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**National and Regional Response
to the January 5, 1999
Cuba Measures**

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The same old ballgame

Clinton eases the Cuban embargo, but not much is changing

BY LINDA ROBINSON

HAVANA—Forty years after the Sugar Kings, a U.S. minor league team, left Havana's Cerro stadium, professional American ballplayers are finally coming back to Cuba. Baltimore Orioles owner Peter Angelos is expected here this week to seal a deal for an exhibition game—provided that Fidel Castro agrees to forgo any profits from the event. Cuba's talented players, who regularly trounce the U.S. Olympic team, are looking for a win. But that's all the island stands to gain from the match-up. Unlike the ping-pong diplomacy that heralded Richard Nixon's opening to China, this overture does not signal a major softening of U.S. policy. And despite the fanfare surrounding *beisbol*, Castro shows no inclination to abandon his hard line, either.

In announcing a series of minor changes in America's 37-year-old embargo, President Clinton stressed last week that he wants to "help the Cuban people" while "keeping pressure on the regime for democratic change." The White House rejected a proposal by two dozen U.S. senators and three former secretaries of state (including détente architect Henry Kissinger) for a full-scale review of Cuba policy. Instead, the administration decided to tinker at the margins, allowing more charter flights, academic and cultural exchanges, and dollars to cross the Straits of Florida. Any U.S. resident may now send \$1,200 a year to any Cuban (other than senior officials), and sales of food and agricultural supplies will be permitted to private restaurants, farmers, and nongovernmental organizations. The United States also will try to restore direct mail service, since a letter now can take a month to travel 90 miles.

Clinton's announcement comes on the anniversary of Pope John Paul II's path-

breaking visit to the island, where the pontiff called for an end to the embargo and for expanded freedoms for Cubans. Castro, like Clinton, has responded in piecemeal fashion. He has reinstated Christmas as an official holiday and permitted sporadic religious processions, but

charged with such vague crimes as "dangerousness," "disrespecting the state," or spreading "enemy propaganda."

Cuba's four most prominent dissidents, including the son of a revolutionary leader, are soon to be put on trial. Vladimiro Roca, Marta Beatriz Roque, Félix Antonio

Bonne, and René Gómez Manzano have been charged under a sedition law that makes even nonviolent protest illegal. Says Magaly D'Armas, Roca's wife, "They shouldn't be in prison. All they've done is express themselves." She adds that Roca's father, Blas Roca, who led the labor wing of the revolution, would not necessarily have condemned his son's break with communism: "He always taught him to think for himself."

Dissidents in jail. According to the indictment, Roca and his colleagues—all university professors or economists—committed a crime by calling on Cubans to boycott elections, government rallies, and mass organizations. They also urged foreign investors to deny requirements like hiring only state-approved workers. The four were arrested in July 1997, shortly after speaking to foreign journalists.

Roca is now in solitary confinement in Ariza prison. Since Castro did not heed the pope's call for the release of the four men, D'Armas is now counting on intercession on her husband's behalf by Spain's royal couple, who are to make their first visit to Cuba this spring. "They are the last hope we have," she says.

But just as Clinton signaled that there will be no major change in U.S. policy, the 72-year-old Castro delivered a similar message on New Year's Day, the 40th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Standing on the same balcony in Santiago from which he addressed the cheering masses on Jan. 1, 1959, Castro assured 2,000 invited guests that, although he has aged since that day, "I still speak the same, dress the same, and think the same." ■



Castro addressing a rally on the anniversary of the revolution

the Roman Catholic Church is far from satisfied. "The church must have the normal space to do its work," says the Rev. José Pérez, secretary of the Cuban Conference of Bishops.

Some 300 prisoners have been released at the pope's request, but an estimated 370 dissidents remain in jail. That's fewer than in previous years, when the number is thought to have been 1,000 or more. Jail sentences are also shorter, but those who speak out can still be

WHA/AS

CUBA

Castro Digs In His Heels

Fidel doesn't think much of an American overture

By ELLIS COSE

WHEN THE UNITED States loosened restrictions on money, food, medicine and charter flights to Cuba last week, the Clinton administration called the measures "a major advance in our effort to reach out to the Cuban people." Fidel Castro wasn't impressed. He dismissed the changes as minor policy adjustments that would do little to alleviate the American economic embargo first imposed on Cuba 37 years ago. "I'm convinced [President Clinton's] ashamed" of the embargo, Castro told a group of American visitors. "But the question is not what Clinton wants, but what Clinton can do." When the United States promised last year to ease licensing procedures for medicines, Castro said, "we immediately sent the list of the medications we wanted to buy. And we're still waiting for an answer." The Cuban leader expected little in the way of bilateral reform from an American president who was "powerless to send an aspirin to this country."

Castro made his comments to a delegation of high-profile black Americans (led by Randall Robinson, head of the Washington-based TransAfrica Forum, and including Camille Cosby, actor Danny Glover and filmmaker Carl Franklin) who had come to Cuba to assess the impact of the embargo and to investigate the status of black Cubans. Around midnight last Wednesday, delegation members were summoned to a government building in Havana, where they joined the Cuban president around a large conference table. They asked some questions, but mostly listened—for more than two hours—as Castro, speaking softly, and occasionally scribbling notes to himself on a small pad, held forth on subjects ranging from the economic distress caused by the Soviet Union's collapse to his affection for black Americans.

Looking thin but fit in olive green fatigues, the Cuban leader energetically defended his regime. He insisted that, de-



Unrepentant:
Speaking to his
troubled nation

"I'm convinced [Clinton is] ashamed of the embargo. The question is not what Clinton wants, but what Clinton can do."

spite economic pressures, Cuba has maintained its commitment to high-quality health care and education. "We have not closed one school, or left any teacher jobless," he said. Indeed, Castro insisted the embargo had made Cubans stronger: "The blockade has turned us into patriots and ... revolutionaries and prepared us to face the future."

To what extent will Castro's revolution shape that future? Now 72, the Cuban leader noted that more than 7 million

Cubans have been born since January 1959, when his guerrilla columns marched victoriously into Santiago de Cuba. The majority of Cuba's 11 million people, in other words, have no direct memory of his mythmaking triumph. Nonetheless, said Castro, those who "think everything is going to disappear the day I run out of energy" were deluded.

Young Cubans are well aware of the revolution's benefits. They proudly tout the country's high literacy rate and its universal and free health care. But many also point out the country's flaws—particularly its restrictions on free expression and its limits on ambition. "The problem is not the blockade in the United States; the problem is here, with us," declared one twentysomething Cuban over dinner. His girlfriend nodded in agreement and added that it was time they were allowed to "be free" to "make our own decisions."

Ironically, part of young Cubans' frustrations seem to stem from the opening up of Cuban society. As tourists totting American dollars have flocked in, Cubans with access to them are becoming a new economic elite. The emerging class division fuels the desire among many Cubans to abandon the values of the revolution and grab a piece of the good life for themselves. So they leave jobs with the state and become self-employed, turn to prostitution or seek positions in the tourist industry, where a quick

buck can be made. To many, the idea of sacrificing for a better Cuban tomorrow seems absurd. "I don't live in the future. I live in the present," explained one young man.

Castro admits to concerns about the growth of vice and economic inequality. And he acknowledges that dollars flowing from expatriates (who are disproportionately white) to family members on the island compounds racial disparities that the revolution did not erase. "We have not won the battle [against racial inequality] yet," he said, but vowed, "We will find an answer."

In today's Cuba, however, answers are much more elusive than they seemed a few years ago. Despite Castro's rock-hard faith in the revolution, Cuba has sailed into the unknown. As the price of its survival, it has invited influences it would have once scorned, and has sanctioned values (materialism, free enterprise) that it previously abhorred—values likely to be every bit as significant in shaping its future as Castro's socialist dreams of the past.

WHAAS

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HERALDLINK FULL STORY

Published Wednesday, January 13, 1999, in the Miami Herald

Enough with the double talk

**THE EMBARGO ON CUBA**

Cuba rejects U.S. measures offering it more money, people and goods. Cuba reacted to new U.S. measures aimed at increasing the flow of money, people, mail and goods to Cuba. The pathetic response: No! — except maybe to an exchange of baseball games. Ricardo Alarcon, head of Cuba's National Assembly, last week blasted the United States, labeling the U.S. policy changes "instruments of bribery" and "a means of manufacturing traitors." Such measures can only be "rejected most categorically," he said.

To top it off, Alarcon threatened that Cuba would cut direct phone service if it were made to pay such rightful claims as the \$187 million judgment awarded to families of Brothers to the Rescue fliers murdered by the Cuban Air Force.

Canada, Mexico, the European Community, Pope John Paul II, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and all others who have lambasted the United States for its economic embargo should mark this well: It is Cuba that is turning down a sensible U.S. offer to ease some restrictions.

This is clear hypocrisy from a government that milks so much sympathy by blaming its woes on the U.S. embargo. But perhaps the Cuban government had no choice. What would Fidel Castro have to rail against if he didn't have this Goliath, the embargo, propped up as the enemy? Perhaps he will have the chance to rail against Cuban baseball players who defect during exhibition games.

The United States well has made clear its good intentions to promote democracy and civil society in Cuba. That, however, is the last thing that Cuba's one-party, one-man regime will tolerate -- from America or any other nation or pressure group. Castro simply will not settle for anything less than absolute control.

Remember this the next time that Cuba cries crocodile tears -- and then torpedoed any effort to "open space" in its relations with the United States



WHATS

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Getting in touch with HERALDLINK

Clinton Takes a Weak Cut at Baseball Diplomacy

JIM MANN

INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

WASHINGTON—If you want to see how cautious and politically driven American foreign policy has become, there is no better example than the Clinton administration's recent half-step forward on Cuba.

Baltimore Orioles owner Peter Angelos will be visiting Havana this weekend, serving in effect as a stalking horse for a slightly new U.S. approach to Cuba. One might wonder whether it is wise to give a role in foreign policy to the meddlesome owner who fired Davey Johnson, the best manager in baseball.

Angelos will explore whether President Fidel Castro and his government are willing to approve two exhibition games between the Orioles and a Cuban team this spring, the first in Cuba and the second in Baltimore. In the larger sense, his mission will test the extent to which the Cuban leadership will give a role to nongovernmental organizations outside its control.

The inside story of the Orioles and Cuba says a lot about what the Clinton administration is and is not willing to do overseas in its final two years.

During President Clinton's first term, his National Security Council carried out a series of back-channel discussions with Cuba. The two sides successfully worked out some practical issues, including an immigration accord. They also explored other possibilities. Meanwhile, Americans seeking to improve U.S. ties to Cuba persuaded Angelos to endorse the idea of exhibition games between the Orioles and Cuba.

There things stood in February 1996, when Cuban fighter jets shot down two small planes belonging to the Miami-based Cuban exile group Brothers to the Rescue.

The administration reacted with outrage. Madeleine Albright, then the ambassador to the United Nations, accused the Cubans of "cowardice." Congress passed and Clinton signed the Helms-Burton Act, which tightened economic sanctions on Cuba and opened the way for suits against foreign companies that invest in Cuba. The idea of an easing of U.S. policy toward Cuba went into a deep freeze.

Last fall, things began to thaw. A bipartisan group of about 20 senators united behind a proposal by Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.) to appoint a presidential commission for a comprehensive review of American policy toward Cuba. Former Secretaries of State Henry A. Kissinger, George P. Shultz and Lawrence S. Eagleburger endorsed the idea.

In other words, members of America's foreign policy establishment and some congressional leaders were attempting to give the Clinton administration the political cover and respectability needed for a significant change in Cuba policy.

Two months ago, administration officials seemed interested in the idea. They even discussed who might head the new Cuba commission. Should it be Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles—who died last month? Or former Clinton aide Thomas F. "Mack" McLarty?

But in late December, the White House got cold feet. Politics intervened. Cuban exile groups voiced alarm that a commission might recommend easing or lifting the 37-year-old trade embargo against Cuba—as, indeed, it might have. Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.) and some other members of Congress with Cuban constituencies weighed in with concern about the commission.

Most important of all, Vice President Al Gore was unwilling to go along. Gore isn't eager to arouse the ire of the Cuban community in Florida, which could be an important state in his presidential race next year.

Administration officials don't deny that politics was a factor. They say it would have taken months to set up a Cuba commission, and the panel might not have made its recommendations until early 2000, in the midst of the presidential primary contests.

"While the commission had bipartisan support, the community that really matters was strongly opposed," explained one U.S. official. "In American politics, the people who really care about an issue carry weight."

So the Clinton administration switched gears. It decided to announce a series of small steps that will ease the trade embargo against Cuba. Among these are resuming direct mail service to Cuba and loosening the previous rules for sending money to Cuban families.

The administration's Cuba package still lacked a centerpiece. At the last minute, Secretary of State Albright added one more component. She said the administration was ready to go along with the old proposal for



Associated Press

Secretary of State Albright, opening '99 season, opts for ball with Cuba

the Orioles' exhibition games against the Cubans, provided that the proceeds went to charities rather than the Cuban regime.

"We decided that high-visibility changes were now appropriate," explained one policy-maker.

The organizers of the Orioles exhibition were stunned by Albright's announcement: their plans weren't ready and hadn't been approved by the Cubans. Nevertheless, Angelos will now sojourn to Havana to see if he can work out two games in which the profit will go to charities or other nongovernmental groups.

At issue is more than baseball. The underlying question is what kinds of groups in Cuba will be defined as "nongovernmental"—and therefore eligible to receive money from the United States. If the definition is broad, the way would be open to broader financial transactions between America and Cuba.

In a column last year, I predicted the Clinton administration might unveil some bold initiatives in foreign policy soon after the 1998 elections were safely over. I put Cuba at the top of the list of possibilities.

I was wrong. The administration moved on Cuba, all right, but it made at best an incremental change. In the current milieu, even appointing a commission is seen as too daring. Politics is a year-round occupation now, in which there is no safe time for bold initiatives.

Jim Mann's column appears in this space every Wednesday.

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ROGER FONTAINE / WILLIAM RATLIFF

Newspapers last week ran stories with leads like: "The Clinton administration moves ahead with bold changes in U.S. policy toward Cuba." But as one editor used to say, "Good story, wrong lead." Such was the case with the latest twist in the Cuban-American saga.

The real lead should have been: "The Clinton administration once again opts for the status quo." Instead of doing something dramatic and in the national interest like ending the antidiluvian trade embargo, it scheduled the Baltimore Orioles for an exhibition game with the Cuban national baseball team.

And speaking of baseball and most importantly, President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore refused to endorse Sen. John Warner's modest, but courageous, proposal for a bipartisan presidential commission to re-examine America's 37-year-old Cuban policy. The policy made sense in 1962 when it began — the year after Roger Maris broke Babe Ruth's home-run record — but not in 1999, the year after Mark McGuire revived memories of the once forgotten Yankee outfielder.

What is going on here? In a nutshell, the State Department after years of policy review has labored and brought forth a mouse. Under the rubric of opening contacts with the Cuban people, Washington will now allow any American to contribute \$1,200 to a duly authorized Cuban, that is, to a non-government group or individual. It allows more flights to Cuba from cities other than Miami. Direct sales of food and fertilizer are now permitted to Cuba's restaurateurs and farmers. Direct mail service will be established. And, of course,

Yielding the field on U.S./Cuba policy

there is baseball.

None of these steps are unwelcome; they are just either trivial or contradictory. Take direct sales, for example. The number of private entrepreneurs who have the cash to buy American products must be minuscule and in any case would require Havana's approval. Allowing increased donations of dollars to authorized Cubans may make legal remittances Cuba's largest source of hard currency, above tourism or sugar. How ironic that with their humanitarian donations, Cuban-Americans who are the only reason the embargo continues today are also the main violators of the embargo's logic of strangling Castro economically.

The embargo with its command-style controls has not and will not bring down Fidel Castro. To the extent it has any impact, it gives Mr. Castro a scapegoat for his economic failures and repression and decreases the prospects of a smooth transit to a more representative post-Castro government.

It is past time for Americans to base post-Cold War policy toward the island on the national interests of both Americans and Cubans rather than on vengeance and haughty, phony moralism, the latter seen in expressing our outrage at Mr. Castro by trying to make the Cuban people as miserable as possible and for years or decades if necessary. But U.S. military and intelligence reports — which the

pro-embargo lobby tries to suppress — agree Cuba is no threat to the United States and Mr. Castro is unlikely to depart — except by death — in the foreseeable future. The embargo is not speeding Mr. Castro's departure by one minute.

There is a deep inherent cynicism in all of this. One White House aide who preferred to remain anonymous suggested bolder moves will await President Gore. Sure. And that is what this latest policy ploy is really all about. President Clinton, stripped of all moral authority, wants only one thing: a friendly successor in the White House and getting that requires New Jersey and Florida. No wonder Fidel Castro rails at democracy. With that kind of example, who wouldn't?

So we come to the transitional step in our policy that Clinton/Gore should have endorsed — but didn't for totally partisan political reasons. Last October, a group of U.S. senators, Republicans and Democrats, not to mention former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger, George Schulz and Lawrence Eagleburger, proposed the president establish a bipartisan commission to review Cuban policy.

Not all who supported the idea of the commission necessarily favor lifting the embargo, they simply recognize that an open-minded, public look at the old policy makes sense on the face of it.

Those who support a radical change in Cuban policy believe the arguments for a new approach just as overwhelming as the case by the Kissinger Commission in 1983 for supporting democracy and opposing anti-democratic regimes and movements of the left or right in Central America. If all the evidence supports maintaining the embargo, as most Cuban-Americans claim to believe, then why do they so oppose a commission that would conclusively substantiate their position?

So the Clinton/Gore White House says no to a fair and free debate without providing an adequate rationale or even a reason other than a gross political calculus. In the case of this proposed commission, Clinton/Gore even had political cover from conservative Republicans, the foreign policy establishment, and sky high approval ratings. All they needed to stand up to were a few loud voices in the Cuban-American community who may in fact represent the winning votes in two states.

For a few days, reports from Washington had hinted that Clinton/Gore might use this issue to restore national priorities, but the reports proved to be false. The first U.S. presidential campaign of the new millennium began on Monday and probable Democrat candidate Al Gore demonstrated just how well he has learned White House lessons about putting politics over integrity and national interests.

Roger Fontaine is Washington correspondent for *Tiempos del Mundo*, published in Buenos Aires, and William Ratliff is a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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LETTERS TO THE TIMES

Increasing U.S. Ties With Cuba

■ Re "U.S. Has Post-Castro Era in Mind With Latest Steps," Jan. 6: Let me see if I get this right. Hard-line anti-Castro Cuban Americans are against relaxing the embargo on Cuba. The same Cubans or their descendants, who fled Cuba, are continuing to hold the island and its inhabitants hostage to their blind hatred of Fidel Castro.

When will America stop allowing this minority of privileged expatriates and their progeny to continue to exercise such undue influence over a people who did not or could not run away when their country was in most need of them. Was and is Castro a dictator who should have long since been overthrown? Absolutely! But at what cost? The Cuban people have been the pawns despicably used by Cuban Americans.

RALPH M. CASILLAS
Los Angeles

■ In "After Castro: Is Capitalism on Horizon?" (Opinion, Jan. 3), Tad Szulc attempts to argue that Castro's socialist government has been a 40-year failure and needs to end. But in the author's own words, Castro enjoys support as a "legendary revolutionary chief," and the army is "highly professional" and was never part of any "repression apparatus." Also Cuba has "literacy, much technical expertise [and] impressive public-health structures."

The author has convinced me that the only thing that needs to end in Cuba is the embargo; the government appears to be doing its job well.

BETHANY LEAL
Los Angeles

■ If we Cubans have an ounce of shame left in us, we should not send a single cent, or go visit Cuba. When most of us left our country, they called us *gusanos* (worms), servants of "Yankee imperialism"; they called our wives prostitutes; they paraded in front of our houses yelling at us, "Go and never come back!" Now they want me and my dollars back in Cuba. No way. The reason I left Cuba is still there. When Castro goes I'll go.

MARIO ABELLEIRA
North Hollywood

(WHA)
ZP



HOME	DISH
MY NOW	NEWS
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most**NEWYORK** Archive

Escape to Freedom

Homeland still inspires
hope, warmth in native son

Editor's Note: In March 1952, Fulgencio Batista established his murderous dictatorship in Cuba with a coup d'etat. Torture and assassination of opponents to his military regime became a common occurrence. The Cuban people despised him and supported Fidel Castro's guerrilla war. Castro, with the backing of the U.S. government, seized power on Jan. 1, 1959.

By ALBOR RUIZ
Daily News Staff Writer

I can still hear my mother's excited voice waking me up near dawn on Jan. 1, 1959: "Get up! Batista fled the country! Get up!"

And I clearly recall my disbelief: "C'mon, mom, it's too early for jokes."

But she wasn't kidding.

Batista, who vowed to commit suicide before relinquishing power, had packed his bags. He left as 1958 breathed its last, whisking his family and fortune to the Dominican Republic in a private plane.

I'll never forgive myself for having gone back to sleep that morning, tired from a New Year's Eve bash, while the streets bustled with people's celebrations. The popular saying *Ano nuevo, vida nueva* — New year, new life — was never more meaningful.

I was living on beautiful Varadero Beach, a three-hour drive from Havana. It was Cuba's main tourist attraction, and my father had opened a grocery store there four years earlier.

Like most Cubans, I was elated by Castro's victory and the promise of a more honest and less oppressive government. My friends and I hated Batista and his thuggish police, who made a joke of stopping us every night, asking for IDs and sending us home. We were lucky: Many other young people all over the country were murdered.

Yet, it didn't take much time for Castro's Socialist-leaning government to lose some of its popularity — especially with the rich, who feared losing their wealth.

As the government evolved into a Communist state, strong opposition developed. Just a year after Castro's arrival in Havana, my father was imprisoned for a short time, charged with helping someone flee the country illegally. After the United States' failed Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, he was sent to prison for five years. This time, the vague charge was "activities against the security of the state."

That turned me around.

Convinced of the unworthiness of any regime that would deprive a man as good as my father of his freedom, I joined a counter-revolutionary organization intent on overthrowing the government.

In August 1961, a friend tipped off authorities that I was organizing anti-government activities. I went underground. While in hiding, I was sentenced to death *in absentia*.

Finally, on a moonless November night in 1961, I escaped from Cuba with two friends in a whisper of a boat that we had been preparing for two months in someone's garage.

We painted it camouflage-style and we moved it two blocks to the shore.

One of my friends was 19 and the other was a 16-year-old who wanted to join his father in Chicago. I was 20.

It was 1:10 a.m. on Nov. 20 when we pushed off from the Havana beach. My heart was pounding so hard I feared I would wake the neighborhood. I was afraid, but I was willing to risk anything to reach *El Norte*, 90 miles away.

We rowed in silence until the city disappeared. Then we started the noisy 30-horsepower Johnson outboard that, together with a toy compass, a flashlight made waterproof with a condom, a bag of oranges and five gallons of water, was to take us across the treacherous Straits of Florida.

Enormous waves threatened to swallow the 14-footer. I dared not tell my pals that I feared we would die. Then the rains came to soothe the seas

and we landed on the United States' Marquesa Island off the Florida coast, which was used as a Navy shooting range.

