# Cuba Embargo Negative – Table of Contents

Summary.................................................................................................................................................2
Glossary..................................................................................................................................................3

## Reasons why the Embargo isn’t Bad

### Answers to: Embargo Hurts Public Health in Cuba
- No Harms – Public Health Strong Now ..........................................................................................4
- No Harms – Preventative Care in Cuba ............................................................................................5
- No Harms – Free Healthcare in Cuba ..............................................................................................6

### Answers to: Lifting the Embargo Solves
- Lifting the Embargo Won’t Solve – No US/Cuban Trade ................................................................7
- Lifting the Embargo Won’t Solve – Cuba Controls Imports ..............................................................8

## Reasons why Lifting the Embargo is a Bad Idea

### Government Repression Turn
- Government Repression Turn .........................................................................................................9-10
- Answers To: Lifting the Embargo Helps Human Rights .................................................................11
- Answers To: Lifting the Embargo Helps Human Rights .................................................................12
- Answers To: Embargo Empirically Fails ..........................................................................................13
- Answers To: Trade Promotes Democracy .......................................................................................14

### Tourism Turn
- Tourism Turn .......................................................................................................................................15
Summary
Glossary

Exploitation (in an economic/how businesses treat people & the environment sense)
Biodiversity
Even with the costs imposed by the embargo, Cuba’s health system is exceptional now.

Barry, Member of the Social Sciences Research Council for the Cuban Working Group of the American Council of Learned Societies, 2010
(Paul Drain & Michele “Fifty Years of U.S. Embargo: Cuba’s Health Outcomes and Lessons” Science Magazine, April, Online: http://www.sciencemag.org/content/328/5978/572.full)

However, impacts of sanctions on Cuba’s financial systems, medical supplies, and aggregate health measures appear to be attenuated by their successes in other aspects of health care. Despite the embargo, Cuba has produced better health outcomes than most Latin American countries, and they are comparable to those of most developed countries. Cuba has the highest average life expectancy (78.6 years) and density of physicians per capita (59 physicians per 10,000 people), and the lowest infant (5.0/1000 live births) and child (7.0/1000 live births) mortality rates among 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries (11, 26).¶ In 2006, the Cuban government spent about $355 per capita on health, 7.1% of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (11, 26). The annual cost of health care for an American was $6714, 15.3% of total U.S. GDP. Cuba also spent less on health than most European countries. But low health care costs alone may not fully explain Cuba’s successes (27), which may relate more to their emphasis on disease prevention and primary health care, which have been cultivated during the U.S. trade embargo.¶ Cuba has one of the most proactive primary health care systems in the world. By educating their population about disease prevention and health promotion, the Cubans rely less on medical supplies to maintain a healthy population. The converse is the United States, which relies heavily on medical supplies and technologies to maintain a healthy population, but at a very high cost.
No Harms – Preventative Care in Cuba

[... ] The Cuban health care industry guarantees basic health coverage – it provides exceptional preventative medicine for all citizens.

Garrett, Senior Fellow for Global Health at the Council on Foreign Relations, 2010
(Laurie, “Castrocare in Crisis,” Foreign Affairs, 89:4, July/August, EBSCOhost)

The two keys to Cuba’s medical and public health achievements are training provided by the state and a community-based approach that requires physicians to live in the neighborhoods they serve and be on call 24 hours a day. In the wake of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, more than one-third of Cuba’s doctors fled, mostly to the United States, leaving the country with just 6,300 physicians and a doctor-patient ratio of 9.2 per 10,000, according to the Cuban Ministry of Public Health. In response, Fidel Castro declared public health and doctor training to be paramount tasks for the new socialist state. By the early 1980s, Cuba led the socialist world -- including its patron, the Soviet Union -- in all health indicators. Between 1959 and 1989, Cuba’s doctor-patient ratio more than tripled, soaring to 33 per 10,000, and health-care expenditures rose by 162 percent. Cuba today has the highest doctor-patient ratio in the entire world, with 59 physicians per 10,000 people -- more than twice the ratio of the United States. Cuba is the world’s only poor country that can rightly say that basic health is no longer an existential problem for its people. Its achievement in this respect is unparalleled. Cuba now boasts more than 73,000 practicing doctors (half of whom work in primary care), 107,761 nurses, and a total health-care work force of 566,365, according to government figures. About 12 percent of Cuba’s adult population is employed by the state in the health-care sector. Because of economic exigencies that have limited Cuba’s access to advanced technology for diagnosing and curing ailments, the Cuban health system has focused -- successfully -- on prevention. Between 1959 and 2000, Cuba reduced its infant mortality by 90 percent, and the number of mothers who died from pregnancy-related complications dropped from 125 per 100,000 live births to 55 per 100,000.
No Harms – Free Healthcare in Cuba

[ ] Cuban health care is exceptional – everyone has access to a doctor and coverage is free.

