".

El congresista republicano por la Florida Lincoln Díaz-Balart, había objetado previamente que se permitiera la venta y financiamiento de alimentos y productos agrícolas entre particulares de aquí y de allá, por violar claramente la ley del embargo, ya que habría

The New York Times subraya en su edición de este martes la coincidencia en la naturaleza y la oportunidad del anuncio de las medidas hecho por la Administración, con un informe del Consejo de Relaciones Exteriores (Council on Foreign Relations), en el que se proponen medidas similares a las anunciadas.

El informe aboga, entre otras cosas, por aumentar los contactos entre ciudadanos de ambos países; por eliminar el límite de viajes a Cuba y al dinero que se puede enviar a familiares; por levantar la mayoría de las restricciones a la venta de alimentos y medicinas y ayudar a organizaciones no gubernamentales a asistir al pueblo de Cuba; por aminorar las restricciones para que vengan de Cuba a EE.UU. académicos, artistas, atletas y funcionarios del gobierno cubano. El informe del CFR fue redactado por Bernard W. Aronson y William D. Rogers, este último uno de los proponentes de la comisión bipartidista que fue rechazada por Clinton.

The New York Times inicia su información sobre el anuncio diciendo que "Estados Unidos está listo para que más personas y más dinero afluayan a Cuba". Y esto naturalmente hace preguntarse a unos si las nuevas medidas debilitan o no el embargo, y afirmar a otros, por un lado, que se trata de maniobras que concluirán en confrontación con el Congreso por parecerse cada vez más a una normalización de relaciones con Cuba; y por el otro, que este aumento de contacto y de afluencia de dinero ayudará, en efecto, a promover la democracia y el respeto a los derechos humanos.

Edición del 5 de Enero, 1999

Orioles de Baltimore aún no quieren hacer declaraciones sobre juego de exhibición en Cuba

Declaraciones del Departamento de Estado

Por VIVIAN CRUCET

La organización del equipo de pelota Orioles de Baltimore de la Liga Americana Profesional no emitió un comentario sobre la propuesta del Departamento de Estado de EE.UU. de que jugaran dos partidos de exhibición entre los orioles y la Selección Nacional Cubana, ganadores de la medalla de oro olímpica, como parte de un nuevo tratado de relaciones con la Isla.

Kevin Behan, vocero de información pública para los Orioles, en la oficina de Baltimore dijo que la organización emitiría sus comentarios pronto.

"Aún no podemos anunciar nada. En cuanto podamos, le haremos saber a la prensa", dijo Behan.

Sin embargo, funcionarios del equipo Orioles han estado hablando con la Administración Clinton desde 1995 para hacer posible estos partidos. Peter Angelos, propietario de los Orioles es uno de los grandes contribuidores al Partido Demócrata. La gestión cesó con el derribo de las avionetas de Hermanos Al Rescate en febrero de 1996 por parte de pilotos de la fuerza aérea cubana.

Al preguntársele la fuente de

(Pasa a la Pág. 10-A Col. 3)

Orioles de Baltimore aún no quieren hacer declaraciones sobre juego de exhibición en Cuba

(Viene de la pág. 1-A)

donde se había derivado el escoger a los Orioles entre los 28 equipos profesionales en las Ligas Nacional y Americana, Behan dijo que sabía, pero no podía decir nada. "Siento ser tan vago en las respuestas, pero, aún no podemos dar comentarios ni sabemos cuando hablaremos con la prensa".

Por parte del Departamento de Estado, se anunció que los Orioles y el equipo cubano jugarían dos partidos de béisbol, uno en Cuba y otro y otro en la ciudad de Baltimore. La organización de los Orioles ha recibido incluso permiso de Washington para viajar a La Habana a finales de esta semana y discutir las posibilidades de llevar a cabo los partidos

durante la temporada de exhibición que comienza en marzo. Uno de los asuntos a tratar es que, como parte del embargo hacia Cuba, el gobierno de Fidel Castro no se beneficie monetariamente de estos partidos y que las ganancias monetarias de las ventas se destinen a organizaciones o agencias de caridad que a su vez ayudaran a ciudadanos cubanos.

Al cierre de esta edición, la Secretaría de Estado, Madeline Allbright, se encontraba haciendo declaraciones específicas sobre la nueva política de la Administración Clinton hacia Cuba en la que se plantea el juego de béisbol.