Frightened by signs that warned that we could be targets, we headed to a nearby oil drilling platform, where American workers alerted the Coast Guard. With our little boat in tow, we boarded their vessel, and they took us to Florida.

The trip from Cuba took 12 uncertain hours — 12 hours that changed my life forever.

No Turning Back

I never wanted to leave my country. My parents are proud Cubans who raised us — me and my two younger brothers and two sisters — to love our island and honor its history.

Yet, there I was in Miami. I only knew a few people. I thought I would help topple Castro's regime more effectively from America and then return to Cuba in a couple of years. But I soon realized that wouldn't happen, as Castro's government solidified its power.

I was a fugitive who could never return and be part of my people's future.

I missed Varadero and my family and friends.

I particularly missed my best pal, Felix Moreno. A smart, hardworking kid from a poor family, Moreno embraced the revolution and the opportunities it offered him.

As a member of the armed militia, he knew I wanted to flee and one evening in 1961 he was alerted that I was within his grasp. As I raced down the street I could see him chasing me. He was wearing civilian clothes and carrying a black machine gun.

I'm not quite sure how I evaded him, but I've always believed his heart wasn't in it.

Twenty years later, Felix and I met again in Havana. He was a top government official and I a journalist in New York. Yet, we hugged as long lost brothers and swapped memories. Not a word was spoken about that night.

Returning Home

After 18 years of attending school and working in a variety of jobs, including busboy, truck driver,

librarian, college professor and journalist in Florida, New York and Puerto Rico, I asked the Cuban government for a visitor's permit, and got it. I thought the time might be right to engage in dialogue instead of violence. My death sentence apparently had been dropped.

Flying from Miami to Havana, I was surprised at how calm I felt. Then we arrived in Havana, and I greeted my cousin Carlos at the airport.

"How do you feel now that you are back after so many years?" he asked. I couldn't speak. I just started sobbing the way I used to when I was a kid.

I was home.

Driving around the country, I was struck by the lack of cars and traffic; at the crumbling buildings and physical deterioration of the country. The spirit of the people, however, remained upbeat and warm, even though many of them had been enduring tough economic times.

By now, I have been back to Cuba four times. Some people are still as committed to the revolution as ever, while many are bitterly opposed to the government and others remain indifferent. Most, however, talk politics fearlessly, an indication of a new openness.

The Pope is going to Cuba later this month and even Castro, an atheist, will be attending his Mass — one of the strongest symbols of change in the country.

That I, once a fugitive sentenced to death, will return to my native country as a journalist to cover this historic event, would have been unimaginable on that moonless November night 36 years ago.

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Cuba bristles at lawsuits, threatens to end U.S. phone links

By JUAN O. TAMAYO
Herald Staff Writer

A Cuban government official has threatened to cut off direct telephone links with the United States if either of two U.S. judges, including one in Miami, rules in favor of groups involved in suits against Cuba.

"This is a very serious threat, but we're looking for ways to resolve this issue and we believe we will be successful," said one U.S. government official involved in last-minute talks on how to leave the confrontation.

The threat was made by National Assembly chief Ricardo Alarcon in a speech Friday in which he rejected several measures to ease U.S. commercial and travel restrictions on Cuba announced by Washington last Tuesday.

"If they do not pay us, we will not do it for free," Alarcon said of Cuba's income from U.S.-Cuba telephone links after noting that two cases now before U.S. courts could significantly affect Cuba's phone.

One involves a suit before U.S. District Judge James Lawrence King in Miami, who in 1997 awarded \$187 million to relatives of three Brothers to the Rescue pilots killed when Cuban MiGs shot down their airplanes the previous year.

Trademark at issue

The second involves a case in New York federal court challenging Cuba's 1995 sale of the Havana Club rum trademark to the French liquor giant Pernod Ricard. The trademark once belonged to a Cuban family now in exile.

Family attempts to collect on the award are opposed by State Department officials, who argue that the relatives cannot access an estimated \$150 million in Cuban funds frozen and held under review by the U.S. government and Washington slapped a trade embargo on Cuba.

Part of that money came from T&T payments for Cuba's share of international telephone calls going back as far as 1960.

But King late last year asked for the relatives and the

U.S. government — the Cuban government did not defend itself in his court — to file position papers on whether the relatives could lay claim to new monies being earned by Cuba for international telephone service.

That amounted to \$60 million to \$70 million in 1997, the last year for which official figures are available, said Enrique Lopez, head of the Coral Gables telecommunications consulting firm AKL

Group. That figure may have grown by 30 percent last year, he added.

Direct telephone links between the United States and Cuba, once routed through Canada, Mexico and even Italy, were restored in 1993 under provisions of the so-called Torricelli Act.

Recent legislation

The suit over the Havana Club trademark involves a little-known

provision in a U.S. budget bill last year that bars U.S. courts from upholding the trademarks used "in connection" with a Cuban business seized by President Fidel Castro's government.

The provision helped Bacardi-Martini U.S.A., which has produced its own Havana Club-brand rum under a deal with the exiled Arechabala family, owner of the brand in Cuba in the 1950s.

Castro's government seized the

Havana Club distillery in the 1960s and in 1995 sold the trademark to a Luxembourg-based joint venture with Pernod Ricard.

Cuba had long before registered the trademark in Washington, and the Luxembourg firm registered the transfer, apparently hoping to be able to distribute the rum in the United States if the U.S. embargo were ever lifted.

But rival rum maker Bacardi-Martini objected, winning a court

battle in New York over the transfer and then pressing on to challenge the trademark's basic registration. The next court hearing is set for Jan. 19.

"We do not want to see direct phone calls to and from Cuba disturbed at all," a U.S. government official said. "To us, that is the best way of informing Cubans on what is going on outside the government-controlled circles of information."

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IN THE AMERICAS

From Herald Staff and Wire Reports

CUBA

Havana unlikely to retaliate for expulsions

U.S. officials said Monday that the Cuban government has apparently decided not to expel any U.S. diplomats from Havana in retaliation for the U.S. expulsion last month of three Cuban diplomats at the United Nations suspected of spying.

U.S. diplomats in Havana were girding for at least one expulsion, the officials added, but in the end the Cuban government chose to not to take any actions that might complicate U.S.-Cuban relations.

U.S. officials had planned to keep the expulsion of the Cubans relatively low key, but procedural gaffes and media leaks made the move more public than Washington had intended.

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January 12, 1999 Tuesday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: TEMPO; Pg. 1; ZONE: C

LENGTH: 1134 words

HEADLINE: VIVA LAS VEGAS;
OLD-FASHIONED GLITZ AND GLAMOR LIVE ON AT HAVANA'S FABULOUS TROPICANA

BYLINE: By Howard Reich, Tribune Arts Critic.

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

Until a few weeks ago, I had believed that the sumptuous and somewhat risqué world of the classic Las Vegas stage show -- with its high-kicking choreography and scantily clad dancers -- had vanished forever.

It has been a long time, after all, since Louis Prima, Keely Smith, Dean Martin and their supporting players ruled the Strip. With modern-day Vegas more interested in animal acts (Siegfried and Roy), fake volcanoes (the Mirage hotel), underwater spectacles (the new Cirque du Soleil show "O") and other family-oriented fare, the era of leggy showgirls and tuxedoed crooners seemed consigned to the history books.

Surprisingly, though, Las Vegas entertainment at its most gloriously decadent still flourishes, not in the United States but, incredibly, in one of the world's last surviving Communist states: Cuba.

Opened in 1939 -- fully seven years before Bugsy Siegel unveiled his ground-breaking Flamingo hotel in Las Vegas -- and still selling skin and glamor as if Castro's revolution never had taken place, the Tropicana stands as an unintended homage to everything Vegas once was (with the notable exception of gambling). From the fabulously costumed dancers on stage to the oleaginous hosts who solicit bribes for ringside seats, from the state-of-the-art choreography to the hucksters hawking souvenirs in the lobby, the Tropicana proves that old Vegas still flourishes south of the border.

That much becomes obvious the moment you step up to the ticket stand, where a Tropicana employee quickly proves that he has mastered the decidedly capitalistic concept of supply and demand.

Though a mediocre seat goes for a steep \$60 (considerably more than most locals can afford), the host just might be able to find something better.

"Let me see what I can do," he says, in excellent English, while studying the seating chart for a club large enough to accommodate hundreds.

"Hmmm. I might be able to switch your seat with someone else's, but I am not sure. Maybe, but I do not know if I can," he says, wrinkling his face as if

trying to solve some unfathomable mathematical problem.

When an American visiting Havana finally catches on and produces a crisp, U.S. \$20 bill, the ticket seller achieves a breakthrough.

"How would you like this seat?" he says, pointing to a choice location on the seating chart, front-row center.

That will do just fine.

"You will be happy," he says. "It is paradise."

Before you enter Eden, however, there's a kind of purgatory to be endured in the lobby, where the hard sell awaits. Nattily attired men and elegantly dressed women pushing cigars, videos, postcards and other collectibles eagerly purvey their wares, while customers (mostly from Europe and South America) slowly proceed to the showroom. And that's not the end of it. If you're spotted carrying any kind of camera, there will be an extra toll to pay.

Like just about everywhere in Havana these days, the Tropicana takes such payments in American dollars, the Cuban peso having so little purchase power that even the locals have little use for it.

Once you step into the showroom and the entertainment begins, however, you quickly realize that this is going to be worth every American penny. For starters, this sprawling space -- with its brilliant lighting, multiple stages, extravagant costumery and house band perched in a kind of elevated, thatched hut -- is open to the air.

The stars glitter brightly on high, and a small forest surrounds the showroom, its tall and arching trees standing in for walls and providing something of a canopy above. Bugsy himself couldn't have pulled off such a feat. Is it any wonder the Cubans call this place "Paradise Under the Stars"?

And when the big band starts to play -- its horns screaming in the night, its percussionists telegraphing intricate Latin rhythms -- the place sounds every bit as glorious as it looks. There isn't a comparably sized jazz-swing band in the United States that could hold its own against the house ensemble at the Tropicana, which has produced a number of top-rank jazz virtuosos, among them the formidable pianist Chucho Valdes.

The stage action, too, represents a high point in the evolution of showroom entertainment, its dozens of singers and dancers perpetually sashaying on and off the stage as if Busby Berkeley had masterminded the choreography. The only difference is that the rhythms are Afro-Cuban, the songs radiantly romantic, the costumes as opulent as anything ever stitched in sequins. (In one number, the female dancers wear headdresses that double as incandescent chandeliers.)

For the next 90 minutes, at least two dozen song-and-dance extravaganzas will unfold on stage, some conceived as large production numbers, others as intimate solo pieces.

An elegantly garbed woman will begin singing "Besame Mucho" from a small stage suspended at least 50 feet in the air, then slowly descend a staircase that's bathed in neon, singing her love song until she reaches the stage

below. A troupe of dancers will offer choreography so overtly sensuous as to make Bob Fosse's steps seem nearly chaste; a male-female duo will cavort in a love dance -- to put it euphemistically -- that leaves precious little to the imagination.

Only the occasional use of strobe lights seems dated, the rest of the show suggesting state-of-the-art entertainment in the classic Vegas manner. Considering that Havana began entertaining foreigners with hedonistic attractions long before Vegas ever did, perhaps it's not so surprising that the city is host to the most lavish stage show outside of Rio de Janeiro.

For economically strapped Cuba, tourist magnets such as the Tropicana represent an effective way to draw American dollars despite the United States' long-running embargo against the country. Since 1993, it has been legal for Cubans to hold U.S. dollars, and the cash infusion is lifting Cuba's struggling economy.

So the beat goes on at the Tropicana, external politics aside. Still, to most Cubans the Tropicana is but a mirage.

"I went there many years ago," says the concierge on duty late at night in the Hotel Riviera, about 10 minutes away in downtown Havana, "but we don't go there anymore. I don't think we ever will be able to afford to."

The comment is sobering, but so is nearly everything else about life in Cuba 40 years after the revolution. The periodic blackouts (electricity is in short supply), the doctors who moonlight as bakers and bellhops (the better to earn American dollars), the locals who hustle cigars and rum on street corners all underscore the austerity of Cuban life.

The Tropicana is its counterpoint, a Vegas throwback where the dollars flow as freely as the booze. So long as its thrilling decadence endures, Siegfried and Roy don't stand a chance here.

GRAPHIC: PHOTOS 2PHOTO (color): On with the show: Tropicana features sequin-clad dancers in spectacular routines.; PHOTO: A complete circus parades around the Tropicana's stage in one of the room's fabulous revues in 1956. Tribune file photo.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

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January 12, 1999 Tuesday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: ENTERTAINMENT; Pg. 4E

LENGTH: 121 words

HEADLINE: CUBAN BALLET CORPS TO PERFORM

BODY:

Ballet Nacional de Cuba will perform the romantic story ballet, "Giselle," Feb.24 in the Palace Theatre in Playhouse Square.

The traditional production was staged by legendary ballerina Alicia Alonso, the company's founding general director. The choreography for the soloists incorporates the virtuoso technique that is the ensemble's trademark. The corps does the rapid footwork that was Alonso's specialty during her long performing career as principal dancer with American Ballet Theater and as a guest artist with numerous international companies.

The Cleveland performance is part of the Cuban company's first major American tour in decades. Curtain time is 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20-\$35. Call (216) 241-6000.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 13, 1999

Miami Cubans slowly adapt as Castro's power endures

Younger generation softens hard-liners fiery rhetoric

By Jim Loney
REUTERS NEWS AGENCY

MIAMI
For four decades, Miami has been obsessed with Fidel Castro — it ebbs and flows with the triumphs and tribulations of the Cuban revolutionary who rules the Caribbean island to the south.

It has become a city of exiles who never meant to settle there and always searched for a way home to Cuba.

But 40 years after the revolution that brought Mr. Castro to power, this heartland of Cuban exile politics, passions and paranoia is undergoing a quiet upheaval of its own.

In the bodegas and cafes of Little Havana, the caustic rhetoric and enmity of aging Bay of Pigs warriors is in slow retreat as a new generation of Cubans opens up a community long locked in hard-line exile politics, experts say.

As the grip of Mr. Castro's most intransigent foes weakens, analysts say the exile community is coming to terms with its own triumphant adaptation to the United States and its greatest failure — the inability to oust Mr. Castro and return home.

"There's a certain pathos about this community four decades down the road. It's become extremely successful at being something they didn't want to be ... an immigrant community," said Max Castro, a Cuba expert at the University of Miami.

Cubans have come in waves to the shores of south Florida since Mr. Castro's rebel army swept to power on Jan. 1, 1959, removing the dictator Fulgencio Batista and establishing the bearded revolutionary as the ultimate power on the Caribbean island. He remains one of the world's longest serving leaders.

From the early "freedom" flights that brought doctors, lawyers and business leaders in the 1960s to the 1980 Mariel boat lift of desperate refugees, Cubans have been very successful in the United States.

They are among the best educated, wealthiest and most powerful of immigrant groups in the United States. One of the most famous, the late Coca-Cola Chairman Roberto Goizueta, the Havana-born son of a sugar refiner who fled Cuba in 1961 with \$40, led

"The young people don't care about Cuba. ... They care more about American things, television, Nintendo."

—Leo Rabelo,
a Cuban immigrant

the soft drink giant for 16 years until his death in 1997.

While some Cubans went elsewhere, Miami, 175 miles across the Florida Straits and home to some 800,000 Cubans, is the beating heart of anti-Castro exile cause.

Rallying to the fiery cry "democracia si, comunismo no," hard-line Cubans built a power base in the streets of Little Havana, constructed the U.S. trade embargo against the island and landed their own in Congress — Castro relative Lincoln Diaz-Balart represents a Miami district in the House of Representatives — and on Wall Street.

Cubans transformed Miami

from a sleepy southern retreat for winter snowbirds to a hub of Latin American commerce, even as aging veterans of the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion donned fatigues and waged imaginary weekend battles in the Everglades, dreaming of the day they would return to liberate Cuba.

Their path was sometimes violent. Businesses dealing with Cuba were bombed. A Cubana jet was blown from the sky.

Jorge Mas Canosa, leader of the powerful Cuban American National Foundation, became the most strident Castro foe in Washington even as he built a multi-million-dollar telecommunications construction company, Mas-Tec Inc.

But as their economic and political power waned, the inevitable assimilation of their children into American life caused anti-Castro passions to wane, some Cubans say.

"The young people don't care about Cuba. The people born in the U.S., they care more about American things, television, Nintendo," said Leo Rabelo, a Cuban immigrant who came to Miami in 1965. "Too many young people don't care about Cuba."

Mr. Rabelo voiced this often-heard lament as he stood on Little Havana's Cuban Memorial Boulevard, steps from monuments memorializing the "martyrs" of the Bay of Pigs invasion and a bronzed map of Cuba bearing the inscription: "La Patria es agonía y deber" — The fatherland is agony and duty.

Yet the death of Mr. Mas Canosa in 1997, followed by the visit to Cuba by Pope John Paul II in January 1998, have changed the face of the exile community subtly but unmistakably.

Mr. Mas Canosa was a dominant and powerful figure whose death

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January 11, 1999

In Cuba's Crippled Economy, the Only Goal Is Survival

Forum

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By JAMES C. MCKINLEY Jr.



HAVANA, Cuba -- Some days Avilio Guia likes to come and sit outside the new Carlos III Market and watch the people coming and going from dollar-only shops.

He was a foreman on the construction team that built the mall a year ago. Now, it is a world out of his reach. His government salary is only 600 pesos a month, less than \$30. He has no way to earn hard currency and the shops inside accept nothing else.

"I could never buy anything here," the 56-year-old builder says, balancing the cheap cigar he bought in a government store in his hardened hand and peering up at his work, at the abstract sculptures hanging from the ceiling, the colored lights and the corkscrew walkway lined with shops selling watches, televisions, electronics, toys, jewelry. "The people who shop here are mostly people with relatives in the United States, or young women, who get money one way or another from tourists," he says.

Ten years after the Soviet bloc collapsed and cut off Cuba's lifeline of subsidies and aid, Cubans struggle to survive in a dual economy, fueled in large part by money flowing from their greatest enemy, the United States. Washington has maintained a 37-year embargo on its nearest Caribbean neighbor but moved recently toward marginally more contact, announcing last week that it would permit payments from Cuban emigres and other Americans to increase.

The once egalitarian island has evolved into a society of haves and have nots, where schoolteachers and doctors supplement meager state incomes with ingenious moonlighting known as "inventando," or inventing. Hotel workers make far more than professionals. More and more people are turning to illegal schemes, running gypsy cabs, engaging in prostitution or in black-market sales of Cuba's famous cigars, rum and coffee.

Other Cubans have abandoned state jobs and opened small businesses under new rules allowing self-employment, in the faint hope of earning more than they did from the state.

Driving these trends is a simple reality: State-controlled wages have remained frozen while prices have risen dramatically since the Soviet era ended. Even though Fidel Castro's government continues to distribute rations of subsidized food and to provide free housing, medical care and education, most people cannot make ends meet on salaries or pensions alone.

Government stores are nearly bare, and the food in farmers' markets is relatively expensive, thanks to onerous taxes on the vendors. Only people who get dollars from relatives abroad or tips from tourists can afford to live decently. "One head of garlic costs a half-day's salary," lamented one man in his 50s who was shopping at a farmers' market

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in the city of Ciego de Avila, and who asked not to be identified. "We go hungry, or we invent a way to live, to somehow get dollars through contraband, whatever it takes. Here, no one lives on their salaries alone."

The roots of Cuba's economic malaise go back to 1991, when \$4 billion in annual Soviet aid suddenly evaporated. By 1993, the centrally planned economy had shrunk by 35 percent and the island's 11 million inhabitants were squeezed as never before. Prices skyrocketed. Hunger became common. Factories closed for lack of spare parts. Thousands of Cubans began fleeing to the United States on rafts.

Since the crisis hit, Castro has consistently blamed the United States' embargo for his people's hardships, accusing Washington again and again of "waging economic war."

Nevertheless, Castro, who remains a die-hard Marxist, reluctantly adopted limited free-market reforms. The dollar was legalized, and Cuba opened its doors to foreign investors willing to enter joint ventures. The government has since poured capital into tourism, building several new hotels -- mostly with European and Canadian partners -- and restoring historic sections of Havana.

Desperate for foreign exchange, Castro's managers set up stores controlled by quasi-state enterprises that accept only hard currency. The state-owned hotel and dollar-store chains compete to some degree with each other, and the government has also tried to boost productivity at state factories and collective farms, giving managers more power to hire, fire and set productivity goals, and in some cases pegging salaries to production. Some workers now receive bonuses and other incentives.

Castro has also allowed people to go into small-scale business for themselves -- although they cannot expand, nor employ anyone beyond the family of the owner. More than 160,000 people now operate private restaurants, workshops, schools, shoe-repair places or cafes. Spare rooms in houses can be rented. Artisans can hawk their wares to tourists.

The government also established markets where farmers could sell produce left over after they have supplied the state with its quota.

Despite these elements of private enterprise, Cuba remains essentially a communist system. Jose Luis Rodriguez, minister of economy and planning, said last week that the reforms were intended to allow some private employment without dropping the state's commitment to socialism: cradle-to-grave social security, free education and free health care. "We are not going to convert to a market economy," he said.

The vast majority of workers still receive low state salaries in pesos. Net profits from hotels and dollar shops go directly into the Central Bank, where they are available to help finance the government, diplomats say. In return, every Cuban family gets rations of rice, peas, milk and other staples at enormous discounts, and is expected to live from the state salaries.

In general, the state discourages the private enterprises by taxing them heavily on expected earnings rather than on actual sales. "One makes just enough to live, no more," said Victor Rodriguez, whose family runs a tiny restaurant in Havana, which the state limits to 12 seats and taxes \$200 a month. "It lets us live a little less smothered."

Since Cuba's sugar industry has been in a steady decline for nearly a decade, the new Cuban economy is driven largely by a \$1.4 billion tourist industry, \$800,000 in remittances from Cubans abroad and hard-currency tips from tourists. Cuban economists estimate nearly half the country is now earning some income in dollars. "We have two markets, segregated, in dollars and in pesos," said Antonio Romero, an economist at the University of La Habana. "We are in the presence of a dual economy, a dual economy that from my perspective is the most complex problem the Cuban economy has today. At the heart of this is without a doubt the measures the government took in the context of the crisis."

Elizabeth Noreiga, who is 50, stood sullenly in the state bodega known as Unidad 303-04 in Havana Vieja, or Old Havana, waiting for a clerk to measure out her rations of rice, peas and sugar. On one wall was a blackboard listing the store's few items, their subsidized prices and how much each family is allowed. No meat or vegetables were

available, though tobacco was. The dingy shelves were virtually empty, save for forlorn boxes of cigarettes, matches, a bottle of rum and a few small packages of evaporated milk.

The clerk measured out five pounds of rice for Ms. Noreiga's household of five people, and then two-and-a-half pounds of peas, marking them down in her soiled ration book in pencil. "With five pounds of rice you can't make it through the month, and you can't eat only rice," Ms. Noreiga said. She and her husband, a dock worker, have a combined income of only about \$5 a month in Cuban pesos, she said.