Campion, M.D. & Morrissey, Ph.D., 2013

Internet access is virtually nonexistent. And the Cuban health care system also seems unreal. There are too many doctors. Everybody has a family physician. Everything is free, totally free — and not after prior approval or some copay. The whole system seems turned upside down. It is tightly organized, and the first priority is prevention. Although Cuba has limited economic resources, its health care system has solved some problems that ours has not yet managed to address. Family physicians, along with their nurses and other health workers, are responsible for delivering primary care and preventive services to their panel of patients — about 1000 patients per physician in urban areas. All care delivery is organized at the local level, and the patients and their caregivers generally live in the same community. The medical records in cardboard folders are simple and handwritten, not unlike those we used in the United States 50 years ago. But the system is surprisingly information-rich and focused on population health.
Lifting the Embargo Won’t Solve – No US/Cuban Trade

[ ] Cuba and the US won’t trade – there’s no market in US for Cuban goods and Cuba won’t abandon relationships with China and Venezuela.

Suchlicki, Director of Institute for Cuban Studies at the University of Miami, 2013

All trade with Cuba is done with state owned businesses. Since Cuba has very little credit and is a major debtor nation, the U.S. and its businesses would have to provide credits to Cuban enterprises. There is a long history of Cuba defaulting on loans. Cuba is not likely to buy a substantial amount of products in the U.S. In the past few years, Cuba purchased several hundred million dollars of food in the U.S. That amount is now down to $170 million per year. Cuba can buy in any other country and it is not likely to abandon its relationship with China, Russia, Venezuela, and Iran to become a major trading partner of the U.S. Cuba has very little to sell in the U.S. Nickel, one of Cuba’s major exports, is controlled by the Canadians and exported primarily to Canada. Cuba has decimated its sugar industry and there is no appetite in the U.S. for more sugar. Cigars and rum are important Cuban exports. Yet, cigar production is mostly committed to the European market.
Lifting the Embargo Won’t Solve – Cuba Controls Imports

[   ] Lifting the embargo won’t get goods to the Cuban people – the regime controls trade in and out of Cuba.

Suchlicki, Director of Institute for Cuban Studies at the University of Miami, 2013

In Cuba, foreign investors cannot partner with private Cuban citizens. They can only invest in the island through minority joint ventures with the government and its state enterprises. The dominant enterprise in the Cuban economy is the Grupo GAESA, controlled by the Cuban military. Most investments are done through or with GAESA. Therefore, American companies willing to invest in Cuba will have to partner mostly with the Cuban military. Cuba ranks 176 out of 177 countries in the world in terms of economic freedom. Outshined only by North Korea. It ranks as one of the most unattractive investments next to Iran, Zimbabwe, Libya, Mali, etc. Foreign investors cannot hire, fire, or pay workers directly. They must go through the Cuban government employment agency which selects the workers. Investors pay the government in dollars or euros and the government pays the workers a meager 10% in Cuban pesos. Corruption is pervasive, undermining equity and respect for the rule of law. Cuba does not have an independent/transparent legal system. All judges are appointed by the State and all lawyers are licensed by the State. In the last few years, European investors have had over $1 billion arbitrarily frozen by the government and several investments have been confiscated. Cuba’s Law 77 allows the State to expropriate foreign-invested assets for reason of “public utility” or “social interest.” In the last year, the CEOs of three companies with extensive dealings with the Cuban government were arrested without charges.
Government Repression Turn (1/2)

[ ] The Cuban Government violates the political and civil rights of its citizens – the United States has an obligation to promote political change

Navarro, former ambassador the UN Human Rights Commission, 2002

(Ana, “Defending Repressed Cubans,” April, Online: http://www.sigloxxi.org/Archivo/repressed.htm)