Diario las Américas
5 de enero, 1999

Clinton dice que no a la Comisión cubana

**Aumentará la
ayuda para
Radio y TV
Martí y
ampliarán
los vuelos
comerciales a
otras ciudades
cubanas**

Por LUIS MARIO

Según informa la oficina de la congresista federal por la Florida, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, la administración del presidente Bill Clinton se apresta a informar este martes por la tarde sobre la decisión de no darle luz verde a la creación de una Comisión Bipartidista sobre Cuba, conocida como "Comisión Warren", que estaría encaminada a revisar la política de Estados Unidos hacia el gobierno de Fidel Castro.

Se trata de la proposición que hicieron trece senadores y tres ex secretarios de Estado, entre ellos Henry Kissinger, que estaría encaminada a revisar las medidas de Estados Unidos hacia el país caribeño dominado por el comunismo castrista. Había una gran preocupación de que esa Comisión estaría encaminada a beneficiar al gobierno castrista.

Entre otras decisiones que se informarán oportunamente el martes, también se dará a conocer que el gobierno del presidente

Clinton se apresta a aumentar la ayuda a las emisoras Radio y TV Martí que desde el territorio nacional transmiten hacia Cuba y, finalmente, los viajes comerciales a ese país se ampliarán hacia otras ciudades además de La Habana. Con ello se facilita a los cubanos en el exterior que visiten su país de origen. Estados Unidos permitirá también el traspaso de fondos no gubernamentales desde este país hacia organizaciones no gubernamentales dentro de Cuba.

Actualizado a las 4:19 p.m., hora del este, el lunes, 4 de enero de 1999

Casa Blanca rechazó crear comisión para revisar política hacia Cuba

WASHINGTON, Ene 4 -- (AFP) -- La Casa Blanca rechazó la propuesta de crear una comisión destinada a revisar la política de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba y Washington se dispone a anunciar en cambio una serie de medidas para favorecer los contactos con la isla, indicaron este lunes fuentes del Congreso.

La creación de esa comisión implicaba un cuestionamiento del embargo aplicado por Estados Unidos a la isla desde hace casi cuatro décadas.

Varios influyentes senadores republicanos y demócratas, apoyados por los ex secretarios de Estado republicanos Henry Kissinger y Laurence Eagleburger, habían recomendado su creación en octubre pasado.

Su objetivo sería "conducir un análisis objetivo, reflexivo y racional de la política estadounidense actual hacia Cuba y sus consecuencias sobre el resto del continente", según los autores de la propuesta.

El Gobierno del presidente Bill Clinton descartó esa opción pero decidió en cambio adoptar una serie de medidas hacia Cuba dentro del estrecho margen que le permiten las leyes norteamericanas, indicaron las fuentes del Congreso.

"La decisión de no crear la comisión es una buena noticia, pero necesitamos saber más detalles sobre estas nuevas iniciativas, para asegurarnos de que verdaderamente ayudarán al pueblo de Cuba, y no al tirano", dijo a la AFP Juan Cortiñas, portavoz de la representante republicana Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Florida).

Según las fuentes, a pesar de rechazar la propuesta, el Departamento de Estado se dispone a anunciar una serie de medidas para incrementar los contactos con el pueblo de Cuba, en particular a través del envío de más alimentos y de una expansión de vuelos desde Miami a La Habana y también a otras ciudades de la isla.

Se anunciará además un incremento de los servicios de correo hacia Cuba, así como nuevos esfuerzos para impulsar el respeto de los derechos humanos en la isla y un aumento de los fondos destinados a Radio y TV Martí, emisoras anticastristas financiadas por el Gobierno norteamericano que transmiten sus programas desde Miami.

Los congresistas norteamericanos del sector anticastrista se opusieron en bloque a la eventual creación de la comisión, afirmando que la misma estaría integrada por cabilderos de grandes empresas que buscan levantar el embargo y negociar con Castro.

En noviembre pasado, la secretaria de Estado norteamericana,

Madeleine Albright, se entrevistó con tres legisladores opuestos a la comisión para intercambiar ideas, entre ellos Ros-Lehtinen.

Asistieron además a la reunión el demócrata Robert Menéndez, de Nueva Jersey, y el representante republicano Lincoln Díaz-Balart, de Florida.

Los partidarios de la comisión estimaban en cambio que ésta debería ser creada siguiendo el modelo de la "comisión Kissinger" sobre América Central, establecida por el presidente Ronald Reagan en 1983 para poner fin a los conflictos en la región.

La política estadounidense hacia Cuba no ha sido revisada desde la instrumentación del embargo contra la isla en 1962, reforzado por la ley Helms-Burton, aprobada en 1996.

Una buena parte de la opinión pública estadounidense y medios empresariales denuncian regularmente las consecuencias del embargo, mientras que en el plano internacional, el aislamiento de Estados Unidos hacia Cuba se hace cada año más patente.

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