"Today is Three Kings Day and I can't buy anything for my grandchildren," she said. "Because we don't have dollars to buy a present."

Several people in the shop said the bodegas seldom have meat, fresh milk or vegetables. When these things come in, they are rationed to families with children. Some people who do not have access to dollars go for months without eating meat.

By contrast, the Cuatro Camino's farmers' market on the opposite side of Havana looks like paradise. The stalls are chock-full of produce: cucumbers, beans, lettuce, tomatoes, yucca, yams, mangos and rice. A crush of people crowd the vendors. Upstairs there is a small butchery section, where one can buy pork and mutton, though never beef.

But prices, though reasonable by American standards, are too steep for Cubans trying to live on a basic government salary of between \$7 to \$9 a month. A pound of red or black beans costs more than 65 cents. Rice is 22 cents a pound. Vegetables range between 13 and 32 cents a pound. Four pounds of salt pork is \$1.13. "If you buy food one month, you don't buy clothes, and if you buy clothes, you don't buy food," said one woman, who asked not to be identified.

The markets depend on middlemen whom the government has accused of exploiting farmers and has promised to stamp out. They buy excess produce from private farmers and cooperatives and transport it to Havana. In interviews, several said they could make about \$5 a day after taxes, assuming they sold everything. "We have to pay a tax before we sell the meat, and if we don't sell it, it's our problem," said Vladimir Duran, a 31-year-old butcher.

Last week, Castro's administrators said they were planning to crack down on the vendors. Since most farmers have no way to transport their produce, fears are rising here that the markets, which have become the main source of food, will effectively shut down.

For years, it was often said about Castro's Cuba that everything was shared equally, even the poverty. Since the legalization of the dollar, the society has splintered.

Factory workers and farm employees appear to have suffered the most. But even professionals have taken jobs in hotels or moonlight as guides because they can earn more in tips than from their government salaries.

Hortencia Volvio, 47, is typical of working-class people who have seen their buying power disappear. Since she was 18, Mrs. Volvio has worked at the Bantroi Shoe Factory in Havana, cutting the uppers for men's shoes. She makes about \$8.45 a month -- enough to live decently in the Soviet era.

In the last four years, her managers have begun docking pay when employees fail to meet production quotas. Some months she makes less than \$4. She has eaten no meat since September. "I would like to find another job," she said. "This way, one can't live."

As if to add insult to injury, the shoes she makes are sold in dollar-only shops. She can't buy them and must make do with defective discards.

She envies Cubans who receive money from abroad. "I would also like to go to the store and buy all the things I need," she said. "I would like to have a good life like everyone else."

Several people who receive remittances from family in the United States said they could not survive otherwise. Many said the payments they received, usually amounting to less

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than \$1,000 a year, merely meant they could eat well and buy good clothes. "I have three brothers abroad and they send me money, otherwise I couldn't live," said Esperanza Garcia, a 35-year-old veterinarian who was working for \$7 a month, plus tips, as a tour guide in a Havana hotel. "I'm lucky. My children do not want for anything."

Then, there are the hustlers.

Every day after school, Juan Antonio, a 51-year-old English teacher who requested that his last name not be published, walks down to old Havana town and prowls the streets, looking for tourists. At home, he has a dozen boxes of fine cigars, all contraband from Cuba's best cigar factories. "I come to the street and I try to sell you a box of cigars, or I try to take you to a place you don't know," he said. "I come every day after school."

Everyone in the chain of cigar smuggling gets a cut, but Juan says he can make as much \$100 a week, far more than his teacher's salary of 200 pesos a month. Juan says it feels demeaning, after decades of teaching school, to be accosting tourists and hawking cigars. His feet hurt him most days, and he would prefer to be at home, reading.

A porter at a hotel in Ciego de Avila, a veteran of the war in Angola, sells Monte Cristo cigars on the black market. He said the illegal cigar business involves people both inside and outside the factories, and most local officials turn a blind eye.

"They know people need to survive," he said.

In cities, the most common underground activity is driving a gypsy cab. Almost everyone with a car, be it a decrepit 1950s Chevrolet or a 1970s Soviet model, uses it to make hard currency. Several drivers said police usually let them go for a small bribe.

Luis Gonzalez Leiba, 40, drives a bus for eight hours a day on a state salary. Every afternoon, he ferries tourists around old Havana in his 14-year-old Moskvich car. He dodges police, who demand a \$250 tax each month from licensed cabs. "You have to struggle to make it here," he said.

Other people have made more difficult choices. Marisol is 24, and left her hometown of Bayamo two years ago for Havana. She said she quit her \$7-a-month job as a clerk at a state-owned store after her husband abandoned her and their 3-year-old boy.

Now she lingers every night at a bar across from the Hotel Capri in a black evening dress, picking up tourists and trading sex for money in a friend's apartment nearby. Marisol, who asked that her last name not be used, said prostitution was one of the few ways she could support her son without going hungry. The government salary, she said, never lasted an entire month, and her son was underweight and scrawny when they left Bayamo.

She said she finds clients two or three times a month, and usually earns between \$120 and \$300. She loathes her foreign clients for treating her like an object rather than a human being, she said. "But I have to put up with it," she said. "I do it for a just cause, you understand, for myself and for my son."

Marisol inhabits the nighttime world of Havana's Vedado section, where pimps buttonhole tourists and offer to take them to discos where prostitutes congregate, or to private apartments to meet women.

Castro has vowed to stamp out this kind of prostitution, and prostitutes in Havana have felt pressure from increased police patrols. Marisol's pimp is a 24-year-old who gave his name as Alberto, who said he had dropped out of college because there seemed to be little point in continuing to study to become a doctor.

His father and mother are both Communist Party stalwarts with government sinecures, he said, and are disappointed in him. But he makes about \$30 a night guiding men to prostitutes. "I don't see a future in this country," he said, drawing on a cigarette. "Think about it. The enemy is the United States, but the money we need, the principal money of Cuba these days, is the money of the enemy."

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January 11, 1999

EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Beating the Yanquis at Their Game

By TINA ROSENBERG

Cuban and American leaders are pondering the issue of whether a Baltimore Orioles visit to Cuba would strengthen or weaken the regime of Fidel Castro. The question seems improbable, yet governments have long used baseball to promote their values and politics.

When the Sandinistas took power in *bAeisbol*-crazed Nicaragua in 1979, they considered banning the sport.

Instead, they decided they could use it to help build the New Socialist Man.

They began with Managua's 30,000-seat stadium, called "Anastasio Somoza Garcia" after the father of the dynasty the Sandinistas overthrew.

They renamed the stadium for the man who shot him.

Anti-American governments love to use the symbol of America as a political canvas. Baseball was exported to Mexico by American railroad engineers, to Japan by missionaries and to Panama by canal builders. An American consul created the first Nicaraguan team in 1905.

Baseball's empire encompasses mainly countries that have spent long periods in America's grip.

Resentment and revolution also flower in these environments, one reason Cuba, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic have all had governments that might want the Yankees to win, but certainly want the Yanquis to lose. And although foreign fans, especially Dominicans, treat their Major League players as national heroes, many also resent a baseball relationship that has mirrored America's economic and political practices abroad, with the gringos raiding the best players and then claiming their tournament as the World Series.

In Japan, *besuboru* is designed to reinforce the values of selflessness, obedience to authority, hard work and loyalty.

Robert Whiting, who has written books on Japanese ball, notes that players practice to near-collapse.

A players' strike is inconceivable, and few players even change teams or demand high salaries.

A superstar American player who took leave from his Japanese team when his 8-year-old son had brain surgery was fired.

Baseball stadiums in Nicaragua in the mid-1980's looked like American ballparks before the days of Beanie Baby giveaways and exploding scoreboards. In the Heroes and Martyrs of September stadium in Leon, Nicaragua's second-largest city, signs advertised Coke and beer, vendors sold hot dogs and the announcers hawked local restaurants.

Nicaragua's best player was Julio Medina, captain of the national team and Sandinista

wla-TS

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icon.

Before the revolution, Medina had grown up cheering for the Cincinnati Reds, but when a scout for the Reds offered Medina a contract in 1984, he said, essentially, no thanks. I'd rather be an agronomist.

"The leaders of the revolution and in sports want to form a new man, both as a professional and as a sportsman," he told me at the time.

Biology student by day, member of the Sandinista Youth, Medina even turned down the per diem players received when traveling abroad.

When I watched him play, he shook hands with the opposing players when he reached their bases. At one point he tagged out a player trying to steal second, and as the player walked away, Medina shook his hand.

For Havana, the Olympic gold medals won by Cuba's baseball players help show the superiority of socialism. Players who want to pitch for the Yankees must come to America by raft.

But pre-revolutionary Cuba had minor-league teams.

One American scout, Joe Cambria of the Washington Senators, lived in Havana. Mr. Castro, who pitched (right-handed) at the University of Havana, had two tryouts with the Senators but was rejected -- good slider, mediocre fastball.

Baseball will not bring Mr. Castro's regime to an end. But had Mr. Cambria been more patient with a developing prospect, baseball might have prevented it.

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Teeing off on capitalism?

My, my, Fidel Castro is not only a revolutionary but a prophet.

In Santiago de Cuba on New Year's Day, back at the plaza where he had basked in triumph 40 years before, the Marxist-in-

chief renewed dire predictions of the collapse of capitalism. Criticizing the "theologians" of the market economy, Castro described a world in the clutch of savage neoliberalism and predicted the "inevitable fall" of the current economic order. How that man does babble.

Never a man to know what he speaks of — or even to mean what he says — Castro told a 1959 crowd in the same plaza: "I am not interested in power nor do I envisage assuming it at any time." He promised that there would "be freedom for those who speak in our favor and for those who speak against us and criticize us."

Those words have since provided scant comfort to those who spoke and were killed, or even to dissidents such as Vladimiro Roca Antunez, Martha Beatriz Roque, Felix Bonne Carcases and

HYPOCRISY IN CUBA
Castro predicts the end of
savage capitalism — then
tees it up at home.

Rene Gomez Manzano. These valiant four authored *The Homeland Belongs to Us All*, a critical manifesto calling for political and economic liberalization. Charged

with sedition, they have been jailed since July 1997.

Castro would look less the hypocrite if he did not practice the savage neoliberalism about which he rails. In the latest example, his government has just resurrected the ultimate prerevolutionary symbol of capitalist decadence: the Havana Biltmore Yacht and Country Club. So exclusive were the club's bashes, beach and 18-hole golf course in the 1950s that the Castro state confiscated it. In today's sequel to that smashing blow "for the people," his government is now selling the country club's ample amenities *exclusively* to foreigners. Of course, the \$1,500 club fee is way beyond the means of the Cuban proletariat. In fact it's 12 times the average annual salary in Cuba.

My, my, how Castro holds to principle and keeps his promises — not.

2ND STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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January 11, 1999, Monday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 652 words

HEADLINE: Dollar transfers: Who gets helped more, Cubans or Castro?

BYLINE: By GEORGE GEDDA, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Hoping to promote anti-government sentiment in Cuba, President Clinton is greatly expanding the pool of U.S. residents eligible to send money to needy Cubans. The irony is that Cuba itself has seen these cash transfers as a critical element in its efforts to stay afloat economically.

It is not clear, however, whether the Cuban government will have second thoughts about the transfers now that the administration is accelerating efforts to use them as a counterrevolutionary tool.

As the administration sees it, the dollar donations can liberate individual Cubans from the dependence on the state, permitting them not only to eat better but also to open their own businesses. The more Cubans independent of the state, the more difficult it will be for Fidel Castro to maintain control.

Until last week, only Cuban-Americans were allowed to wire money to family members on the island, up to a limit of \$ 1,200 annually. As part of an effort to reach out to the Cuban people without benefiting the Castro government, Clinton decreed that any U.S. resident could transfer funds to Cubans in need, so long as the \$ 1,200 annual ceiling is observed.

The president also called for direct mail service, allowed limited food sales for the first time and is permitting an increase in both direct charter flights and in cultural exchanges.

So far as is known, Cuban officials have not commented on the rule changes concerning cash transfers. But Cuban National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcon attacked a related provision that permits private U.S. organizations to send money to counterpart groups in Cuba.

This step, Alarcon said, "seeks to convert U.S. institutions into tools for bribery to buy people's opinions."

No one doubts that the family-to-family cash transfers have helped Cuba at a time of dire economic need. To accelerate dollar flows, Cuba legalized the currency in 1993, then created "dollar stores" so that Cubans could use their hard currency to buy desperately needed consumer goods.

The rationale, according to a 1994 statement by Economics Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez, "is to sell products to those who have dollars at very high prices; then the government will be able to redistribute the profits among those who need it more."

Last week, Rodriguez dismissed the overall Clinton package as "crumbs" without making specific reference to the changes in dollar transfer policy.

Hoping to trigger a rebellion, Clinton tried to ban the dollar donations in 1994. Ana Julia Jatar-Hausmann, a Cuba specialist at the Inter-American Dialogue, said the impact was minimal.

The money kept pouring in because the ban was unenforceable, she said in a telephone interview. Beyond that, the Florida exile community was not about to allow family members in Cuba to go hungry if it could be avoided. Clinton lifted the ban in March 1998.

A Cuban economist at a government research institute estimated that the U.S.-to-Cuba dollar flow reached \$ 800 million in 1997, the last year the practice was illegal.

According to an administration "fact sheet," the goal of allowing any U.S. resident, not just Cuban-Americans, to wire money, "is to support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society in order to help promote a transition to a free, independent and democratic state."

Peter Romero, acting assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, told reporters the changes in the dollar-transfer policy should be considered together with other changes announced last week.

"The intention of this is to promote a very nascent, non-governmental sector in Cuba in a way that they are able to exercise increasing autonomy and, obviously, increase their ranks," Romero said.

"Will these groups now be able to afford lots of U.S. products and agricultural implements and food? The answer to that is probably no. Will they in the future? That's our sincerest hope."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 1999

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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL)

January 11, 1999, Monday, Broward Metro EDITION

SECTION: YOUR BUSINESS, Pg. 6

LENGTH: 871 words

HEADLINE: RED TAPE SLOWS U.S.-CUBA TRADE THAW

BYLINE: DOREEN HEMLOCK; Business Writer

BODY:

Get ready to exercise the patience of Job if your company hopes to profit from new proposals that would ease U.S. trade and travel restrictions on Cuba.

Ask Tico Travel, the Fort Lauderdale travel agency which also operates in Costa Rica.

Tico applied for a license nearly a year ago from the U.S. State Department to sell tickets on charter flights that the government allows into Cuba.

It hoped to learn the U.S.-Cuba travel business and, eventually, organize its own charter flights.

"We think it's an up and coming market, and we'd like to be in on the ground floor," said Vice President Robert Hodel.

But trying to get approvals has turned out to be "a very frustrating process," Hodel said. "Just when you think you've got all the paperwork in to them, they tell you that you need another piece of paper."

Or ask Aero Freight, a company in Sebring in central Florida that has been seeking for months to fly humanitarian aid to Cuba.

Executive Bert Brault said U.S. rules and regulations have proved so complex that business with Cuba seems virtually impossible.

"They say you can do people-to-people business. But how can you deal with people, without getting involved with the government?" Brault asked. "You have to get landing rights and you have to clear customs. That's government."

Even authorized business -- such as shipping U.S. magazines and other publications to Cuba -- can expect delays.

DHL, the package delivery company that runs Latin American and Caribbean operations from Fort Lauderdale, offers U.S. clients service to Havana, but it takes four days -- on an unusual route.

Parcels are shipped to DHL's hub in Cincinnati, flown to Mexico and then sent on commercial airlines to Havana, because commercial airlines can't offer direct

Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale), January 11, 1999

U.S.-Cuba service.

"If air transportation and commercial restrictions were lifted, we could more than likely offer next-day service from Miami," a DHL spokesman said.

President Clinton proposed last week to ease sales of food and farm-related products, allow direct mail service and broaden money-transfer services to Cuba. That could mean big business for such companies as food giant Cargill, tractor maker Caterpillar or package delivery leader Federal Express -- if they can successfully maneuver the permitting maze.

The U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, a New York-based group that advises on Cuba business, offers one suggestion to speed up the approvals:

Add staff at the busy Treasury and Commerce Department offices.

Said Council President John Kavulich: "These opportunities will be hollow, unless there are more people to deal with these applications."

And like Job, be patient. Florida to trade more with Mexico

Florida is starting a new program to boost exports to Mexico, a colossal market long overlooked by the Sunshine State.

The official kickoff is set for July 12-15, with a trade mission and trade show in Mexico City, possibly led by Gov. Jeb Bush, said Manny Mencia, Enterprise Florida's vice president of international trade.

Mexico has become the second-largest trade partner for the United States, surpassing Japan, since the North American Free Trade Agreement started five years ago.

In 1998, U.S. exports to Mexico likely reached \$ 94 billion -- more than the total of U.S. exports to the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean combined. This year, the total should hit \$ 100 billion, government studies show.

"But Florida has a problem with market share," Mencia said. "While we account for about 44 percent of U.S. exports to the rest of Latin America, our share of U.S. sales to Mexico is only about 1 percent. We've failed to take advantage of the market opportunities created since NAFTA."

Florida sold about \$ 860.5 million in goods mined, grown or manufactured in the state to Mexico in 1997, up 23 percent from the previous year, according to the latest full-year data from Enterprise Florida.

Major exports include telecommunications equipment, computers, scrap metal and fertilizers.

Florida could easily sell more high-tech products, including environmental equipment, medical equipment and satellite communications products, according to studies by Enterprise Florida's office in Mexico City. **FLORIDA EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES IN MEXICO** Target industry Mexican imports U.S. share Computers and peripherals \$ 1.2 billion \$ 832 million Waste control equipment \$ 365 million \$ 310 million Electronic components \$ 356 million \$ 181 million Industrial air pollution control \$ 142 million \$ 116 million Medical equipment \$ 217 million \$

Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale), January 11, 1999

98 million Health care products \$ 121 million \$ 89 million Satellite
communications equipment \$ 138 million \$ 85 million Medical disposables \$ 89
million \$ 60 million Industrial water pollution control \$ 55 million \$ 39
million Telecommunications switching equipment \$ 51 million \$ 39 million

Total \$ 2.7 billion \$ 1.8 billion SOURCE: Enterprise Florida's Mexico City
office. Data are Mexican market estimates for 1997.

TYPE: International Business

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 1999

Outlook

Should U.S. normalize relations with Cuba?

Island's economy is smaller than Baltimore's

NEW OVERTURES to Cuba announced last week by President Clinton are considered the most significant change in foreign policy toward the island in many years.

Clinton has authorized more charter passenger flights to and from Cuba, fewer restrictions on payments to Cubans by U.S. residents, direct mail service with the island and the sale of U.S. food and agricultural supplies to nongovernmental entities. He also authorized increased exchanges of athletes, scientists and others.

Some are encouraged by a change in U.S. relations with Cuba. But many, including a strong contingent of Cuban Americans, believe that any economic help the United States gives ultimately strengthens President Fidel Castro's government.

Is it time to normalize relations with Cuba? What are the implications of such a move? How long would it take to see positive results from such a change in policy?

Mark P. Vitner

Vice president and economist, First Union Corp., Charlotte, N.C.
Florida is definitely the point of impact because that's where most of the expatriates live.

I imagine there are mixed emotions. It will allow more money to be passed to relatives, but I doubt they'll think that it's going to mean a free Cuba.

produce a lot of sugar. Perhaps an increase in [Cuban] exports would decrease our prices here.

Cuba would be a very attractive place for tourists. Today, many tourists are not looking for a fancy, built-up resort. People are looking for a relatively unspoiled, relaxed atmosphere. That's what Cuba has. If Cuba opens up, I think a lot of Americans would go there.

Some people have argued that the best way to attack communism or an authoritarian regime is with capitalism. Allow capitalism to infiltrate and penetrate the economic and political systems, and gradually the regime may fall.

I think aside from the political issue, economists are for any opening. We're always for free trade. The added benefit is that it might gnaw at or tear down the regime.

Right now, Cuba cannot borrow money to buy things. I could see Spain and South America and European banks would be willing to loan them money. I think this would have broad-reaching, positive implications for the Cuban economy.

James L. Hughes

Director, Office of International Business, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

We're looking at what's going on at the federal level. If the sanctions are lifted, there are a number of things that we would explore doing to encourage trade.

We try to help Maryland companies export to countries around the world. There are people in the tourism industry who have talked to us about being interested in developing hotels or vacations to Cuba.

Personally, I think that the baseball diplomacy may be the most successful part of this whole deal. From a business standpoint, I don't think it will mean much to the U.S. economy at all. You're talking about a country that isn't even the size of Baltimore's economy. Their economy just isn't very large.

They won't have much purchasing power in the United States. They are a \$16 billion economy to the United States \$8 trillion. They are smaller than Greenville, South Carolina's. Baltimore's is \$62 billion.

If Clinton's initiatives will help anyone, it will be the people of Cuba. But there will not be any immediate impact to the U.S. economy.

Sung Won Sohn

Senior vice president and chief economist, Wells Fargo & Co., Minneapolis

Increasing economic ties with any nation, especially for a country at our doorstep, would be mutually beneficial economically. Cuba has a lot to offer the U.S. They

We're very careful in targeting markets around the world. We focus on markets where we see considerable opportunities for products and services and also in places where the state can play a role in making Maryland companies successful.

We don't do a lot with the Caribbean. We're focusing on the larger markets in Latin America, the more mature markets.

The per capita income in Cuba is anywhere from \$1,500 to \$3,000 a year. Mexico's per capita is \$8,500, Argentina's is \$5,600.

Maryland sells mostly sophisticated products, higher end. You need a rather sophisticated market. It's a fairly diverse group, but for the most part, Maryland products have a higher technology component than most states. If the sanctions were lifted, these are all factors we would look at in determining how much emphasis to put on Cuba.

There was a lot of enthusiasm when the wall came down in Eastern Europe and a lot of countries rushed in to do business.

Some companies did well, but a lot have pulled back.

We try to be longer term and more strategic, rather than rushing into the hot new country.

Terry McCoy

Professor of Latin American studies and political science, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.

I'm glad to see anything, but I don't think it makes much difference substantively. It's more in the realm of humanitarianism than economics. I think the United States has been under pressure since the pope's [Cuban] visit.

You can hardly argue that the current policy has been successful, and we bear the moral burden in the eyes of most of the rest of the world of picking on a small country, a country of 11 million people.

There's a feeling that a lot of the suffering of the Cuban people is attributable to the embargo.

As bad as things are in Cuba, there's no evidence that the government is going to fall. When the government does change there, it's in our interest to have some relations with them.

Even recognizing that what we're doing may not provoke a positive response from the Cuban government, it's still the right thing to do. It's the right thing morally and strategically.

Compiled by June Arney

LEVEL 1 - 21 OF 110 STORIES

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The Denver Post

January 10, 1999 Sunday 2D EDITION

SECTION: PERSPECTIVE; Pg. H-02

LENGTH: 753 words

HEADLINE: Cuban move less than half a loaf

BYLINE: By Jim Hoagland

BODY:

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 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 announced on Tuesday that he would accept Albright's recommendation to ease of restrictions on the flow of mail, money and travelers to Cuba.