During 2001, repression has increased in Cuba. For the last 43 years, the basic human rights of the Cuban people have been violated. Cubans do not have political rights because Castro and the Communist Party, the only legal party, have absolute power. Those who peacefully have tried to promote changes have ended up in prisons. For the Cuban people, there is no justice. The fundamental democratic precept of judicial independence is not valid. Judges are chosen by the Communist Party based on their political integration and commitment to the regime. Closed-door and summary trials are frequently held. The common citizen has no protection against the regime's violence. People under arrest are held incommunicado indefinitely. The police and the armed forces, too, are politicized; they beat, arrest and even murder those who protest against the lack of rights. In Cuba, the “Rapid Response Brigades,” armed with sticks and iron bars and dressed as civilians, attack human-rights advocates to give the impression to the international media that “the common people” spontaneously clash with opposition groups. The political prisoners suffer the most. They are confined in cells with highly dangerous common prisoners who attack them, with the guards’ tacit approval. Political prisoners also are denied medical attention as a form of punishment. Cuban authorities brag about their education and health systems. But they fail to mention that students must participate in pro-government activities to be able to attend universities or technical schools. Or that students who don't sympathize with the government are expelled. Or that workers who disagree with regime policies are fired from their jobs. The repression in Cuba is such that distributing the Declaration of Human Rights is classified a "counterrevolutionary activity," which is enough to earn a Cuban a beating from the police or paramilitary brigades. The human-rights violations perpetrated by the Cuban government are inexcusable. We, the countries that believe in freedom and live in democracy, should not abandon the people of Cuba.
Government Repression Turn (2/2)

(____) Maintaining the embargo key to causing political change. Lifting the embargo will increase the power of the government

International Policy Digest, 2013
(“Time to Strengthen the Cuban Embargo,” May 9, International Policy Digest, Online: http://www.internationalpolicydigest.org/2013/05/09/time-to-strengthen-the-cuban-embargo/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+internationalpolicydigest+(International+Policy+Digest)

However unfortunate it may be, Cuba, in its current state, is a nation consisting only of a wealthy and powerful few and an impoverished and oppressed proletariat, who possess little to no means to escape or even improve their fate. Lifting the trade embargo will not increase the general prosperity of the Cuban people, but it will increase the prosperity of the government. Ergo, the poverty and dire situation of the Cuban people cannot be blamed on the United States or the embargo.

No doubt, it has been a fruitless 50 years since the embargo was enacted. Little has changed as far as democracy and human rights are concerned. To maintain control, Cuba has "managed to offset much of the effects over the years in large part because the Soviets subsidized the island for three decades, because the regime welcomed Canadian, Mexican and European capital after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, and because Venezuela is its new patron," according to Llosa. However, Venezuela is now undergoing a political transition of its own with the recent death of Hugo Chávez, its president for the past 14 years, and the controversial election of Nicolás Maduro. Despite being Chávez's handpicked successor, Maduro only won by a narrow margin and will likely be forced to cut spending on social programs and foreign assistance in an effort to stabilize Venezuela's dire economic problems. Therefore, now is the ideal time to take action. Without Venezuela’s support, the Cuban government will assuredly face an economic crisis.

Strengthening the embargo to limit U.S. dollars flowing into Cuba would place further pressure on the Cuban government and has the potential to trigger an economic collapse. A change in the Cuban political climate is within reach.

According to U.S. Senator Robert Menendez, "Tourism to Cuba is a natural resource, akin to providing refined petroleum products to Iran. It's reported that 2.5 million tourists visit Cuba – 1.5 million from North America…1 million Canadians…More than 170,000 from England…More than 400,000 from Spain, Italy, Germany, and France combined – All bringing in $1.9 billion in revenue to the Castro regime." This behavior undermines the embargo, which is why the U.S. should urge other nations to adopt similar policies toward Cuba. A strong and unyielding embargo, supported by the U.S. and its allies, is necessary to incite political change.

Furthermore, Sen. Menendez argues, "Those who lament our dependence on foreign oil because it enriches regimes in terrorist states like Iran, should not have a double standard when it comes to enriching a brutal dictatorship like Cuba right here in our own backyard." If the policy of the U.S. is to challenge these behaviors, then it must also stand up to Cuba. It would be a disservice to squander the progress of the past 50 years when opportunity is looming.
Answers To: Lifting the Embargo Helps Human Rights

(____)

(____) All economic benefits of engagement would flow to the government – giving it more power to repress its people.