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 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."

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, written by Bernard Aronson and William D. Rogers, former State Department officials, 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. Warner should not abandon his idea of a national commission simply because this lame-duck president demurs. Americans have become accustomed to leadership on vital topics coming from outside this politically gutless White House. Jim Hoagland writes for The Washington Post.

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 1999

9TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

January 10, 1999, Sunday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: GENERAL NEWS, Pg. A10

LENGTH: 114 words

HEADLINE: CUBAN DENOUNCES PROPOSAL TO EASE TERMS OF EMBARGO

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

A high-ranking Cuban official has denounced President Clinton's proposals to ease some restrictions in the United States' embargo of this communist-run island, calling them a "'deceptive maneuver'" intended to deflect growing opposition around the world to the embargo.

The official, Ricardo Alarcon, the legislative leader who is Fidel Castro's point man on negotiations with the United States, said the changes were also meant to hide Clinton's rejection of a bipartisan commission to review the wisdom of the 37-year-old embargo. Two former Republican secretaries of state are among those who have supported the proposal to set up a commission.

- From Wire Reports

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Sarasota Herald-Tribune

January 10, 1999, Sunday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: PERSPECTIVES, Pg. 2F

LENGTH: 327 words

HEADLINE: TIMIDITY ON CUBA;
 THE EASING OF U.S. RESTRICTIONS DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH

BODY:

Cubans need more than ''elbow room'' and a ''modicum of independence'' to make their nation shake their shackles of poverty and oppression. Yet that's all the relief the Clinton administration is willing to provide for now.

The administration's decision to relax some restrictions on Americans' dealings with Cuba's citizens represents another incremental step that should provide some welcome relief in the Caribbean. But it's a timid response to the problems and openings in Cuba, and it ignores the need for a review of U.S. policies toward Cuba.

The relaxation of rules will allow Cubans to receive more dollars from American friends and family members, and buy more U.S. food and medicine. More direct flights between the two countries will be allowed and direct mail service from the United States will be renewed.

These steps will make life better for some Cubans and their friends and relatives in the United States. They barely rise to Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright's assessment of them as methods of offering Cubans ''elbow room'' and a ''modicum of independence.'' They fall short, however, of the measures recommended by the Council on Foreign Relations, published under the signature of two former senior State Department officials, and don't even come close to generating the kind of change necessary to make significant improvements in the standard of living in Cuba.

The failure of the Clinton administration to embrace the idea proposed by Sen. John Warner - a complete review of U.S. policy, conducted by a special commission, if necessary, is baffling. After all, Warner is a Republican and the administration has seldom failed to embrace an opportunity to defer decisions to a commission.

The refusal even to review the U.S. policy continues the dogmatic approach that hasn't toppled Castro or brought prosperity to Cuba. Americans and Cubans deserve more - at least a modicum of courage and thoughtfulness.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 1999

Instead of Needed Changes, Administration Continues a Failed Policy

► CUBA

By Wayne S. Smith

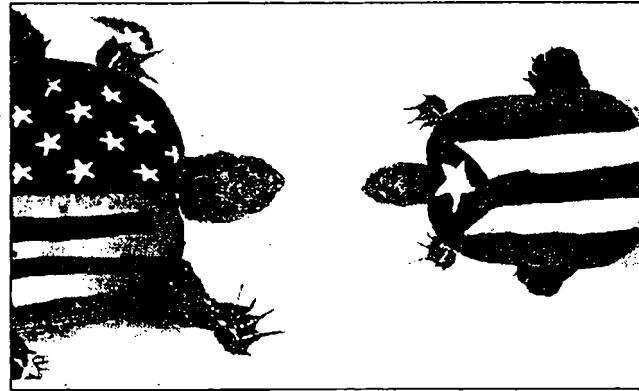
WASHINGTON

Those who had hoped for something new in Cuba policy were deeply disappointed by the measures the Clinton administration announced last Tuesday. What had been called for 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, but none that alter policy in any significant way. Still, even timid steps forward are better than none at all, and the hard fact that the policy has failed may yet force a more substantial change of course.

Thirty-nine years after the U.S. embargo was first imposed, Fidel Castro is still in power. The embargo has accomplished nothing, but neither did it cause serious problems with the rest of the international community. No one country is obligated to trade with another. Hence, while regarding our refusal to trade with Cuba as eccentric, other countries also saw it as none of their business.

Ironically, however, it was then that Washington went beyond a simple embargo. 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, it threatened to haul foreign companies into U.S. federal courts if they "trafficked" in expropriated property in Cuba and warned foreign banks not to provide

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.



GUILLERMO BERT/for The Times

credit to Cuba. Helms-Burton has caused serious problems with our closest friends and trading partners and generated a strong rejection of U.S. policy toward Cuba on the part of the international community.

It was against this background of a failed policy that, last October, a distinguished group, largely made up of Republicans, 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 provided the president with effective political cover. He could not have been attacked by conservative Republicans for going along with an idea that essentially came from their own ranks.

At first, the administration seemed amenable, but conservative members of Congress, led by Sen. Robert G. Torricelli (D-N.J.), and the right-wing Cuban ex-

iles in Miami and New Jersey voiced strong opposition. Reportedly, one Cuban American congressman warned Vice President Al Gore that appointing a bipartisan commission might jeopardize his chances of winning the presidential elections in 2000.

This was somewhat of an empty threat, given that it was mostly Republicans behind the commission idea. It was

a matter of the exiles saying to Gore, "If you do what these Republicans are suggesting, we won't vote for you." But for whom would they vote? The candidate of those who had put the idea forward?

Nonetheless, the administration caved. It announced there will be no commission and no policy review. There was no need for one, the administration 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 a review was needed? Why did the idea have strong support from the foreign-policy establishment?

As a sop to those who had hoped for more, on Jan. 5 Clinton announced measures he said would expand contacts with the Cuban people and show support for them, but 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 will be routed from other cities besides Miami and Havana. 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, are not likely to increase appreciably the flow of people between the two countries. Still, any increase is better than none. The same could be said of the increased remittances that will be allowed. Cuban Americans currently can send \$1,200 per annum to family members; under the new rules, any U.S. citizen can send that much to private citizens or entities on the island. A church in Los Angeles, for example, that has a relationship with a church in Cuba can now send money. Presumably, Americans could also send money to Cuban friends to help start small business, say, a private restaurant. Any increase in the flow of dollars to Cuba's hard-currency-short economy will be helpful.

The proposed sale of food to private institutions, the sale of fertilizers and farm implements to private farmers and cooperatives, and the proposal to begin direct mail service between the U.S. and Cuba will be more difficult to implement. Neither private restaurants nor farmers have any means of buying such goods. The importation of goods and the system for distributing them are in the hands of the government. So unless U.S. firms can sell to government entities, or unless Cuba modifies its means of importation, few sales are likely to be made. As for direct mail service, the Cubans have long taken the position that it will require regularly scheduled air service, not charters. That would require a civil air agreement between the two countries.

The administration's proposal for increased funds for Radio and TV Marti is just absurd. Radio Marti was moved to Miami in violation of its mandate and has become another vitriolic exile station,

CONT.

paid for by U.S. taxpayers. Given its stridency, Radio Marti's listenership in Cuba has plummeted. More money won't help. As for TV Marti, over the years, the U.S. taxpayer has wasted some \$120 million on it, even though it is never seen nor heard. Talk about throwing good money after bad.

So, an opportunity has been lost. A bipartisan commission could have recommended effective changes in policy and won public support for those changes. Short of that, Clinton could have opted for more meaningful steps. He might, for example, have indicated the administration's support for legislation to lift the embargo on the sale of foods and medicines, might have removed all travel controls or announced the closure of TV Marti and the transfer of Radio Marti back to Washington, where it can be brought under the effective control of the Voice of America.

Most important, 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 contacts are 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. □

OPINION

ALLISON SILVER
Sunday Opinion Editor

GARY SPIECKER
Deputy Opinion Editor

LEVEL 1 - 75 OF 110 STORIES

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January 10, 1999, Sunday Final Edition

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A14; AROUND THE WORLD

LENGTH: 707 words

HEADLINE: AROUND THE WORLD

BODY:

SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICER DENIED AMNESTY IN ACTIVIST'S DEATH

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa - A South African policeman has been denied amnesty in the 1977 beating death of black liberation leader Steve Biko, an attorney said yesterday. The decision apparently leaves the officer open to criminal charges in the infamous case that hastened the end of apartheid. Former Detective Sgt. Gideon Nieuwoudt was denied amnesty because he and four other officers, who also are seeking amnesty, did not admit any crime, said George Bizos, a lawyer for Biko's family.

The five officers testified before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission last year that Biko tried to attack one of his interrogators while in custody in the city of Port Elizabeth.

The officers say they tackled the 30-year-old Biko and accidentally slammed his head against a wall. He was then taken in a police van, naked and bleeding, on a 750-mile trip to a prison in Pretoria, where he died of brain injuries on Sept. 12, 1977.

Only those who confess to politically motivated crimes committed during apartheid are eligible for amnesty.

Cuban official denounces Clinton overture on embargo

HAVANA - A high-ranking Cuban official has denounced President Clinton's proposals to ease some restrictions in the United States' embargo of the island, calling them a "deceptive maneuver" to deflect opposition to the embargo.

The official, Ricardo Alarcon, is the legislative leader who is Fidel Castro's point man on negotiations with the United States.

He said the changes were also meant to hide Clinton's rejection of a bipartisan commission to review the wisdom of the 37-year-old embargo. Two former Republican secretaries of state are among those who have backed such a panel.

"The whole world thought at least this commission would be created," Alarcon said Friday night.

On Tuesday, Clinton announced a package of moves intended to spur private enterprise in Cuba without helping Castro's government. They included expanding direct charter flights to the island, allowing more Americans to send cash to Cuba, establishing direct mail service and sanctioning sales of food and agricultural supplies to charities and privately held farms.

Congo villagers say rebels massacred hundreds in raid

MAKOBOLA, Congo - Terrified Congolese residents, some hiding from patrolling soldiers, said today that hundreds of civilians died when rebels started shooting and burned dozens of huts in an eastern fishing village on New Year's Eve.

The killings appeared to be retaliation for an attack by combatants allied with President Laurent Kabila's forces, who briefly captured Makobola from rebels Dec. 30.

An Italian missionary news service reported Wednesday that it had eyewitness accounts indicating at least 500 people were killed.

Chinese cigarette mogul gets life sentence for embezzling

SHANGHAI, China - One of China's best-known businessmen, a cigarette-maker with the moniker of "Tobacco King," was sentenced yesterday to life in prison for helping to embezzle more than \$ 3.5 million.

Chu Shijian, former president and chairman of Yuxi Hongta Tobacco Co., stole the money from the company in 1995 with the help of two subordinates, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Chu and the other executives were sentenced by the Higher People's Court in Yunnan, a province in southwestern China. A senior state economic planning official in charge of awarding cigarette quotas got a suspended death sentence Nov. 7 for taking \$ 120,000 in bribes from Yuxi Hongta.

100-year-old American vet of WWI gets top French honor

LOS ANGELES - A 100-year-old veteran who survived a World War I mustard-gas attack was awarded France's highest honor in a nursing-home ceremony.

William Zelnicker received the National Order of the Legion of Honor on Friday from Deputy Consul General Philippe Vinogradoff.

The Providence, R.I., native ran away from home and enlisted in the Army's 26th "Yankee" Division at age 17. He was an ambulance driver and stretcher bearer until he was felled in the Sept. 24, 1918, German mustard-gas attack during the American offensive on St. Mihiel.

The Seattle Times, January 10, 1999

GRAPHIC: PHOTO; TATIANA MAKEEVA / THE AP: 38 KILLED IN BUS PLUNGE: RESCUERS SEARCH THE WRECKAGE OF A BUS THAT PLUNGED 820 FEET INTO A RAVINE NEAR KAZBEGI, IN NORTHEASTERN GEORGIA. AUTHORITIES SAID 38 PEOPLE WERE KILLED WHEN THE BUS VEERED OFF A WINDING ROAD AND PLUNGED INTO A RIVER FRIDAY NIGHT. IT HAD BEEN TRANSPORTING MOURNERS FROM A FUNERAL IN THE TOWN OF KOBİ. THERE WERE NO SURVIVORS.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999



SURF'S UP. THE Newtimes WEB PAGE AND INTERNET DIRECTORY

79



HERALDLINK FULL STORY

Published Sunday, January 10, 1999, in the Miami Herald

U.S. orchestra may play in Cuba

MILWAUKEE -- (AP) -- Representatives of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra have been talking with Cuban officials about performing on the island next winter.

If arrangements are worked out and approval is granted by the U.S. State Department, the Milwaukee Symphony would become the first major U.S. orchestra to play in Cuba since Fidel Castro came to power.

The orchestra would play one or two concerts in connection with its long-scheduled concert Dec. 15 at the Kravis Center in West Palm Beach.

Steve Ovitsky, the symphony's executive director, and Robert Wilkins, general manager, were in Havana last week for talks with officials of the Cuban Institute of Music, which invited the orchestra to the island.

WHA

SURF'S UP. THE Newtimes WEB PAGE AND INTERNET DIRECTORY



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1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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January 9, 1999, Saturday, BC cycle

SECTION: Sports News

LENGTH: 264 words

HEADLINE: Cuba blasts new U.S. proposals, but hints baseball possible

BYLINE: By JOHN RICE, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: HAVANA

BODY:

Yankees no! Orioles? Why not?

Cuba on Friday denounced U.S. measures to ease sanctions against the socialist island as efforts to buy traitors, but hinted it may approve the first visit by a major league baseball team in half a century.

Parliament Speaker Ricardo Alarcon, delivering Cuba's formal response to President Clinton's Jan. 5 announcement, called it "a new phase in the war against Cuba" that insulted Cuban Christians by portraying them as agents of subversion.

But Alarcon seemed to show sympathy for the Baltimore Orioles' plan to play exhibition games against the Cuban national baseball team, a game U.S. officials said they would now authorize after blocking it for three years.

He did not give definite approval, but indicated talks would deal with the type of bats - wood or aluminum - to be used and suggested proceeds go to aid Central American victims of Hurricane Mitch rather than to Cuban charities, as U.S. officials proposed.

Alarcon said U.S. officials "have been trying to sabotage this legitimate activity" and called the Orioles "champions in waiting for a bureaucratic license - three years" to arrange the game.

The Orioles, he said, "are interested in practicing sport. They know that Cuba is a baseball power. It is a challenge and it is an honor for any team to compete with the Cubans."

U.S. officials said the Orioles would like to play one game in Cuba and to play host to the Cubans at Camden Yards, probably during spring training this year. The Cubans will be finishing their national winter league season at the time.

6TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Charleston Newspapers
The Charleston Gazette

January 09, 1999, Saturday

SECTION: News; Pg. P4A

LENGTH: 784 words

HEADLINE: Baby steps won't get us into Cuba

BODY:

AS HIS first foreign policy initiative of 1999, President Clinton relaxed the American embargo against Cuba.

Under the new, more flexible U.S. rules, mail service between the United States and Cuba is restored; more direct flights to Cuba are permitted; any American, not just a Cuban-American relative, is now allowed to send up to \$ 100 a month to any Cuban family, except senior government officials; and an exhibition game between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team is scheduled for March. Clinton's initiative was immediately endorsed by Miami's fierce anti-Castro lobby as "consistent" with existing U.S. policy toward Cuba. That's the first sign there's something wrong with what Clinton did. As indeed there is.

On Cuba, Clinton certainly moved in the right direction. But his action is too little and too timid. And it is, in one sense, a giant step backward.

Baseball diplomacy toward Cuba replaces pingpong policy toward China. Great! So far, so good. But, while adopting that and other small measures, Clinton also announced he was abandoning a big one: a proposal by 24 senators from both parties for a bipartisan commission to review all aspects of U.S. relations with Cuba. And that giant

step, not little baby steps, is what is needed now.

"It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism," lamented Sen. John Warner, R-Va., chief architect of the commission plan. "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 is right. It is wrong to continue to deny basic humanitarian assistance to the Cuban people, in the fear that food and medicine are somehow going to propel Castro's army into invading south Florida.

South Beach, beware!

But that's only half the problem with the embargo. It's also wrong to continue to deny Americans the right to travel to Cuba and make money in Cuba.

I recently returned from 10 days in Cuba under the auspices of the San Francisco-based human rights organization Global Exchange. I can tell you from firsthand experience and travel: The U.S. embargo is hurting Americans and hurting the United States much more than it's hurting Cuba.

I've traveled all over Latin America. I've never seen more beautiful beaches than Cuba's. Never met more friendly people. Never danced to more vibrant music. Never eaten better food. And those riches are attracting tourists to Cuba in droves - Canadians, Italians, Mexicans, French, Germans, Dutch. But, except for the occasional journalist or researcher, no Americans. We're missing out on the hottest opportunity in the Caribbean.

I talked to many businesspeople in Cuba. They love American dollars. Their economy is expanding. They're ready to make deals. And they're making them. New deals with businessmen from Spain, Canada, Italy,

Germany, Mexico. Everybody but Americans. For hotels, new restaurants, new buses, new cars, new planes, new clothing. Americans are missing out on the hottest investment opportunity in the Caribbean.

You don't have to be a trained diplomat to realize that America's embargo against Cuba is a Cold War policy that simply no longer makes sense. In fact, I heard the best argument against the embargo from a Havana taxi driver.

Heading back to Jose Marti airport, my cab driver, no admirer of Castro's, summed it up: "You Americans have it all backward," he told me. "The embargo doesn't hurt Castro. It hurts the American people. And it hurts the Cuban people."

In fact, he explained, "the only person it helps is Castro."

Keeping the embargo in place gives Castro a convenient, albeit phony, excuse for continuing to suppress political dissent and freedom of the press. And prohibiting American firms from introducing capitalist competition in Cuba gives Castro a monopoly on goods and services, enabling him to keep propping up his old, tired, bloated bureaucracy. It will be fun to watch the Baltimore Orioles trounce the Cuban nationals. But if we really want to see capitalism trounce communism, we should stop pussyfooting around toward Cuba. We should stop taking little steps and take the one big leap that really counts. Get smart. Lift the embargo. Let democracy and capitalism into Cuba. Let American tourists and American businessmen do their thing. Castro will soon be history.

A Cuban taxi driver can see that. Why can't the American Congress? Why can't Clinton?

Press is co-host of CNN's "Crossfire."

LOAD-DATE: January 09, 1999

22ND STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Dayton Newspapers, Inc.
Dayton Daily NewsJanuary 9, 1999, Saturday, CITY EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. 6A

LENGTH: 318 words

HEADLINE: WORLD DIGEST

BODY:

Attack on Serbian cops triggers violent response

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia - Ethnic Albanian rebels killed three Serb policemen and seized eight soldiers Friday in separate ambushes in Kosovo, prompting Serb forces to gear up for a counter-attack. The attacks, one of which rebels said was in response to Serb shelling, are the latest in a spiral of retaliation that international monitors fear may eventually bring a tottering October truce to complete collapse. The policemen were killed when Kosovo Liberation Army rebels fired an anti-tank weapon at their armored vehicle near Suva Reka, 30 miles south of Pristina. In a separate ambush, guerrillas attacked a Yugoslav convoy carrying rations to troops stationed near Kosovska Mitrovica, northwest of Pristina. They seized eight soldiers.

U.S. decision on Cuba 'crumbs,' official said

HAVANA - Cuba's economy minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez, dismissed a U.S. move to ease the embargo on his country as "'crumbs'" Friday, saying the measures announced this week by President Clinton would have little effect on Cuba's economy. His comments were the first official Cuban reaction to Clinton's decision, which eases a few elements of the U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba while still maintaining the bulk of the blockade.

Rebel leader rejects Sierra Leone cease-fire

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone - Gen. Sam Bockarie, top commander of the Revolutionary United Front, a ruthless rebel army roaming the streets of Sierra Leone's capital, rejected a proposed cease-fire Friday. Bockarie said that within 24 hours, his forces would attack the western parts of Freetown still under government control and then move against the international airport at nearby Lungi, an important military base. Bockarie wants rebel patriarch Foday Sankoh, jailed by the government and sentenced to death on charges of high treason, released.

- From wire services

TYPE: DIGEST

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

MIAMI HERALD - Downloaded January 9, 1999
Cuban Dismisses Shift In U.S. Policy

By **JUAN O. TAMAYO**, Herald Staff Writer

A top Cuban official on Friday rejected the relaxation of U.S. sanctions on Havana announced by Washington this week, saying they were insulting, meaningless and designed only "to intensify their war on Cuba.

"These measures cannot but be rejected in the most categorical way, Ricardo Alarcon, head of the National Assembly and Cuba's top expert on U.S. relations, said in a nationally broadcast speech in Havana.

The U.S. decision announced Tuesday, he added, was President Clinton's veto of proposals for a bipartisan commission to carry out a detailed review of U.S. policies toward Cuba, which might have recommended a total lifting of the U.S. embargo.

"That was all that really happened, Alarcon said, adding that the other measures, described by some U.S. officials as designed to promote democracy in Cuba, amounted to little.

"The embargo remains, he said.

Alarcon noted that senior U.S. officials had described the measures as "nothing new, and that the Cuban American National Foundation had welcomed some of them.

"That tells you something, he said.

Among the measures announced Tuesday was permission for U.S. residents to send up to \$1,200 to Cuban individuals, and permission for sale of some food and agricultural goods to Cuban individuals and nongovernmental organizations like church groups.

Alarcon, in a speech carried simultaneously by Cuban TV and most radio stations, and monitored in Miami, said the increase in cash that U.S. residents are permitted to send to Cuba was designed to provide funds for dissidents, "to buy consciences and manufacture traitors.

He also complained that the measures were an attempt to use the Roman Catholic Church as a tool in U.S. plans "to divide us, to weaken us, to erode our society from within.

But those plans will fail, Alarcon added, because there is growing world opposition to the U.S. embargo and Washington's policy of pressuring Cuba to embrace political and economic reforms.

23RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Journal Sentinel Inc.
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

January 9, 1999 Saturday Final

SECTION: News Pg. 5

LENGTH: 139 words

HEADLINE: U.S. moves on Cuba dismissed as 'crumbs'

SOURCE: Journal Sentinel wire reports

DATELINE: Havana

BODY:

Cuba's economy minister dismissed a U.S. move to ease the embargo on his country as "crumbs" Friday, saying the measures announced this week by President Clinton would have little effect on Cuba's economy.

His comments were the first official Cuban reaction to Clinton's decision, which eases a few elements of the U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba while still maintaining the bulk of the blockade.

"With this type of crumbs, one does not develop any country, nor resolve any problem in the world," Jose Luis Rodriguez said at a news conference.

Among other things, Clinton announced he would let U.S. companies sell food and farm supplies to non-governmental organizations in Cuba and let any American send up to \$1,200 to Cuban individuals, as well as allow larger cash donations to Cuban charities.

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

24TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Journal Sentinel Inc.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

January 9, 1999 Saturday Final

SECTION: News Pg. 1

LENGTH: 549 words

HEADLINE: Symphony may play in Cuba in a first for a U.S. orchestra

BYLINE: TOM STRINI

SOURCE: Journal Sentinel music critic

BODY:

The Milwaukee Symphony might become the first major U.S. orchestra to perform in Cuba since Fidel Castro came to power.

Steven Ovitsky, the MSO's executive director, and general manager Robert Wilkins were in Havana Thursday and Friday for talks with officials of the Cuban Institute of Music, which invited the MSO to the island nation.

Jonathan Watts, of Canada-Cuba Sports and Cultural Festivals, made the trip with Ovitsky and Wilkins. The MSO turned to Watts' Toronto-based company for assistance in setting up concerts in Cuba.

The trip, if it happens, will be a short one, with one or two concerts in mid-December. The MSO will be in Florida on Dec. 15 to play a long-established concert at the Kravis Center in West Palm Beach.

Music director Andreas Delfs proposed extending the Florida trip to Cuba. According to MSO spokesman Andrew Buelow, Delfs got the idea from an unidentified New York friend who does a lot of business in Cuba.

The friend tipped Delfs about an impending relaxation of U.S. rules restricting Americans' contact with Cuba. This week, President Clinton did, indeed, loosen certain restrictions, including some that govern artistic groups, so the MSO's timing looks good.

Still, the trip is not a certainty. U.S. State Department approval is required and yet to be obtained, and money must be raised to cover the cost of the trip. No funds will be forthcoming from Cuba or the Cuban Institute of Music.

In a statement issued Friday afternoon, Ovitsky said that acceptance of the Cuban invitation was "contingent upon securing full funding from outside sources, independent of contributions for our ongoing operations."

"It's my understanding that the State Department has generally considered cultural trips of this kind to be permissible," Buelow said.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Paul Kennedy Tap Company are recent examples. Both American troupes performed at the 26th annual Havana International Ballet Festival in November.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel January 9, 1999 Saturday

Buelow said that costs of the trip had not been estimated, but they should not be excessive. The orchestra already will be in Florida, little more than 100 miles from Cuba, and any stay in Cuba would be brief.

Rumors about the Cuba trip have circulated among musicians for several weeks. Ovitsky filled in the players at a rehearsal on Dec. 30.

The orchestra has made just four trips beyond U.S. borders: to the Dominican Republic in 1974 and 1975; to England, Germany and Holland in 1986; and to Japan in 1992.

Cuba has never been a hotbed of Western classical orchestra music. There is more status to be gained in the orchestra world by playing in London, Berlin, Vienna or even Prague than by playing in Havana.

But the MSO stands to gain an international public-relations bonanza if it manages to become the first major U.S. orchestra to play in Cuba since the U.S. imposed the embargo 37 years ago. Comparisons of the U.S. table tennis team's visit to China just before the thaw between the two countries would be inevitable.

"Everybody goes to Europe," Buelow said. "We're not interested in doing business the way every other orchestra does. We want to do things that are different and unusual. The opportunity is presenting itself, so why not?"

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 1999

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International

The New York Times
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January 9, 1999

Cuba Belittles U.S. Move to Ease Sanctions

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAVANA -- Cuba's Economy Minister on Friday dismissed a United States move to ease the economic embargo on his country as "crumbs."

His comments were the first official Cuban reaction to President Clinton's decision of Monday, which eases a few elements of the United States' economic sanctions against Cuba while still maintaining the bulk of the blockade.

"With this type of crumbs, one does not develop any country, nor resolve any problem in the world," José Luis Rodríguez said.

Among the changes, United States companies will be permitted to sell food and farm supplies to nongovernmental organizations in Cuba.

Rodríguez implied that Cuba may not permit some of the activities announced by Clinton.

"I don't believe it is in line with the country's principles of relations with the United States to accept that type of measure without having it in any way move the policy of the blockade and siege of the country," he said.

The head of the Roman Catholic aid agency Caritas in Cuba, Raúl Suárez, called the United States measures "a positive step" for aid groups because they help communications between Cubans abroad and on the island.

But he said Caritas could not afford to buy food abroad nor does it have an import license to purchase United States food.

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(WHA)
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15TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Palm Beach Newspaper, Inc.
The Palm Beach Post

January 9, 1999, Saturday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: OPINION, Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 395 words

HEADLINE: NON-OPENING TO CUBA

BODY:

Aside from giving the Oriole a migratory range from Baltimore to Havana, the Clinton administration's new Cuba policy does disappointingly little.

Under the proposal, anyone, not just Cuban-Americans, can send up to \$ 1,200 a year to people in Cuba. U.S. farmers can sell products to nongovernmental customers - probably charities, but perhaps small, independent restaurants. There's more money for Radio and TV Marti. Direct mail delivery will begin, and there will be more direct airline flights. And the Baltimore Orioles can play exhibition games against Cuba's national team.

The policy, according to the administration slogan, "helps the Cuban people without helping Castro." Actually, it's such a baby step that it helps hardly anyone. The administration should have admitted that our policy of embargo and isolation has been a three-decade-plus failure and begun building diplomatic ties to what someday will be a post-Castro Cuba.

Diplomatic relations do not condone the actions of any foreign government or head of state; they recognize reality. The United States has diplomatic relations with Vietnam, with which we fought a war that cost nearly 60,000 American lives. What's the hang-up with Cuba?

The hang-up, as everyone knows, is political. President Clinton panders to the rabid anti-Castro crowd the same way Republicans do. The exiles' response this week was muted because, while loosening the policy around the edges, President Clinton rejected the request that he create a bipartisan commission to evaluate relations with Cuba. The Cuban American National Foundation correctly suspected that the commission would push for diplomatic ties to open up business opportunities.

President Clinton was right not to create such a commission, but not for the reason the foundation cited. The administration should act on its own to create a rational, realistic Cuba policy.

President Clinton never displayed that much nerve and won't now. Three years ago, when Cuba shot down exile planes, he was stampeded into signing the Helms-Burton Law, which expanded the embargo and reduced presidential authority to set Cuba policy. The rhetorical hard line on Cuba has not been hard on Castro. The U.S. embargo continues to give him a scapegoat for his own failed economic policies and tyrannical rule. These slight changes don't change anything.

18TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Scripps Howard Newspapers
Press Journal (Vero Beach, FL)

January 9, 1999, Saturday

SECTION: A section; Pg. A13

LENGTH: 202 words

HEADLINE: CUBA: MINISTER CRITICAL AS U.S. EASES EMBARGO

BYLINE: BRIEF

BODY:

Top of the Morning

HAVANA - Cuba's economy minister dismissed a U.S. move to ease the embargo on his country as "crumbs" Friday, saying the measures announced this week by President Clinton would have little effect on Cuba's economy.

His comments were the first official Cuban reaction to Clinton's decision, which eases a few elements of the U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba while still maintaining the bulk of the blockade.

"With this type of crumbs, one does not develop any country, nor resolve any problem in the world," Jose Luis Rodriguez said at a news conference.

Clinton announced he would let U.S. companies sell food and farm supplies to non-governmental organizations in Cuba and let any American send up to \$ 1,200 to Cuban individuals, as well as allow larger cash donations to Cuban charities.

The measures also call for direct mail service to Cuba, expanded charter flights and easing limits on visits while maintaining the ban on tourism, business travel or general trade with the Caribbean island.

Even if Clinton's offer had been made with good intentions, he said, "we are not at all going to rely on foreign aid to promote our process of development."

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 1999

LEVEL 1 - 1 OF 89 STORIES

Copyright 1999 Seattle Post-Intelligencer
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

January 9, 1999, Saturday , FINAL

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. A2

LENGTH: 105 words

HEADLINE: HAVANA MARKS ANNIVERSARY OF CASTRO'S ARRIVAL, VICTORY

SOURCE: P-I News Services

DATELINE: CUBA

BODY:

Havana, Cuba's capital, yesterday celebrated the 40th anniversary of Fidel Castro's triumphal arrival here with music, banners and speeches.

Aging veterans of the revolution sporting their medals mingled with thousands of schoolchildren for the ceremony at Ciudad Libertad, or Liberty City, an educational center created out of the military headquarters of ousted dictator Fulgencio Batista.

From the old military reviewing stand where Castro made his first major speech in Havana as Cuba's new leader on Jan. 8, 1959, Otto Rivero, president of the Union of Young Communists, spoke of the lasting power of Castro's movement.

NOTES:

Briefs

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

Reaching Out but Not Touching Cubans

■ **Foreign Policy:** U.S. initiatives mean well, but they fall short of affecting most of the island.

By GILLIAN GUNN CLISSOLD

"It's absurd," laughed an elderly Cuban woman to her companion. "How do they think we are going to buy food from the U.S.? It means nothing for people like us." That comment, overheard at a Havana bus stop earlier this week, reflects the sentiment of many Cubans regarding recent adjustments of U.S. policy toward their country. While the Cuban government has adopted a cautious wait-and-see approach, many individual Cubans have already concluded that the new initiatives President Clinton announced on Jan. 5 will mean little to their daily lives.

If the measures really are intended to "send a message of hope" to the Cuban people, as Clinton claims, the White House has a lot more work to do.

Many Cubans, both in intellectual circles and at the street level, argue that the new measures—permitting U.S. food sales to private restaurants and agriculture input sales to private farmers—are meaningless, because imports cannot clear customs without government permission. Since the measures are designed, in Clinton's words, "to provide the people of Cuba with hope in their struggle against a system that for four decades has denied even basic human rights," Cuban authorities may be ill-disposed to such sales. Why should they approve a measure openly intended to weaken them?

The Cuban government is already curtailing the activities of small private restaurants because they do better than their state counterparts on prices and service. The government also is carefully monitoring private farmers amid accusations of profiteering.

In addition, Cuban authorities are well aware that private activities reduce government leverage on citizens by providing a source of income outside of state control and may therefore be reluctant to approve private-sector requests to purchase items from the "enemy."

Even if the government decides to authorize the purchases, only those citizens with dollars will be able to participate, and they will sell their products in hard currency. The very small portion of Cuban "haves" will get richer but there will be little impact on the "have-nots."

In addition, the decision to extend to all Americans the right to send remittances of up to \$1,200 per year to Cuban families, a right previously restricted to Cuban Americans with relatives on the island, is not expected to benefit many Cubans. Because of U.S. travel restrictions, few Americans have developed relationships in Cuba that are sufficiently strong to trigger such generosity.

The provision permitting even larger remittances to "entities in Cuba that are independent of the Cuban government" is assumed to be meaningless, since those recipients deemed "independent" by

Washington may be considered counter-revolutionary by Cuban authorities.

The last time a U.S. administration tried to "reach out to the Cuban people," it turned out badly. In the early 1990s, Washington quietly sought to facilitate greater contact between U.S. and Cuban scholars. In 1995, when conservative critics complained this was "helping Castro," the Clinton administration abandoned its past discretion and proclaimed that such contacts were part of a "Track Two" policy designed to "subvert the Cuban system" by exposing Cuban scholars to "democracy and capitalism."

The hard-line element within the Cuban government, already uneasy about greater contact with Cuban scholars, used the U.S. rhetoric to justify a crackdown that damaged many academic careers.

Because of this history, repetition of "Track Two" language in the new proposals rings alarms. Scholars hold U.S. officials' impolitic language partly to blame for the crackdown. Though terminology in the new initiatives is slightly more careful than that of four years ago, the unmistakable message is that contacts are intended to hasten a transition to a new political system.

Finally, Cubans feel these new measures are a poor substitute for the much-touted commission proposed by 24 U.S. senators from both parties to conduct a comprehensive review of Cuba policy. Rightly or wrongly, many Cubans believe Clinton abandoned the commission proposal due to pressure from the Cuban American right wing and that this proves he lacks the courage to provide genuine leadership on Cuba policy.

If the Cuban people are to believe that the new measures are genuinely meant to

First, the "Track Two" style "we-are-opening-contacts-in-order-to-subvert" theme must be further minimized. The fact that the language of the Jan. 5 measures is slightly less provocative than that of 1995 provides grounds for hope that some members of the administration appreciate the need for discretion. Whether they will be able to mute the subversion theme further in the face of conservative pressure remains in doubt.

Second, the implementation of the new initiatives must maximize the opportunity for average Cubans to benefit from U.S. largess. Specifically, "entities independent from the Cuban government," and thereby eligible to benefit from the new policy adjustments, must be defined broadly enough to encompass more than Cuba's small private sector, religious institutions and dissidents. This will require a sharp departure from past practice since the departments of Treasury and Commerce have placed restrictive interpretations on previous presidential decisions to adjust aspects of the embargo.

Without these steps, Clinton's new measures could simply consolidate popular Cuban cynicism regarding U.S. intentions.

Gillian Gunn Clissold is director of Georgetown University's Caribbean Project.

Rodriguez, Lula

From: DeLaurentis, Jeffrey
Sent: Friday, January 08, 1999 6:24 PM
To: Rodriguez, Lula
Subject: FW: CUBA-USA

see attached.

-----Original Message-----

From: Smith, Willard T
Sent: Friday, January 08, 1999 2:07 PM
To: ARACCA Exchange Group; DeLaurentis, Jeffrey
Subject: FW: CUBA-USA

-----Original Message-----

From: Horowitz, Paul D.
Sent: Friday, January 08, 1999 1:49 PM
To: LW-Americas
Subject: CUBA-USA

BC-CUBA-USA 1STLD

Havana slams U.S. embargo measures as "crumbs"
(adds details)

By Andrew Cawthorne

HAVANA, Jan 8 (Reuters) - Washington's easing of some restrictions in its embargo on Cuba were mere "crumbs" that do not alter the basic U.S. policy of "harassment" toward the Communist-run island, a senior government figure said on Friday.

Asked what financial benefit the measures might have for Cuba, Economy Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez replied: "To make that evaluation, we would have to accept those measures ... in my opinion, this sort of measure does not have any impact."

The minister, a senior member of Fidel Castro's government and close ally of the 72-year-old Cuban leader, added in a news conference that he did not believe it was in Havana's policy line "to accept such measures without (the U.S.) changing one tiny bit the policy of blockade and harassment of the country."

Rodriguez, in the most detailed reaction yet from the Cuban government to President Bill Clinton's announcements earlier this week, added: "With this sort of -- I am going to use a word that may seem hard -- 'crumbs,' you can't develop a country nor fix any problem in the world."

His comments seemed to clearly set the tone for Cuba's official reaction to the measures, which local legislative president and Castro's pointman on U.S. affairs, Ricardo Alarcon, is due to outline in a televised address later Friday.

Clinton announced on Tuesday a package of moves to expand direct flights and cash remittances to Cuba, and increase people-to-people contact. The measures -- interpreted by some analysts as insubstantial tinkering with the embargo, but by others as a significant easing of sanctions -- also approved direct mail to the island, food and agricultural sales to non-government entities, as well as possible exhibition baseball games and other sporting events.

The measures were announced together with Washington's rejection of a proposal, backed by anti-embargo lobbyists, to set up a bipartisan committee to review U.S. policy on Cuba.

Economy minister Rodriguez, who spoke briefly on the subject in a news conference dedicated to a review of Cuba's development in 40 years since Castro's 1959 revolution, indicated the U.S. moves had not pleased Havana.

"As a result of these measures, Cuba will not alter nor modify its position toward the U.S. blockade, which we will continue fighting and struggling for its lifting," he said.

"They are not measures in that direction."

He implied that the measures were ill-intentioned, and vowed Cuba would never base its development on external aid: "This country has had to make do with its own efforts."

Castro has still not spoken publicly on the issue, but Rodriguez' comments appeared to show he has made his opinion clear to the Cuban leadership, diplomats and analysts said.

Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, in brief comments to reporters during a visit to Haiti earlier this week, had also already said the measures "don't really go to the root of the problem ... a blockade that is unjust."

Castro was due to attend a ceremony in Havana Friday afternoon recreating the entry into the Cuban capital, 40 years ago on Jan. 8, 1959, of his "victory caravan" following the triumph of his revolution a week earlier.

His rebel army took power on Jan. 1, 1959, following the flight of former dictator Fulgencio Batista, but Castro delayed his entry into Havana with a week-long march from east to west.

Alarcon's comments on the embargo measures were due to be broadcast on state-run television at 9:30 p.m. (0230 GMT).

Havana alleged this week that the embargo had cost Cuba \$800 million last year, and \$60 billion since its implementation soon after Castro took power.

The embargo from its outset has been intended to isolate and put pressure on the Cuban leader and his one-party socialist system. It has outraged Castro and become a centre-piece of his political discourse, with frequent condemnations of the embargo as an "imperialist" tool of war that has imposed "genocide" on the Cuban people over the years.

BASEBALL

O's-Cuba exhibition needs to fly for charity's sake

By PETER SCHMUCK
SUN STAFF

Major League Baseball has steadily increased its emphasis on international outreach over the past several years, but the decision by the U.S. State Department to allow the Orioles to travel to Cuba may test that commitment.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig has given the go-ahead to begin work on the proposed goodwill exhibition series, but Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association have withheld final approval until more of the details have been worked out.



Selig

In the meantime, MLB and the players union will be trying to ascertain whether there is sufficient support among the owners and players for the trip.

It's a sticky issue, of course, and there are certain to be pockets of resistance within ownership and the union, but the games should go on.

Orioles owner Peter Angelos has been trying to get a trip like this off the ground for several years, well aware that his desire to make an overture to the Cuban people would be controversial, but nonetheless committed to using baseball to bridge the ideological gap between the countries.

He is willing to take the risk. Major League Baseball should be willing to join him in the effort.

There are a number of major-league players of Cuban descent — most notably former Oriole Rafael Palmeiro — who are opposed to the overture, and that is understandable in light of the hardship that their families faced because of Fidel Castro's repressive regime. But the potential of the exhibition series to generate revenue for charities that directly benefit the Cuban people should not be ignored.

ON BASEBALL

If Angelos and MLB International can put together a suitable broadcast agreement during the next couple of months, the two games could provide millions of dollars worth of food and medicine for needy Cubans.

No doubt, the trip will be a hot topic at the quarterly ownership meeting that starts Tuesday in Carlsbad, Calif. Selig doesn't figure to allow the mission to go forward if there is not widespread support among the other 29 major-league clubs, but it might be too early in the process to look for a consensus.

Hopefully, resistance will be minimal and Angelos will be able to move ahead with plans for the historic venture.

Baltimore Sun 1/8/99

LEVEL 1 - 50 OF 104 STORIES

Copyright 1999 Journal Sentinel Inc.
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

January 8, 1999 Friday Final

SECTION: News Pg. 13

LENGTH: 99 words

HEADLINE: Castro calls for crackdown on crime

SOURCE: Journal Sentinel wire reports

DATELINE: Havana

BODY:

Fidel Castro is demanding a crackdown on rising crime in Cuba, calling it a threat to the revolution and urging greater U.S. cooperation in the fight against drugs, terrorism and human trafficking.

Crime has "internal political consequences," Castro told an auditorium full of police this week. He blamed the crime on the dollars and tourism brought in by an easing of government control over the economy.

Castro demanded tougher sentences and urged judges not to shy away from the death penalty, which was common in the 1960s and 1970s but has been rare in the past decade.

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 1999

12TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 News & Record (Greensboro, NC)
News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

January 8, 1999, Friday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A13

LENGTH: 405 words

HEADLINE: PLANS FOR FOSTERING A FREE CUBA AT LAST

BYLINE: The Miami Herald

BODY:

The Clinton administration has 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.

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 Miami 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 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 the pro-active 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 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.

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.

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 1999

14TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

January 8, 1999 Friday, METRO

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. A16

LENGTH: 587 words

HEADLINE: PROPOSED OPENING HAS SCARED DICTATOR SINGING OLD, TIRED TUNE

BYLINE: By Myriam Marquez of The Sentinel Staff

BODY:

Fidel Castro blames the U.S. embargo against Cuba for rising crime on the island. It's his old, tired tune.

His long-winded, hourslong speech to Cuba's National Revolutionary Police Tuesday (running into the wee hours of Wednesday) was classic Castro. Because his regime has been forced to trade in American dollars since the Soviet Union collapsed, Castro said, desperate Cubans are being forced to steal and traffic in drugs.

No need for Castro to take responsibility for a failed Marxist economic system that forces young girls to prostitute themselves to help their families survive.

No need for the comandante maximo to acknowledge that his bankrupt system is the one that forces Cubans into an underground economy of U.S. dollars. It's easier to blame the embargo than for Castro to admit that these folks, despite all their free government education, earn a pittance in their government jobs.

No need for the dictator to explain why he continues to crack down on Cubans who speak out about the injustices of the system when the embargo can so conveniently be demonized. Hey, human rights and a civil society are a foreign concept to the guerrilla fighter for life.

The Clinton administration announced this week that it will relax the embargo and allow more greenbacks and more Americans to get to Cuba - as long as the money goes to nongovernment groups, such as the Catholic Church and other religious organizations, charities, humanitarian groups or directly to families. Travel by Americans to the island for cultural, religious or humanitarian exchanges and athletic competitions would be eased, too.

So what does Castro have to say about that?

Blame U.S. dollars on Cuba's crime wave, he chimes, without speaking directly about the proposed opening.

Clearly, Castro is scared of losing his scapegoat. Any opening by the United States would show that this nation and its people aren't the enemy of Cubans and that the economic funk Cubans have experienced for 40 years rests on the

Orlando Sentinel Tribune, January 8, 1999

intransigence of an old, bearded guy in green fatigues.

The Clinton administration is right to take a few baby steps toward reform. After 40 years of Castro's dictatorship, the United States must try new approaches to directly reach the Cuban people.

Orlando lawyer Lou Frey, who will be traveling with a delegation of former members of Congress to the island next week, told me months ago that opening up cultural exchanges and travel to Cuba makes lots of sense. In 1996, Frey visited Cuba with the delegation and came back convinced that shutting off Cuba to Americans was an approach destined to fail.

It's hypocritical for some Cuban-Americans, including the two Republicans from Dade County now serving in Congress, to call for sustaining a hard-line approach that Castro uses to his advantage.

All that Clinton's opening would do is make official what has been happening for years. Americans travel to Cuba illegally, through Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, etc., and U.S. officials most of the time look the other way. Cuban-Americans already send money to their kin on the island. The new policy simply would allow any American to send as much as \$1,200 each year directly to Cubans.

It would be morally corrupt for the United States to lift the embargo entirely and reward a despot. What the U.S. opening can do, though, is show Cubans that Americans want to help the people without propping up a dictator. It's a delicate balance, but one that's long overdue.

I can't imagine Castro will accept it.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 1999

January 7, 1999

Angelos may go to Cuba first

Preliminary trip
planned to pave way
for games with Orioles

By PETER SCHMUCK
SUN STAFF

Orioles owner Peter Angelos hopes to lead a baseball delegation to Cuba, perhaps as early as next week, to advance his three-year quest for a home-and-home exhibition series between the Orioles and a team of top Cuban players.

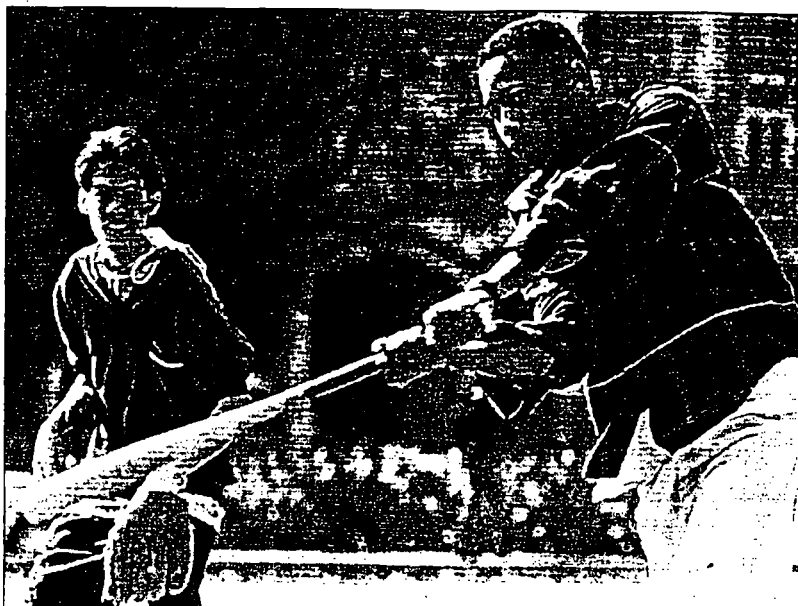
The planning for the proposed goodwill mission still is in the preliminary stages, but some of the groundwork for the venture was laid during an earlier attempt to organize an exhibition trip. The Orioles were denied permission to visit Cuba by the State Department two years ago, but this week's decision by the Clinton administration to lower some economic barriers between the United States and the island nation included the go-ahead for the charity series.

"This is something that Bud [Selig, commissioner] and I have been talking about for years," Angelos said yesterday. "Now that it has been made part of a policy announcement by the president, we need to sit down and talk to all the parties concerned. If everybody is satisfied, we can go forward."

So far, the public reaction has been largely positive, though the overture is certain to prompt protests from some segments of the Cuban-American population. Angelos said that he is moving forward because he feels that the time is right to reach out to the Cuban people — and because a love of baseball is one of the many things that Cubans and Americans have in common.

"I read somewhere that I wanted to do this because I was interested in their ballplayers," Angelos said. "I don't remember ever being motivated by that objective. I don't re- [See Cuba, 6D]

BASEBALL



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Connection: *These boys, who played baseball yesterday on the streets of Havana, could see the Orioles play in their city if a proposed exhibition series with a Cuban all-star team becomes a reality.*

Angelos may visit Cuba to pave way for O's trip

[Cuba, from Page 1D]

member exactly when was the first time I thought about this, but it was at the time when it was becoming apparent that the Soviet Union no longer was a threat to the Western Hemisphere. It seemed to me that it made sense to have better relations [with Cuba].

"This is just an interested citizen. Why can't we do something together to improve the relations between our people? We have so much in common."

"Why can't we do something together to improve the relations between our people? We have so much in common."

Peter Angelos, Orioles owner, on his effort to schedule exhibition games with a Cuban team

Organizing the games will be

huge undertaking on relatively short notice. The Orioles hope to play in Cuba during spring training and face the Cuban team later at Camden Yards, but there is more to it than just flying in and taking the field.

The Orioles and Major League Baseball have to negotiate United States and international broadcast rights and determine how the proceeds from the broadcast and gate revenues will be distributed. The money has been earmarked for charities that help impoverished Cubans, but it remains a complicated process that also must have the blessing of the Cuban authorities.

The game wouldn't technically be against the Cuban National Team, because the 1999 version of that team will not be assembled until later in the spring. The Orioles would play what amounts to a Cuban amateur all-star team, drawn from the teams that compete in Cuba's national league.

Orioles officials acknowledge that the short time frame makes the organizational effort a tremendous challenge, but Angelos has waited a long time for this opportunity and indicated yesterday that he is committed to seeing the exhibition series become a reality.

The issue remained on hold until the State Department's surprising announcement, which suddenly turned the Orioles into one of the standard-bearers for Major League Baseball's growing emphasis on international outreach.

"It was a surprise that the State Department picked it up and ran with it," Angelos said. "The Secretary of State [Madeleine K. Albright] got directly involved. The reaction has been very positive."

There still are some hurdles. The Orioles have gotten preliminary approval from Selig to organize the exhibitions, but the plan still must be approved by Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association.

More importantly, it must be approved by the Cuban government and the Cuban sports ministry. Angelos and his son Louis are expected to head the delegation that will travel to Cuba to work out the details.

The traveling party also is expected to include Orioles counsel Russell Smouse, consultant Scott Armstrong and representatives of Major League Baseball. The trip has not yet been scheduled, but Angelos said that he hopes to depart sometime in the next two weeks.

**The
Library****your Document****find
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search****Cuba-Policy Changes Are Wimpy**

By Larry Birns. Larry Birns is director of the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

WHEN IT COMES to classy foreign policy making, don't look to Washington, because the Clinton administration's bookcase is somewhat bereft of its own profiles of political courage.

So it came as no surprise that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's recent initiative on easing relations with Cuba is considerably less than meets the eye. The most that Washington can show when it comes to its Cuba embargo is a tattered strategy that already has gone unexamined for decades.

Intended to isolate Cuba both politically and economically, the policy ended up with the island at the peak of its attractiveness to foreign investors, with Havana today having diplomatic relations with almost every country.

Rather than fielding a big policy aimed at ventilating and resolving musty points of anger between Havana and Washington, Albright apparently is content to abide by long-standing string-pulling by the right-wing Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), along with the posturing of three Cuban-American members of Congress, who have managed to frustrate a bona-fide plan authored by a bipartisan group of 24 senators to impanel a national commission to re-examine the fundamentals of U.S.-Cuban relations. This was something that the White House had to block because it feared that such a body could wind up proposing to end the embargo.

With its Cuba policy in disarray, the Clinton administration has been under increasing pressure to formulate new guidelines for an outworn strategy. But Washington has a problem. Rather than taking a leadership position, it finds itself snapping at the heels of such conservative stalwarts as Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) and other Republicans, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, as well as most of the CEOs of the Fortune 500 companies.

In addition, major policy advisers from the Nixon, Reagan and Bush eras, including three of their secretaries of state, were calling for a thorough vetting of U.S.-Cuban relations, perhaps ending in the termination of a universally denounced embargo.

Further, the State Department has had to endure the ignominy of being mocked by the European Union, taunted by Canada, unanimously voted down at the annual meeting of the Organization of American States, as well as by the UN General Assembly.

With an embattled Cuba policy on its hand, and often the butt of unchivalrous remarks regarding the banalities of its anti-Havana rhetoric, the Clinton administration doesn't know how to bring closure to Washington's traditional anti-Castro stake-out. The new U.S. initiative toward Cuba - easing restrictions on travel, remittances and sales of agricultural products - does contain some useful components. But after adding the pluses and minuses of what Washington is now offering, it almost seems that the United States is once again trying to discredit Castro politically rather than aid the Cuban population, which just doesn't breed sound policy-making.

The defining cast of this latest so-called U.S. humanitarian initiative towards Havana is that it lacks focus and consistency. How can Albright, in good conscience, portray her Cuba gambit as an enlightened demarche aimed at easing the suffering of the Cuban people,

when it is counterpoised by a call for an expansion of Radio Marti, the U.S propaganda vehicle created at enormous taxpayers' expense as a political payoff to CANF?

One might divine that Albright's announcement was authored by two State Department speech writers working at cross purposes: One delivered the usual compulsory allotment of leftover Cold War rhetoric, while the other stitched together a program that contained some rational elements such as diversifying the number of U.S. airport departure points for travel to the island and increasing the number of Americans allowed to send remittances there, as well as authorizing an exchange of baseball games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team.

Today, an overwhelming case can be made that the Clinton White House, once again, has badly misused an opportunity to advance the island's political liberalization. Cuba at worse remains a third-string human rights violator, with a military capacity that has been so downsized that the island has been purged from the Pentagon's annual list of world-wide national security threats to the United States.

Although Fidel Castro repeatedly professes his allegiance to the revolution, in reality it becomes more qualified daily, with the dollarization of the economy, the opening up of almost the entire economic sector to foreign investments and the increased range of private sector activities in which ordinary Cubans can participate.

The shabbiness of Albright's initiative perhaps can be seen by contrasting it with calls upon the Castro regime to open itself to the world, and the United States to Cuba, issued by Pope John Paul II during his visit last January. While Havana builds an entente cordiale with the Roman Catholic Church, Washington strives to seek electoral favor with the most extreme elements of the Cuban-American community.

Whatever the administration may have concluded, Cuban officials must now realize that the Revolution has lost some of its edge, that cynicism is increasing among the citizens along with street crime and thefts from state businesses. Ordinary citizens are wearying over government admonitions that prosperity is just around the corner, and all that is required is another round of sacrifices.

But whatever Cuba's profound shortcomings, they will not be redressed by the White House's now routine pandering to extremists, allowing the latter's narrow prejudices and understandable emotions to be substituted for servicing compelling national interests.

These would best be served by an ongoing dialogue at least comparable to those that Washington has carried out with other former or current pariah nations such as Sudan, China, North Korea and Vietnam.

The administration continues to sanction a self-serving Cuban policy steeped in hypocrisy and pedestrian in its logic, which has little to do with the welfare of the Cuban people, but much to say about the low flame of this administration's foreign policy inspirations.

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Cuba-Policy Changes Are Wimpy., 01-07-1999, pp A45.

LEVEL 1 - 33 OF 131 STORIES

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

January 7, 1999, Thursday

SECTION: WIRE; Pg. A04

LENGTH: 222 words

HEADLINE: Castro assails crime wave, blames foreign influences

BYLINE: Reuters News Service

BODY:

HAVANA -- President Fidel Castro, who has kept a tight rein on Cuba's isolated society during 40 years in power, has vowed to get tough on rising crime on the island, particularly prostitution, drugs and human smuggling.

But in a marathon speech, broadcast into early Thursday, Castro pinned most blame for the recent crime surge on foreign influences associated with Cuba's opening to tourism and business from abroad this decade.

"Crime is one of the factors that have grown in these times, as new forms of delinquency have arisen that we are not accustomed to," Castro told a 5,000-strong audience at a ceremony for the 40th anniversary of his Revolutionary National Police force in Havana's Karl Marx theater.

"The fundamental task, of enormous economic and political importance, is to combat and defeat crime," added a stern-looking Castro, dressed in military uniform.

The communist leader's five-hour speech -- given Tuesday behind closed doors but broadcast on state-run television -- was Castro's first detailed public analysis of a crime phenomenon that has shocked Cubans this year.

Although still relatively low compared with other Latin American and Caribbean nations, the crime rise -- including murder, rape and robbery -- has startled a society that has been tightly controlled since Castro's revolution.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 1999



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PLAIN TEXT
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Clinton: Plan aids Cubans, not Castro

The White House tried to reassure, but some Fla. Republicans spoke out.



A Cuban woman receives her monthly ration of fish at a small bodega in Havana, Cuba. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

By George Gedda
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON -- President Clinton said yesterday that his program to reach out to Cuba's people would not assist President Fidel Castro and that it was consistent with the U.S. policy of maintaining pressure for democratic change on the island.

The initiative, widely advertised by the administration Monday and announced by Clinton yesterday, calls for an expansion of cash transfers from private Americans to needy Cubans and opens the way for increased people-to-people exchanges, direct mail service, and the sale of food and other agricultural products to nongovernment entities.

"The 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."

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright said the steps "should help all Cubans to understand that the United States is on their side."

Most of the criticism of the initiative was directed at Clinton's call for food sales to Cuba through nongovernmental entities, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and private farmers.

"How can we sell agricultural products without selling to Fidel's machine of oppression?" asked Sen. Connie Mack (R., Fla.), who warned that Clinton's program might provide greater benefits to the Cuban government than to the island's people.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R., Fla.) said the administration should be wary about selling to Cuban nongovernmental organizations because the majority

are controlled by the Cuban government.

James Dobbins, Latin America specialist at the National Security Council, expressed confidence that food deliveries could be monitored to ensure that they reached the intended beneficiaries.

He said that Catholic and Protestant churches might be the only potential purchasers of U.S. food at first but that it was hoped other nongovernmental institutions would develop over time.

Cuba's independent farmers also would be eligible to buy U.S. seed and fertilizer, but Dobbins acknowledged the Cuban government might not allow them to do so.

"This will be on the table as an incentive rather than immediately implemented as fully as it might be," he said.

Less controversial was Clinton's decision to expand the pool of U.S. residents eligible to send cash remittances to the island. Until now, only Cuban Americans have been allowed to send cash to family members; the limit has been \$300 per quarter. Under Clinton's initiative, any U.S. resident can send money to needy Cubans, consistent with the quarterly limit.

Other steps announced by Clinton include a restoration of direct mail service and an expansion of direct charter flights to the island, perhaps including flights from U.S. locations other than Miami.

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Eased Cuba sanctions questioned

By JUAN O. TAMAYO
Herald Staff Writer

The powerful heads of the House and Senate foreign affairs committees on Wednesday questioned the legality of President Clinton's decision to allow food sales to Cubans, saying it might violate the Helms-Burton law.

The food sales and other measures easing U.S. sanctions "breach Congress' intent in codifying the embargo on Cuba under the Libertad Act," said Ben Gilman, R-N.Y., chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

Echoing Gilman's concerns were Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart, both Florida Republicans; and the authors of Helms-Burton, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind.

Ros-Lehtinen said she, Burton and Diaz-Balart raised their objections at a meeting Wednesday with State Department and Treasury officials who are developing regulations for the changes announced Tuesday by the Clinton administration.

"We want to know where is the legal controlling authority that authorizes them to change the law," Ros-Lehtinen said. "The way we read Helms-Burton, they do not have any such authority."

The 1996 Helms-Burton law, officially known as the Libertad Act, includes a clause that turned into law all U.S. sanctions then in effect against Cuba. The sanctions had previously been imposed by presidential order. Backers say that means Congress must now approve any significant change in the sanctions.

But the White House had a team of lawyers look at Helms-Burton soon after its adoption and concluded that the executive branch still has the power to tighten or loosen the regulations governing U.S. sanctions on Cuba.

Although the 37-year-old U.S. embargo has always banned food sales to Cuba, the Clinton administration announced Tuesday that it would license U.S. food sales to independent Cubans not tied to President Fidel Castro's government.

While Helms supports some of the other changes announced Tuesday, and he is ready to back "even bolder" moves to promote democracy in Cuba, "we're concerned that any sale of food probably requires legislation," said Foreign Relations Committee spokesman Mark Thiessen.

Ros-Lehtinen said State and Treasury officials at the meeting Wednesday promised to send her a report arguing that the executive branch did not violate Helms-Burton in easing the sanctions.

"This is just the first stage... We'll be haggling about this for a while. There will be lots of paper flying back and forth, and eventually there may be a legal challenge," Ros-Lehtinen said.

Both backers and foes of Helms-Burton have long talked about potential court battles — backers because President Clinton has repeatedly waived enforcement of certain parts of the law, foes because they argue that the law infringes on the president's right to conduct foreign policy.

18TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 The Post and Courier (Charleston, SC)
The Post and Courier (Charleston, SC)

January 7, 1999, Thursday, POST AND COURIER EDITION

SECTION: A, Pg. 8

LENGTH: 1329 words

HEADLINE: An offer Castro can't refuse?

BYLINE: Staff Reports

BODY:

One of Fidel Castro's greatest strengths throughout his 40-year-long dictatorship has been his ability to blame all the troubles besetting the Cuban people on Washington. He has been aided and abetted by U.S. policy. Instead of trying to reach out to the Cuban people, successive American administrations have kept Cuba in isolation.

The measures proposed this week by President Clinton constitute small but welcome steps away from a failed policy.

In a statement, the president explained that the steps he has proposed "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."

They may be small steps but they are significant. All U.S. residents will be able to send \$ 300 a month to Cuba to help needy citizens, expanding a program that allowed cash transfers only to relatives on the island. Direct charter flights will be allowed from some U.S. cities and direct mail deliveries will be authorized.

The ban on the sale of food to Cuba will no longer apply if purchases are made by nongovernment entities. Exchanges in the fields of culture, education, religion and sport will be encouraged. Mr. Clinton has also proposed that U.S. firms be allowed to sell fertilizer, pesticides and agricultural equipment to independent farmers as well as agricultural products to privately owned restaurants.

The objective of this change in policy was spelled out in a draft report prepared by a group of experts from the Council for Foreign Relations: "The success of the Cuban-American community is one of the most powerful factors in promoting change in Cuba. The transfers of money, goods and medical supplies from Cuban-Americans to friends, family and religious communities in Cuba are helping to create a new group of Cubans who no longer depend on the state for their means of survival."

If the people-to-people contacts that Mr. Clinton has proposed are supported by Congress, the Cold War attitudes that have frozen Cuban-American relations

for four decades will begin to melt and democracy will have a chance to develop. There is, however, a possible snag. If warm relations are established between ordinary Americans and Cubans, it will not be so easy for Fidel Castro to convince his people that their suffering is caused by the United States.

Castro may not allow the people-to-people contacts that the president has proposed. Last year he refused to accept free food from the United States, offered through the U.N. Food for Peace program. In 1985, he ordered his air force to shoot down two unarmed planes from Brothers to the Rescue, a Cuban exile humanitarian group, at precisely the moment the Clinton administration was making tentative overtures to improve relations. The incident prompted President Clinton to sign the Helms-Burton Act, which tightened and toughened the embargo and put U.S.-Cuban relations back in a Cold War mode.

However, the latest proposals contain one offer that Castro may not be able to resist. Like the Ping Pong games that led to Richard Nixon's opening to China, the new policy would be launched by the Baltimore Orioles playing an exhibition game in Cuba, with a return match in Baltimore.

Castro is a baseball fan. It would be a diplomatic triumph if his weakness for the game caused him to agree to steps that would undoubtedly weaken his hold over the Cuban people. Bus system needs funding option The future of public transportation is looking up locally as the Charleston Area Regional Transit Authority assumes full control over the bus system. Ridership already has increased with the replacement of the system's ancient fleet of buses. Pending route revisions should make the system more responsive to the public.

But one element necessary for long-term success has yet to be settled. Local legislators should actively push for passage of a bill this year that will expand the authority's funding options.

A proposal that would have given CARTA the ability to take a funding plan to the voters within its service area failed to pass out of subcommittee late last year, despite the support of the Charleston legislative delegation, which represents all but one of the eight jurisdictions in the system's service area. (Hanahan is in Berkeley County.)

The bill would allow a local gas tax to supplement existing revenues on which the bus system depends. It has been estimated that a tax of 1 or 2 cents per gallon could sustain the system, along with existing sources, including fare box revenues. Previously, the shortfall had been assumed by SCE&G under a long-term franchise agreement that recently expired. The expense of operating a comprehensive mass transit system is such that all are now under public ownership, across the nation.

Under the terms of the proposed legislation, any increase in the gas tax to benefit mass transit must be approved by a majority of voters. The authority should be given the opportunity to make its case.

Howard Chapman, acting director of CARTA, says that the legislative proposal is now supported by officials in the Columbia area and regional transportation authorities across the state. Their backing recognizes the necessity of a broader funding base if buses are to continue in operation, here and elsewhere. In 1990, a proposal for a \$ 20 vehicle tax to support a publicly owned bus

system was soundly defeated in Charleston.

The metropolitan area needs a good public transportation system. CARTA's importance will grow as overdue route revisions are completed, and as the area sees new growth - and increased traffic congestion.

The bus system can operate through the year 2003 with the aid of a subsidy granted by SCE&G as part of the agreement to transfer ownership. The authority needs a strong proposal to put to the voters before that year approaches - ideally in the 2000 general election. The proposal that the Charleston delegation will consider on Monday will help CARTA achieve its funding requirements in the allotted time. NBA players learn the hard way The apparent settlement of the NBA labor dispute is welcome news.

It's not that many folks - even many basketball enthusiasts - were mourning the cancellations of nearly meaningless games in a protracted, 82-game regular season that eliminates less than half of the league's teams from an overcrowded playoff system.

But the settlement announced Wednesday does assure those enthusiasts that the NBA will have playoffs this season - the world's best players at their best. And the settlement does defy an expensive trend by proving that greedy professional sports owners occasionally can still outwit greedy pro athletes (another memorable basketball upset).

NBA owners locked out the players (this was not a strike) at the start of this season to force a new, management-favorable basic agreement, and the strategy seemed to work. The athletes appeared to blink in this high-stakes showdown (the owners could afford to miss a season; the players couldn't) - a gratifying outcome for fans who can't afford tickets and reject union-solidarity rhetoric from "workers" with average annual salaries of \$ 2.6 million.

Even more encouraging: Dennis Rodman will have less free time. A forward for the defending champion Chicago Bulls, cross-dresser, author and actor, Mr. Rodman suffered his latest public humiliation seven weeks ago when his Las Vegas marriage to former "Baywatch" star Carmen Electra was annulled because he was too drunk to remember saying, "I do." Without the lockout, he surely would have been too busy for such risky antics.

Mr. Rodman now can re-focus on his primary talent - he's a world-class rebounder of errantly shot basketballs.

And the NBA - players and owners - can re-focus on winning back the fans they dared to disappoint.

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Press Journal (Vero Beach, FL)

January 7, 1999, Thursday

SECTION: A section; Pg. A15

LENGTH: 116 words

HEADLINE: CUBA: EMBARGO CHANGES MAY NOT HELP MOST CUBANS

BYLINE: BRIEF

BODY:

Top of the Morning

HAVANA - President Clinton's moves to ease the U.S. embargo of Cuba are unlikely to bring relief to most Cubans struggling to get by under a stagnant economy.

One measure, which allows all Americans - not just those with relatives in Cuba - to send \$ 1,200 a year to Cubans, is unlikely to result in a flow of vast new sums to the impoverished island.

Economists estimate that \$ 500 million to \$ 800 million already is sent to Cuba each year by exiles trying to help families. That is the largest net source of hard currency for the Cuban economy.

Cuba's government has made no formal comment on the measures other than to say it is studying them.

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 1999



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JAMES O. GOLDBOROUGH

Taking a few timid steps toward Cuba

James O. Goldsborough

January 7, 1999

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

Lobbied vigorously by bipartisan groups to reconsider U.S. policy toward Cuba, the Clinton administration moved timidly this week to ease a few restrictions on U.S. contacts with Cubans.

This disappointing response to the growing call for an overhaul of ineffective policy is purely political. President Clinton, for obvious reasons, is reluctant to challenge Senate conservatives, who support the four-decades-old economic embargo on Cuba; Vice President Al Gore doesn't want to risk losing Florida's Cuban exile vote in the 2000 election.

U.S. foreign policy should not be made by Jesse Helms and Cuban exiles in Florida. The evidence that U.S. policy toward Cuba is ineffective and counterproductive is overwhelming. Two bipartisan study groups have now concluded that it's time for a thorough rethinking of policy.

In November, a high-profile group of senators, former secretaries of state and former officials wrote the president that, "Americans from all sectors of our nation are becoming concerned about the effects of our present U.S.-Cuba policy on U.S. interests and the Cuban people."

This group, which included Republican Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger, George Shultz and Larry Eagleburger in addition to a half dozen Republican senators, asked Clinton to appoint a national commission to consider all aspects of policy on Cuba, including ending the embargo.

In announcing the administration's response, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright turned them down. There will be no commission. Instead, the administration will relax some restrictions on person-to-person contacts between Americans and Cubans and allow a U.S. baseball club to play in Cuba during spring training.

Such timid policy limits U.S. influence as Cuba's transition to the post-Castro era approaches. As the Kissinger group makes clear, the United States should be working to maximize its influence in Cuba during this period.

The worst thing for both countries would be a post-Castro upheaval leading to civil war and to tens of thousands of refugees fleeing Cuba again in flimsy boats for Florida.

Pope John Paul II warned of this danger during his historic visit to Cuba a year ago this month. "No nation can live in isolation," said the pope. "Cuba needs to open herself to the world, and the world needs to draw close to Cuba."

The administration's hesitant Cuban policy grows out of a fear of challenging conservatives like Helms, who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and for whom the Cold War will never end.

Clinton kowtowed to Helms three years ago in signing the Helms-Burton bill, which tried to punish U.S. allies for trading with Cuba. When those allies threatened to take the United States before the World Court over the bill, Clinton agreed to suspend its main provisions.

Albright has publicly courted Helms, believing her charm could overcome fundamental policy differences between an internationalist administration and an isolationist senator. Albright held hands with Helms, hoping public displays of affection would persuade him to unblock U.S. peacekeeping dues to the United Nations.

The secretary was had. The dues have not been paid. The Helms-Burton law has not been repealed.

Kissinger's group is not the only one pushing for a policy overhaul while there is still time. Three years ago, another bipartisan group, the Inter-American Dialogue Task Force on Cuba chaired by former Republican Attorney General Eliot Richardson, went even further, calling for negotiations to end the embargo.

"What is needed from the United States," said the Richardson group, "is active bargaining, not passive waiting or the tightening of pressure without regard to consequences."

The Richardson report was swamped by events. It was the eve of an election and Congress was working on the Helms-Burton bill to appease Florida's Cuban exiles. Castro himself would soon scuttle ideas of detente by shooting down two planes from Miami that wandered too close to Cuba.

The Kissinger group is made up not only of former officials, but includes 17 sitting senators, including 13 Republicans (among them John Warner, Richard Lugar, John Chafee and Chuck Hagel), and four Democratic senators, including Barbara Boxer and Bob Kerrey.

The policy recommended by the group for Cuba is consistent with U.S. policy toward the regimes of the former Soviet empire a quarter century ago as communism in Eastern Europe began to show signs of fatigue.

That policy can be summed up simply: the best way to weaken communism is to get the free-market nose under the tent. Dictatorships and planned economies function most efficiently when they are isolated from free markets and democratic societies.

Many U.S. Cuba experts believe the embargo has helped keep Castro in power. They believe the shooting down of the two Cuban exile planes from Miami three years ago was his deliberate response to the recommendations of Richardson group, which were welcomed by Clinton and which Castro feared would pave the way to negotiation and detente.

The Kissinger group's bipartisan recommendations for a thorough re-examination of ineffective Cuban policy gave Clinton the political cover he needed to advance U.S. interests in the region.

As Sen. John Warner, R-Va., concluded of the administration's timid response: "It's a lost opportunity for America to review a policy of basic isolationism."

GOLDSBOROUGH can be reached via e-mail at jim.goldsborough@uniontrib.com

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LEVEL 1 - 1 OF 131 STORIES

Copyright 1999 Seattle Post-Intelligencer
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

January 7, 1999, Thursday , FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A14

LENGTH: 776 words

HEADLINE: BILL CLINTON STILL TAKES BABY STEPS IN DEALING WITH FIDEL CASTRO

BYLINE: Jim Hoagland Columnist

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

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 Tuesday 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 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, written by Bernard Aronson and William Rogers, former State Department officials, 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. Warner should not abandon his idea of a national commission simply because this lame-duck president demurs. Americans have become accustomed to leadership on vital topics coming from outside this politically gutless White House.

Jim Hoagland is associate editor/senior foreign correspondent for The Washington Post. Copyright 1999 Washington Post Writers Group.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

TYPE: COLUMN

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

LEVEL 1 - 2 OF 131 STORIES

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SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

January 7, 1999, Thursday , FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A14

LENGTH: 370 words

HEADLINE: END ALL SANCTIONS IN CUBA

BODY:

The Clinton administration has taken a timid step in the right direction by easing up on Cuba, a politically and economically bankrupt nation.

But the initiatives fall short of what's needed, which is to end the 37-year-old economic embargo on that country entirely.

As Sen. John Warner, R-Va., rightly put it: "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." The administration proposals, however short of the mark, do lay the groundwork for eventually normalizing relations with Cuba.

The underlying assumption is that the once-nettlesome Fidel Castro is nearly irrelevant and soon will be gone, and thus the United States would be well advised to use its good offices to help Cubans see the wisdom of choosing a true democracy.

Over the 40 chilly years since the Russian Communist-inspired Cuban missile crisis, the United States has pursued a policy bent on punishment and isolation of Cuba. So it could well take more than these halting steps to win the affections of Cubans for U.S.-style democracy.

Nevertheless, they'll now be allowed to have direct mail exchange with the U.S. rather than having to use a third-country conduit. Cubans will be able to receive \$1,200 a year from any American, not just from Cuban-American relatives. And they'll be able to watch a U.S. baseball team, the Orioles, play on a field in Cuba.

What more could they want?

For starters, Cubans, who on average are paid \$10 per month, could use investments from U.S. business to help get their economy on its feet. But the embargo prohibits that.

And it could use U.S. tourists, but the embargo prohibits that too.

It will get a few more visiting scholars, athletes and cultural groups, thanks to cutting some red tape for such visits.

The next step is to cut the red tape for everyone and to fully open Cuba to the flow of ideas and goods. We treat the Chinese better than this, and they pose a security threat. Pitiful Cuba long since ceased to pose a threat to anyone.

Enough is enough already. The Cuban people have paid in full the price for their feckless leader's ill-fated fandango with the Red Bear.

NOTES:

Editorials

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

TYPE: EDITORIAL

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 1999

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The Times-Picayune

January 7, 1999 Thursday, ORLEANS

SECTION: METRO; Pg. 6B

LENGTH: 360 words

HEADLINE: INITIATIVE TO THE CUBANS

BODY:

The muted response to President Clinton's new proposals on the hot-button question of relations with Cuba reflects the relatively minor nature of the initiatives, a fiddling around the edges rather than a full-scale revision of official perception of and approach to the issue.

The proposals have both humanitarian and policy purposes. To help the Cuban people survive Fidel Castro's communism-ravaged economy, Americans will be allowed to send more money to individuals.

Currently, Cuban-Americans can send relatives in Cuba \$1,200 a year -- a limit widely winked at.

The new proposal allows anyone to send anyone that much, and there is under study a plan to allow religious and other humanitarian agencies to send more money to sister organizations on the island.

Food and medicine aid would be augmented in a way designed to support economic activities independent of the Castro regime.

This latter may be, as Sen. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., said, "naive," but that was the only criticism from the resolutely anti-Castro lawmaker.

The number of charter flights from the United States would also be increased, and resumption of direct mail would be worked on.

There is even a provision to allow the Baltimore Orioles to negotiate a game in Havana against the Cuban national team and host the Cuban team for a game in Baltimore.

But comparisons of baseball diplomacy to the Ping-Pong diplomacy in the early stages of President Nixon's opening to China are premature. Serious, if secret, work by both countries was already in progress then, and there is no indication that President Clinton's proposals, all well within the economic embargo the United States has imposed on Cuba for 37 years, is anything other than unilateral.

Still, the policy import of the loosening of some restrictions is the argument that we should be preparing for the disappearance of Mr. Castro and possible changes in Cuba's political scene. We want to help strengthen democratic opposition to the Castroite regime and hold out the prospect of a

The Times-Picayune, January 7, 1999

prosperous future free country and economy.

That, too, might be naive, but there is no loss in making the attempt.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 1999

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1999 **A25***Jim Hoagland*

Tiptoeing 'Round A Relic

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"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."

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METRO

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1999

Too Much or Not Enough?

Eased Embargo Seen as Undue Reward, Modest Start by Split Cuban Americans

By PAMELA CONSTABLE
Washington Post Staff Writer

To Jay Fernandez, a conservative Cuban American businessman, the Clinton administration's decision this week to permit more travel to Cuba and allow more food, mail and money to be sent there is a "cruel joke" on the Cuban people and an undeserved reward to Fidel Castro's repressive regime.

"None of this will make any difference to my relatives in Cuba," said Fernandez, who directs a Virginia-based advocacy group called Casa Cuba. And the easing of the trade embargo, he complained, is being initiated even though Cuban dissidents have been beaten on live television in recent weeks and five Cuban diplomats have been expelled from the United States on suspicion of spying.

"So why do we turn around and reward them?" he asked angrily.

But to Jorge du Brueil, a retired Cuban American educator in Rockville, the administration's move is a "very modest beginning" toward his dream of normalizing U.S. relations with his homeland—and ultimately dropping the 37-year American embargo against its communist government.

"It doesn't get to the heart of the problem, but I'd rather have things going in this direction than the opposite," said du Brueil, a board member of the nonprofit Committee for Cuban Democracy. "A lot of people in the United States don't know the real story about what's happening in Cuba, and if more of them start flying down there, it may lead to other things."

Like every change in American policy toward Cuba, the administration's latest shift is being hotly debated among the Washington region's estimated 10,000 Cuban

See EMBARGO, B4, Col. 5



BY CRAIG HEERDON—THE WASHINGTON POST

Eduardo Barada, co-owner of the District's Habana Village nightclub, says the eased restrictions "will show ordinary Cubans the generosity of the American

Eased Cuban Embargo Is Seen As Undue Reward or as a Star

EMBARGO, From B1

Americans. Some see it as a victory for anti-Castro groups that successfully pressed officials not to ease restrictions even further; others see it as a victory for pro-detente groups that argue that more open channels will inevitably weaken Castro's rule.

The new policy will allow any U.S. resident to send up to \$1,200 a year to private Cuban citizens, increase charter flights between Cuban and American cities, establish direct mail service and allow American companies to sell food and agricultural products to private groups in Cuba.

The administration also is permitting the Baltimore Orioles to visit Cuba this spring for an exhibition game with the Cuban national team, which will be allowed to travel to Baltimore for a similar event.

"I am content because this will show ordinary Cubans the generosity of the American people, and give them a chance to integrate more in the world," said Eduardo Barada, co-owner of the Habana Village nightclub in the District, who has hosted numerous performances by visiting Cuban musicians.

Virginia Schofield, a Cuban American artist in the District who is active in the Committee for Cuban Democracy, praised the administration for opening up mail service. But she said anything

short of lifting the embargo will bring little real change in Cuba.

"What the administration has done is pretty miserly," she argued. In recent weeks, she said, a panel of prominent Americans sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations had called for a review of U.S. policy toward Cuba, and a similar commission has been proposed by members of Congress. "I think they are just throwing a bone at them, but in concrete terms it is just a tiny little opening."

Frank Calzon, a Cuban American who directs the District-based Center for a Free Cuba, warned that some of the provisions of the new U.S. policy may not be agreed to by Castro's government and that others could benefit Cuban officials more than citizens.

"The road to hell is paved with good intentions," Calzon said. Havana, he argued, is not likely to accept direct mail service from the United States because it would lose millions of dollars in fees from private shipping services. And if American athletes start traveling to Cuba, he added, "they should go tell Castro to stop persecuting Cuban ballplayers for their views."

The worst thing, Calzon said, is that the U.S. proposal "raises false expectations. They say they will sell food to small, self-employed buyers, but how will they get the money to buy it? So far, the Cuban government won't even let the Catholic church buy wholesale milk."

O's face obstacles in bid for Cuba trip

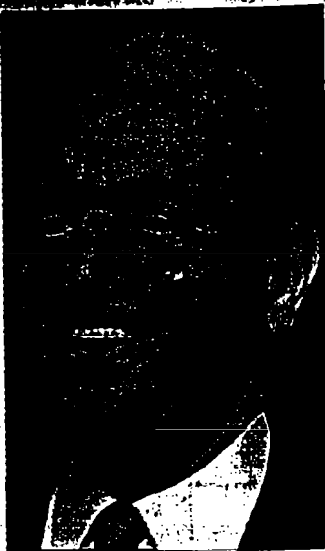
State Dept. gives OK, but other issues loom

By PETER SCHMUCK
SUN STAFF

The Orioles are pondering a historic trip to Cuba, but the wide-ranging implications of the politically charged goodwill mission could make it difficult to get off the ground.

Orioles owner Peter Angelos has been trying to arrange a home-and-home exhibition series with the Cuban national team since 1996, and got the go-ahead from the State Department yesterday. Now, the club has to negotiate the sensitive landscape of Cuban-American relations to assure that the games are a humanitarian success and not a public relations disaster.

"Baseball is a wonderful medium for bringing people together," Angelos said in a prepared statement yesterday. "That has been demonstrated again and again in a



Peter Angelos: "Orioles welcome the opportunity to play a part in the effort to improve relations between these two peoples."

variety of contexts. In that spirit, the Orioles welcome the opportunity to play a part in the effort to improve relations between these two peoples."

The road to Havana is paved with good intentions — the proceeds from the two exhibitions would be expected to help impoverished Cubans — but the proposed trip may not be well-received in some quarters of the Cuban-American community.

That obviously is a concern of baseball commissioner Bud Selig, who must give his blessing to the venture, enough so that he has spent the past two days considering the industrywide ramifications of what may go down in history as baseball's version of "pingpong diplomacy."

The public reaction was largely positive when a delegation of [See Cuba, 6D]

[Cuba, from Page 1D]

American table tennis players traveled to mainland China in 1970 as a prelude to widening diplomatic contact with the isolated communist country. But table tennis wasn't the national pastime, nor was it a multibillion-dollar entertainment industry with much to lose from a negative shift in public opinion.

The fallout of any overture to Fidel Castro's government — especially in areas with large Cuban-American populations — could be significant.

Selig has been in regular contact with Angelos about the proposed Cuban visit, but has yet to give official approval for the trip.

The Orioles have cleared only the first hurdle in a complicated process — the approval of the Clinton administration. They also must get the approval of the Cuban government and the Major League Baseball Players Association.

Baltimore Sun 1/6/99

Hot-button issue

The relationship between the United States and Cuba is such a hot-button issue in Florida that a proposed 1996 exhibition game between the U.S. Olympic baseball team and the Cuban team in Homestead, Fla., was moved to Millington, Tenn., under the threat of an anti-Castro backlash. The Cuban team also played in North Carolina and Georgia.

Though the games would take place far from the hotbeds of anti-Castro fervor, the Orioles still could find themselves the target of protests at their spring training site in Fort Lauderdale, a 30-minute drive from the Miami hub of Florida's Cuban population.

Baltimore Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, who traveled to Cuba in March, has thrown his support behind the mission. He acknowledged yesterday that there might be some mixed reaction from the Cuban community, but expressed confidence that the climate for such a overture has improved since the Orioles made a similar attempt to arrange a Cuban visit three years ago.

Schmoke said the Orioles have been talking with various Cuban-American organizations to get their sense of the proposal.

"There obviously is not 100 percent either way," Schmoke said. "The general response has been more favorable than it was three years ago. We hope that's a good sign. I've talked with a number of Cuban-American leaders, and it has generally been supportive."

Cuban sports officials are believed to be receptive to an Orioles visit, but a spokesman for Cuba's National Institute of Sports said the nation's athletic governing body had not yet been contacted by the Orioles or the State De-

partment.

"We have not heard anything," the spokesman said by telephone from Havana. "We have only read the newspaper. When we get official communication from the Orioles or the United States, we will be able to discuss it."

Cuba might be wary of sending its national team to Baltimore. The last two times that the team has visited the United States, a star player has defected. Both players — Rolando Arrojo and Osvaldo Fernandez — now play in the major leagues.

Nevertheless, Cuban-born Anaheim Angels executive Preston Gomez, who just returned from a visit to his homeland, said yesterday that high-ranking Cuban sports officials are excited about the possibility of a major-league visit, but acknowledged that opinion in the Cuban-American community would be divided.

"The majority of Cuban people in Miami will oppose it," Gomez said, "but if you took a consensus of Cuban people in the United States, I think they feel it would help us come to some kind of understanding. I hope they let them go and break the ice."

Gomez, a former major-league player who is well-known in Cuban athletic and government circles, said he would be willing to help the Orioles bring about the series.

Other voices

The players association "also has veto power over any venture that does not fall within the scope of the collective bargaining agreement. If the union is not satisfied that it is in the best interests of the Orioles players or the union membership at large, it could simply tell the players not to go, but union officials appear open to the concept of a goodwill trip.

"It's an interesting possibility, and we'll have to look at it," said Donald Fehr, union executive director. "Of course, any games will have to be approved by both Major League Baseball and the players association."

The concerns of the players union may be more pragmatic than political. If the most militant wing of Florida's anti-Castro movement takes a strong position against the trip, the possibility of spring training protests creates an important security issue for the players.

Also, the players union represents a number of Cuban defectors who have family members in Cuba, many of whom have been denied the opportunity to leave the country by the Castro regime. If those players are hostile to the idea of a goodwill trip — and garner the support of other Latin players — the union may be hard-pressed to approve it.

Former Orioles first baseman Rafael Palmeiro said in 1996 that he would not accompany the club on a proposed trip to Cuba. He told the Associated Press he would have taken the same stance this year if he had re-signed with the club.

"My family fled Cuba 28 years ago because my parents wanted a better life for us, myself and my brothers," Palmeiro said. "My dad is aware of everything that happened. He is anti-Castro, and so are we. ... For me to go back there goes against everything we stand for and believe in."

Florida Marlins catcher Jorge Fabregas, whose parents fled Cuba after Castro took power, also expressed reservations yesterday, but said he might be able to support the exhibition games if the proceeds go toward food and medicine for impoverished Cubans.

"It's a touchy subject," Fabregas said. "My parents had to leave their homeland because of that dictator. I see what my parents went through and my wife's parents went through, so it's tough."

"I'm sure, from a baseball standpoint, it would be great, for a major-league team to play the best amateur team in the world. I'd love to see them play. From a political standpoint, it would bother me. I wouldn't want that guy [Castro] to have the pleasure of seeing a major-league team on his soil. But if it's for a good cause ... for the people of Cuba ... then I guess I'd be for it."

Sun staff writers Ivan Penn, Joe Mathews and Joe Strauss contributed to this article.

Orioles play a role opening door to Cuba

U.S. seeks to expand
contacts; Baltimore
negotiates two games

Clinton would broaden ties

Effort to ease plight
of Cubans, maintain
anti-Castro sanctions

By MARK MATTHEWS
SUN NATIONAL STAFF

WASHINGTON — The Baltimore Orioles could be playing baseball in Cuba this year as part of a new U.S. initiative to expand people-to-people contact with the Communist-ruled island, U.S. officials disclosed yesterday.

The games will be allowed only if profits go to humanitarian assistance in Cuba and not to the Fidel Castro regime, a senior U.S. official said. The Orioles are expected to send a group to Cuba as early as this week to negotiate arrangements for the exhibition games, one of which would be in Cuba and the other in Baltimore.

The new permission granted to the Orioles was one of a series of steps expected to be officially announced by the White House today that are aimed at easing the plight of Cubans while maintaining tight sanctions against the Castro government.

"We ought to be doing everything we can to help the Cuban people," a senior State Department official said.

The Clinton administration also plans to allow more people to send money to Cubans, to open direct mail service, and to permit the sale of food to independent organizations and small restaurants, and the sales of fertilizer and pesticides to private farmers and cooperatives.

The new measures follow an initiative launched after the visit to Cuba of Pope John Paul II a year ago this week. That visit provided what the senior official called a

"wedge" allowing increased contacts to be explored.

The Clinton administration, which has courted voters in Cuban-American strongholds in Florida, has refused to lift the economic embargo imposed by the United States after Castro assumed power in 1959.

But starting during Clinton's first term, the administration has explored ways of boosting contacts with the Cuban people that would not directly benefit the Castro government.

The effort was scuttled temporarily after Cuban forces shot down two aircraft piloted by Cuban exiles in 1996. But after Castro granted greater religious freedom at the time of the pope's visit, the Clinton administration seized the

[See Cuba, 5A]

Balti • Sun 1/6/99

Orioles exchange could help open door to Cuba

[Cuba, from Page 1A]

Opportunity to resume the effort.

While unveiling the proposed contacts at a briefing yesterday, the Clinton administration rejected another idea that has been prominently floated by former officials and some Republican lawmakers: naming a bipartisan commission to review the United States' policy toward Cuba, including the four-decade embargo.

"There is a broad consensus, with a major disagreement on the embargo," a senior State Department official said. "The embargo is the law, and the only way that can be changed is by Congress passing another law. And I don't think that can be handled by a bipartisan commission."

Schmoke sought exchange

The Orioles baseball exchange would fulfill a long-standing ambition of the Orioles and Baltimore Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, who suggested sending the team to Havana for an exhibition game last March after a visit to the island.

"The mayor and a number of other people have been working behind the scenes to try and carry the people-to-people contact between Baltimoreans and Cubans a step further," said Clint Coleman, a spokesman for Schmoke.

The baseball exchange would depend on acceptance of the proposal by the Cuban government and its acceptance of the U.S. conditions on the proceeds going to charity.

"If arrangements for the exhibition games are structured in a way which promotes people-to-people contacts, facilitates humanitarian assistance for the Cuban people and minimizes benefit for the Cuban government, a second license will be granted to expend funds for the holding of the exhibition games," a senior State Department official told reporters.

Orioles owner Peter G. Angelos, a major contributor to the Democratic Party, could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Bill Steika, an Orioles spokesman, said: "We have nothing to re-

port at this time. We'll most likely have an announcement tomorrow."

Baseball Commissioner Allan H. "Bud" Selig also would have to approve the exhibitions.

"The Orioles have kept us informed on every phase of it," Selig said. "They wouldn't want to begin the process without our approval."

Kenneth F. Hackett, executive director of Catholic Relief Services in Baltimore, said his organization has been advising the Orioles on the exchange of baseball teams.

"We have been in discussions with the Orioles for quite a while," he said. "We're working very actively with them right now to work out some of the details."

CRS has sent about \$20 million worth of assistance to Cuba, mostly food and medicine, since 1992, Hackett said. The aid is distributed through Caritas, a Cuba-based organization affiliated with CRS. Either agency could qualify as a charity recipient of the proceeds of the baseball games.

Hackett added, "We're in favor and have advocated on the record that we think it's time to rethink the embargo. These steps are really positive."

There was no immediate reaction from the Cuban government yesterday.

Cuban exiles cautious

The new U.S. measures drew a mixed response from the fiercely anti-Castro Cuban exile community and its supporters in Congress. They applauded the Clinton administration's rejection of a bipartisan commission on Cuba, but opposed any measures that might benefit the Castro regime, even if indirectly.

Jose Cardenas, Washington director of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), cautiously welcomed the plan for exhibition games. He said Castro should "not be allowed to dictate what teams are allowed to go down." He particularly opposed giving Castro the right to veto games with teams that include Cuban exiles.

So far, the Orioles are the only team mentioned by the Clinton administration as being eligible to explore exhibition games.

Cardenas also opposed easing restrictions on the sale of food.

The Clinton administration proposes that some of the food could go to the small private restaurants that have sprung up in Cuba in recent years, thus encouraging private enterprise. But Cardenas said this would end up bolstering the tourism industry and thus would indirectly benefit the Castro regime.

However, he said CANF "has always supported efforts to reach out and assist the Cuban people, so long as they didn't result in a benefit to the Castro regime."

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright spent part of yesterday afternoon telephoning lawmakers to tell them of the new initiative.

'Please review this'

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Florida Republican, told the Associated Press that he opposes any sale or financing of agricultural products to Cuba, calling it illegal.

"If you proceed by executive order, that would violate the law," Diaz-Balart said he told Albright. "Please review this before proceeding."

Rep. Robert Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat, opposed easing restrictions on the flow of money to Cuba.

"This policy change will substantially increase the cash flow to the regime and even permit sending cash to Fidel Castro himself," he said.

The Clinton administration says that senior Cuban government or Communist Party officials would not be eligible to receive remittances.

Now, only family members living in the United States can send money to needy Cubans. Under the new policy, anyone in the United States could send money. The limit of \$1,200 annually would remain.

Sun staff writers Peter Schmuck and John Rivera contributed to this article.

Old rivals still limit U.S. ties to Cuba

Clinton's new warmth
toward island avoids
angering exiles, Castro

By MARK MATTHEWS
SUN NATIONAL STAFF

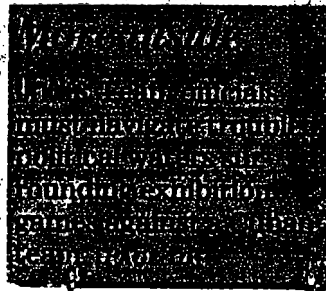
WASHINGTON — The administration's long-range hopes of paving the way for a peaceful post-Communist transition in Cuba will likely be hemmed in by two opposing forces: Fidel Castro and Congress.

President Clinton formally announced a series of measures yesterday to improve people-to-people ties by making travel easier, boosting academic contacts and allowing Americans to send more money and food to the Caribbean nation.

The announcement came a day after the administration opened the way for baseball diplomacy with Cuba.

But a powerful anti-Castro lobby on Capitol Hill continues to block both an easing of the 36-year-old economic embargo against the island and an improvement in official ties between Washington and Havana.

And... the Castro regime is... to tolerate... measure... freedom for the Roman Catholic Church, non-governmental organizations and even... (See Cuba, 13A)



[Cuba, from Page 1A]

small private enterprises, it won't permit anything that threatens its survival.

"The balance of political power is still on the side of the traditional actors on Cuban policy: the hard-line elements of the Cuban exile community and the Cuban government," said Richard Nuccio, a former Clinton adviser on Cuba policy who is now a visiting scholar at Harvard.

But the Clinton administration is determined to exploit openings both in Cuba and on Capitol Hill that it hopes will pave the way for a peaceful transition to the post-Castro era.

"We are just going to pursue this relentlessly," a senior U.S. official said Monday.

Baltimore Sun
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Despite the administration's belief that last year's review of the Paul II provided opportunities for increased people-to-people contacts and private organizations.

Seizing on a shared passion for baseball, the administration intends to allow the Orioles to arrange exhibition games in Cuba and Baltimore — provided the Castro regime agrees to turn the profits over to a charity, such as Catholic Relief Services.

Sports have traditionally served to improve diplomatic relations, starting with the pingpong diplomacy between the United States and China in the 1970s and more recent wrestling matches between Americans and Iranians.

Its economy hobbled by decades of communism and the U.S. embargo, Cuba is eager for American dollars and has allowed some private enterprise to develop outside strict government control, including small family-run restaurants and agricultural cooperatives.

In response, Washington is loosening its rules to allow Americans to send money to anyone in Cuba, not just relatives, so long as the recipient is not a member of the regime.

The United States also is planning to allow charter flights from several American cities to new Cuban destinations, not just Havana. Washington also plans to allow direct mail and increased exchanges among academics, scientists, athletes and others.

"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, who said that taken together the administration's initiatives are "significant."

And the trend won't stop with this week's announced steps. Officials say the policy will be reviewed continually and new measures may come in a matter of months.

One impetus will be a report due soon from the Council on Foreign Relations which recommends allowing Americans to send up to \$10,000 a year in remittances — perhaps enough to start a small business — and to claim Cuban relatives as dependents. Currently the limit is \$1,200 a year. The report also urges unlimited family visits.

A more moderate Cuban-American population has begun to make its voice heard since the death last year of Jorge Mas Cano-

sa, the most influential leader of the fiercely anti-Castro Cuban exile community in Florida.

And cracks have appeared in the powerful anti-Castro coalition in Congress.

Particularly telling was the split reaction of Republicans. While south Florida's Cuban-American representatives criticized most aspects of the administration plan, the office of powerful Castro foe Jesse Helms offered general support.

But the price of keeping congressional support was not going too far in the direction of a thaw.

Marc Theissen, Helms' spokesman, praised the administration for refusing to side with Senate moderates and pick a bipartisan commission to review lifting the embargo.

"What he did was a reaffirmation of U.S. policy, a reaffirmation of the embargo and a reaffirma-

tion that U.S. policy will remain the isolation of the Castro regime," said Theissen.

"Once the embargo is off the table, there is an opportunity to force a bipartisan consensus to build a civil society and promote human rights."

Helms, the North Carolina Republican who chairs the Foreign Relation Committee, wants the administration to go further. He has sponsored a measure to provide \$100 million in humanitarian assistance.

"Helms does not think he is

risking support [from Cuban-Americans] by taking views somewhat to the left of Ileana and Lincoln," said Nuccio, referring to two of Florida's most vociferous anti-Castro representatives, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart, both Republicans.

But there is no escaping Castro's large measure of control over the thaw in relations. Cuban beneficiaries of American aid risk being tarred as enemies of the state, says Geoff Thale, a Cuba expert at the Washington Office on Latin America.

In the past, Castro has reacted violently when he sensed that he was losing control over the relationship, some experts say.

Nuccio believes the shooting down of the two private airplanes piloted by Cuban Americans over the Florida straits in February 1996 marked a Castro effort to set back an earlier U.S. initiative. Indeed, it stopped the momentum of improved ties in its tracks.

"He created a situation that was much more manageable for him," Nuccio said. Castro could take similar action again and put American hard-liners "in the driver's seat."

The only way to ensure that Castro will cooperate in improving people-to-people ties is for the United States to cooperate with the Cuban government, Nuccio says — for instance, by increasing anti-narcotics or environmental cooperation.

This, however, would undercut a key purpose of trying to improve the people-to-people ties, namely to weaken the Cuban regime from inside Cuba but outside the government. As a result, it would likely hit a brick wall on Capitol Hill.

"The balance of political power is still on the side of the traditional actors on Cuban policy: the hard-line elements of the Cuban exile community and the Cuban government."

Richard Nuccio, a former Clinton adviser on Cuba policy

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By David L. Marcus, Globe Staff and Teresa Mears Globe Correspondent,
01/06/99

WASHINGTON - Trying to balance demands from exile groups that want to isolate Fidel Castro and US companies that hope to sell products in Cuba, President Clinton eased the Cuban embargo slightly yesterday, mixing "baseball diplomacy" with modest trade concessions.

Clinton's plan would allow more flights to Cuba, increase sales of farm products to Cuban entrepreneurs, and start cultural and athletic exchanges. But Clinton ignored the recommendation of a bipartisan group that a presidential commission consider lifting the 37-year-old trade embargo.

While several analysts who specialize in Latin America called the shift in policy an important symbolic opening, many business leaders said it fell far short of the sweeping changes advocated by the bipartisan group, which was led by Senators John Warner, a Virginia Republican, and Christopher Dodd, a Connecticut Democrat.

Many of those familiar with the disputes over Cuba policy say Castro's government is likely to reject many of the proposals. "The safe bet is that Cuba will block some of the measures, and they may block all," said Richard Nuccio, a former Clinton administration Cuba specialist now at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

In Washington, a spokesman for Cuba's diplomatic mission played down the importance of the US moves. "These steps don't indicate that they want more relations, because if they did they would have followed the recommendations of the Warner committee," said the spokesman, Luis Fernandez. "If they want more relations, really they should lift the embargo."

Administration officials said Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright had consulted on the issue with a wide range of political, business, and religious leaders, including Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston. Law and several New England members of Congress, including J. Joseph Moakley of South Boston and James P. McGovern of Worcester, both Democrats, have urged Clinton to reverse the embargo and encourage trade and tourism with Cuba.

Moakley and McGovern applauded the change yesterday, but issued a statement calling Cuba policy a Cold War relic. The two congressmen, who visited Cuba in 1996 and 1998, met yesterday with Cuban

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diplomats to plan another trip. In Havana, they said, they will demand respect for human rights.

Clinton's move, which was leaked to several news organizations Monday, has been interpreted in vastly different ways by exile groups and business associations. The contrast was clear by the headlines in yesterday's Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald, newspapers published by the same company. "US Easing Contacts With Cuba," read the headline in the English-language paper, while the Spanish version said, "White House Says Cuban Embargo will Not be Changed."

Florida's Cuban-American members of Congress, Representatives Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, both Republicans, blasted the announcement. "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 intention of normalizing relations with the Cuban dictator," Ros-Lehtinen said in a statement.

Hard-line exile groups agreed with some aspects of the plan, but rejected the idea of selling food and agricultural products in Cuba. That "only reinforces the perception that what motivates US foreign policy is greed and the corporate bottom line, not freedom and solidarity with oppressed people," the Cuban American National Foundation said.

US officials said the slight thawing of relations was helped by the visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba last January. Legislation signed by Clinton three years ago leaves the president little power to lift the embargo without approval from Congress.

One breakthrough announced by the administration is a plan to allow the Baltimore Orioles to hold an exhibition game in Cuba and to permit a Cuban team to play a game in Baltimore. Such games would be a long way from starting a regular competition, but they would be a break from the past, when the Treasury Department, which oversees sanctions, routinely denied travel permits to both American and Cuban organizations. From 1975 to 1978, several major league teams were invited to Cuba but were barred from playing.

This time, the Clinton administration said, the Orioles game will be allowed only if profits go to humanitarian assistance in Cuba, not to the Castro regime. The US government also is making it easier to send Cuban families money - up to \$1,200 a year. And the administration has proposed starting direct mail service to the island.

Larry Birns, of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs in Washington, dismissed the policy as a "limited response by the administration to a clamorous demand being made internationally and nationally for a revision of US policy."

Max Castro, a senior research associate at the North-South Center at the University of Miami, called the measures an "incrementalist, minimalist step that will have minimal results."

Also in Miami, Jose Basulto, leader of the exile group Brothers to the Rescue, whose four fliers were shot down and killed by the Cuban military in 1996, was skeptical.

"The announcement doesn't do anything," he said. He suggested that it was motivated by the next presidential election.

An administration official acknowledged that politics had entered into the decision-making, in this way: If Clinton had appointed a prominent commission to reconsider the embargo, it would have taken six months to agree on the members. It would have taken another six months for the commission to make recommendations, and that would have come at the start of primary season for the 2000 presidential election.

David L. Marcus reported from Washington, and Teresa Mears from Miami.

This story ran on page A02 of the Boston Globe on 01/06/99.
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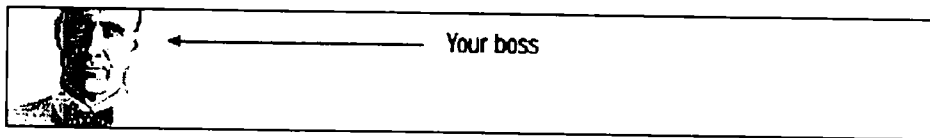
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From: News and Views | Beyond the City |
Wednesday, January 06, 1999

Cuba Plan Spurs Gripes & Doubts

By JORGE FITZ-GIBBON and HELEN KENNEDY
Daily News Staff Writers

Cuban officials greeted news of a partial easing of the U.S. trade embargo with skepticism yesterday, while New York-area Cuban exiles complained the embargo had been weakened and Fidel Castro strengthened.

"This is just going to prolong a 40-year-old dictatorship," said Camilo Fernandez, president of *Asociación Pro Cuba* in Elizabeth, N.J.

"At a time when he has his hands full, this is going to alleviate Castro's internal problems for him," Fernandez said. "The need for humanitarian aid, that's a tale. What we have to change is the regime."

President Clinton insisted the new rules — which include more food sales, increased travel and laxer rules about sending money to Cubans — would not help Castro.

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

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said his government would take a "wait and see" attitude about the announcement.

"The root of the problem is still a blockade that is unjust," Robaina told Reuters.

In Miami, Remberto Perez, tri-state area director for the powerful Cuban American National Foundation, cautioned that hidden under the guise of humanitarian aid could be "a Trojan horse that was floated in Washington to end the embargo."

The foundation, a Miami-based anti-Castro group, said food sales, as opposed to food donations, reinforce the perception that U.S. foreign policy is motivated by greed and not by

"solidarity with oppressed peoples."

The American food industry welcomed the decision to relax some restrictions on food sales to Cuba.

"It's a start," said Lisa Jager, a spokeswoman for U.S. Wheat Associates.

The new rules could be "the beginning of a series of steps" leading to the full lifting of the embargo, said Len Condon, vice president for international trade at the American Meat Institute.

"Right now, I suspect the potential is sort of limited," he said. "But when Cuba becomes the Cuba it was back in the '40s and '50s, with all the big hotels," it could become a booming market for U.S. farm products, he said.

Other steps announced by Clinton include a restoration of mail service and an expansion of charter flights to the island, perhaps including flights from U.S. locations other than Miami.

The president also authorized members of the Baltimore Orioles baseball team to arrange exhibition games with the Cuban national team.

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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.

CARL HIAASEN



EMBARGO STANDS — SO DOES FIDEL

There he was in Santiago de Cuba on New Year's Day: same beard, same fatigues, same tired old speech on the evils of free-market capitalism. Same old Fidel.

That trade embargo we slapped on him 37 years ago — boy, that was some brainstorm, wasn't it?

Let's strangle Cuba until the people become so famished and miserable that they rise up and overthrow Castro. That'll teach the hairy commie creep to thumb his nose at Uncle Sam!

Except the embargo backfired. Not only did it fail to incite a counterrevolution, it cemented Castro's grip on the island, enhanced his rebel stature and elevated him from the ranks of blowhard to some sort of Third World icon.

Today, the embargo stands as one of America's most stupendous foreign-policy flops — and the biggest favor we ever did for Castro.

Without it, he'd have no scapegoat for his calamitous economic plans, no credible excuse for running Cuba into the ground. Without it, he and his starry-eyed socialism would've been gone long ago, smothered in Levi's and Coca-Cola and Gap franchises.

But there Fidel stands at age 72, not just clinging to power but commanding as imperiously as ever. There will be no popular uprising to overthrow him; not this year, not next year, not ever. Cuba won't be rid of the guy until he blows an aneurysm, or his heart poops out.

Instead of adjusting its Cuba policy to reality, the United States has chosen not just to continue the futile embargo, but to broaden it. The result appeared New Year's Day for all to see, defiant in his trademark green fatigues.

The Torricelli Act? Helms-Burton? Failure heaped upon failure, always at the expense of the Cuban people.

Three former secretaries of state recently joined 24 senators to urge the creation of a panel to review the U.S. position toward Cuba. The Clinton administration wouldn't go that far, afraid of antagonizing Florida's exile leaders in advance of Al Gore's run for the presidency.

But officials this week did announce a modest policy shift that will: increase travel between the two countries; allow exiles to send more money to relatives in Cuba; restore direct U.S. mail service to the island; and let the Baltimore Orioles negotiate for exhibition baseball games with the Cuban national team.

The part of the plan that's been drawing the most fire permits the sale of some food and farming products to nongovernment entities in Cuba. Both Miami's Cuban-American House members denounced the food sale provision, with Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen saying it gave Castro "a substantial opportunity to prolong his rule."

As if, after 40 years, we've finally got him teetering on the ropes. How absurd. It's the embargo that prolongs Fidel's rule, not cans of soup shipped to hungry children.

But in this debate — the last windy bastion of anti-communist gabble — humanity always takes a back seat to politics. Anything we might do to help Cuba's poor, the unspoken logic goes, also helps Castro remain in power. Therefore we stay the course.

It's foreign policy reduced to a grotesque personality fixation, the hatred for one old geezer too often outweighing compassion for the people he rules.

Implicit behind the embargo is the coldblooded notion that hunger and poverty are necessary in Cuba because they breed unrest, and in unrest lies hope for revolt. For four decades this has been U.S. strategy, four decades of calculated deprivation.

But there is no revolt. Just Fidel Castro and another New Year's Day harangue. He sure didn't look like he's missed many meals. Sadly, the same cannot be said for everyone in Santiago de Cuba.

Eased Cuba sanctions questioned

By JUAN O. TAMAYO
Herald Staff Writer

The powerful heads of the House and Senate foreign affairs committees on Wednesday questioned the legality of President Clinton's decision to allow food sales to Cubans, saying it might violate the Helms-Burton law.

The food sales and other measures easing U.S. sanctions "breach Congress' intent in codifying the embargo on Cuba under the Libertad Act," said Ben Gilman, R-N.Y., chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

Echoing Gilman's concerns were Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart, both Florida Republicans; and the authors of Helms-Burton, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind.

Ros-Lehtinen said she, Burton and Diaz-Balart raised their objections at a meeting Wednesday with State Department and Treasury officials who are developing regulations for the changes announced Tuesday by the Clinton administration.

"We want to know where is the legal controlling authority that authorizes them to change the law," Ros-Lehtinen said. "The way we read Helms-Burton, they do not have any such authority."

The 1996 Helms-Burton law, officially known as the Libertad Act, includes a clause that turned into law all U.S. sanctions then in effect against Cuba. The sanctions had previously been imposed by presidential order. Backers say that means Congress must now approve any significant change in the sanctions.

But the White House had a team of lawyers look at Helms-Burton soon after its adoption and concluded that the executive branch still has the power to tighten or loosen the regulations governing U.S. sanctions on Cuba.

Although the 37-year-old U.S. embargo has always banned food sales to Cuba, the Clinton administration announced Tuesday that it would license U.S. food sales to independent Cubans not tied to President Fidel Castro's government.

While Helms supports some of the other changes announced Tuesday, and he is ready to back "even bolder" moves to promote democracy in Cuba, "we're concerned that any sale of food probably requires legislation," said Foreign Relations Committee spokesman Mark Thiessen.

Ros-Lehtinen said State and Treasury officials at the meeting Wednesday promised to send her a report arguing that the executive branch did not violate Helms-Burton in easing the sanctions.

"This is just the first stage . . . We'll be haggling about this for a while. There will be lots of paper flying back and forth, and eventually there may be a legal challenge," Ros-Lehtinen said.

Both backers and foes of Helms-Burton have long talked about potential court battles — backers because President Clinton has repeatedly waived enforcement of certain parts of the law, foes because they argue that the law infringes on the president's right to conduct foreign policy.

CUBA: What's behind the recent U.S. measures? To the readers who have asked what led the Clinton administration to ease travel and trade restrictions on Cuba this week, let me add one more explanation to those offered by Cuba pundits in recent days — preventive diplomacy.

The latest U.S. measures may be a preemptive strike by the Clinton administration to deflate an expected barrage of anti-U.S. propaganda in coming months, when Cuban President Fidel Castro will enjoy larger than usual media exposure.

Castro is expected to get a hero's welcome at the Feb. 2 inauguration of President-elect Hugo Chavez in Venezuela. He will also be the host of Spanish King Juan Carlos during the latter's visit to Cuba, and may steal the show at the first European-Latin American summit, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in July, and — most of all — during the Ibero-American Summit to take place late this year in Cuba with the attendance of 21 heads of state.

So 1999 looks like a Castro propaganda feast, and U.S. officials may be trying to keep gringo-bashing to a minimum. Asked about it, a U.S. official involved in the adoption of the new measures said propaganda considerations played "a secondary" role. "The first consideration was to further encourage independent activities in Cuba," the official said.

*must develop
a Public
Info Plan*

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HEADLINE: Cuba proposal may soon send Orioles into action

BYLINE: BY JOHN RICE

BODY:

A wide-ranging proposal by President Clinton to relax restrictions with Cuba could send representatives of the Baltimore Orioles there as early as this week to arrange exhibition games with a Cuban team.

The proposal, announced Tuesday, would also let more Americans send money to Cubans, offer direct mail service and expand direct charter flights.

Few Cubans had heard about the plan, which was mentioned only briefly on the state-run news media. Foreign Ministry spokesman Alejandro Gonzalez said he would comment only after the proposal had been analyzed.

Still, the possibility of a visit by the Orioles had great appeal on this baseball-mad island, and it would be the first trip by a major league team to Cuba in decades.

Cuba has been largely isolated from U.S. professional baseball since shortly after Fidel Castro's 1959 revolution.

The U.S. government has blocked major league visits to Cuba, although a few defectors -- most recently Orlando Hernandez of the New York Yankees -- have made their way to U.S. teams.

One exhibition game would be played in Baltimore and another one in Cuba.

Cuba's team would be in peak form for the proposed March or April meeting, because its baseball season ends in late March, while the U.S. team would be in spring training.

The Clinton proposal is aimed at easing the plight of Cubans while maintaining sanctions against the Castro government. The measures follow an initiative by Pope John Paul II, who visited Cuba a year ago.

The Clinton administration said the games would be allowed only if profits went to humanitarian assistance in Cuba and not to Castro's government.

The last major league team to visit Cuba was the Brooklyn Dodgers, who trained in Havana in 1947. In 1960, an exhibition game between the Orioles and Cincinnati Reds was canceled. From 1975 to 1978, a number of major league teams were invited to Cuba but were barred from playing there by the commissioner's

office.

Clinton is expected to ease the restriction on cash remittances to Cuba, allowing any American send up to \$ 1,200 a year. Under current rules, only Cubans can send up to \$ 1,200 a year to relatives.

Cubans in the United States send an estimated \$ 500 million a year to relatives in Cuba -- a major source of foreign exchange and a crucial source of income for many families in a country where salaries average about \$ 10 a month.

U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the new rules also allowed monetary donations to church and other non-government groups, though only with specific permission. Until now, only donations of goods have been allowed.

Direct mail service will mean faster delivery. Mail now often takes more than a month to reach the United States through third countries.

The other measures announced Tuesday included easing red tape faced by scholars, athletes and cultural groups visiting Cuba, which could help encourage such visits, although tourism remains banned.

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