Radosh, adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute, 2013

What these liberals and leftists leave out is that this demand — lifting the embargo — is also the number one desire of the Cuban Communists. In making it the key demand, these well-meaning (at least some of them) liberals echo precisely the propaganda of the Cuban government, thereby doing the Castro brothers’ work for them here in the United States. And, as we know, many of those who call for this actually believe that the Cuban government is on the side of the people, and favor the Cuban Revolution which they see as a positive role model for the region. They have always believed, since the 1960s of their youth, that socialism in Cuba has pointed the way forward to development and liberty based on the kind of socialist society they wish could exist in the United States. Another brave group of Cuban opponents of the regime has actually taped a television interview filmed illegally in Havana. “Young Cuban democracy leader Antonio Rodiles,” an American support group called Capitol Hill Cubans has reported, “has just released the latest episode of his civil society project Estado de Sats (filmed within Cuba), where he discusses the importance U.S. sanctions policy with two of Cuba’s most renowned opposition activists and former political prisoners, Guillermo Farías and Jose Daniel Ferrer.” The argument they present is aimed directly at those on the left in the United States, some of whom think they are helping democracy in Cuba by calling for an end to the embargo. In strong and clear language, the two dissidents say the following: If at this time, the [economic] need of the Cuban government is satisfied through financial credits and the lifting of the embargo, repression would increase, it would allow for a continuation of the Castro’s society, totalitarianism would strengthen its hold and philosophically, it would just be immoral … If you did an opinion poll among Cuban opposition activists, the majority would be in favor of not lifting the embargo.
Answers To: Lifting the Embargo Helps Human Rights

[ ]

[ ] The entire premise of the affirmative is flawed – economic engagement will only strengthen Cuba’s regime. The hardships imposed by an embargo are prerequisites to generate change.

Lopez, former professor of political science at the University of Illinois, 2000

The debate over the effectiveness of the U.S. embargo on Cuba has paid little attention to the scholarly literature on economic sanctions and transitions to democracy. One consequence is that critics of the embargo base their arguments on hypotheses that are empirically wrong or that misconstrue scholarly findings. Supporters of the embargo, in turn, do a poor job of exposing the flaws in the anti-embargo arguments. But in fact, the hypotheses used by engagement advocates to criticize the U.S. embargo are untenable. There is strong historical evidence that economic development does not lead to democracy. Foreign investors in Cuba are more likely to become supporters of the dictatorship rather than agents of political change. Foreign capitalists at the time of the transition to democracy will face legal and political problems that will likely entail considerable financial losses and impair their ability to continue to do business in Cuba. And the desire of some American firms to establish businesses in Cuba now, seeking to get a hold on the market in preparation for the post-transition period, is shortsighted and apparently based on misunderstandings of the economic and political factors involved. Given the nature of the Cuban dictatorship, neither engagement nor the embargo by itself will move the Castro government toward political liberalization. But unilateral economic sanctions can be effective by reaffirming a commitment to international norms of democracy and justice and by weakening the Castro government and promoting a change of regime. The U.S. sanctions impose serious economic costs on the Castro dictatorship, and the deterioration of the Cuban economy in the 1990s can be clearly linked both to the marked development of independent groups that challenge the government and to the increase in overt opposition on the part of the general population. Moreover, there is reason to believe that Cuba’s economic problems have generated serious discontent within the Communist Party’s own cadres, including military officers.
Just because the embargo failed in the past, doesn’t prove it won’t work now – Cuba’s current economic crisis makes it uniquely weak to a democratic transition.

Lopez, former professor of political science at the University of Illinois, 2000

A corresponding observation exists in the literature on transitions to democracy, which indicates that dictatorships tend to fall when faced with crises, including economic ones. In a cross-national statistical study involving 139 countries from 1950 to 1990, the authors found that dictatorships are more likely to survive when their economies grow and more likely to be destabilized when they face economic distress. Another study found that in a data set of twenty-seven dictatorships, twenty-one experienced economic decline prior to transitions to democracy. All communist dictatorships in the set (Poland, Nicaragua, Romania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia) experienced economic deterioration or stagnant, low rates of growth in the years before the demise of the dictatorships. A widespread observation among scholars of Eastern European politics is that a key factor underlying the pressures leading to the fall of communism in Eastern Europe was economic deterioration. A declining standard of living decreased people’s tolerance for the regimes. As their situations grew worse, the populations became more aware of the failure of their own regimes to provide an acceptable level of prosperity. The connection between deterioration of economic performance and transitions to democracy has also been observed in Latin America, where decreases in standards of living preceded the wave of democratization during the 1980s. Poor economic performance contributes to the demise of dictatorships by provoking latent or active opposition to the regime among citizens and groups within civil society who blame the government for their poverty. It also reduces the benefits enjoyed by active supporters of the regime and its coalition allies. Even in cases where economic crises are not the main source of factional conflicts within the ruling elite, deterioration of economic performance tends to widen cleavages among the rulers.
Answers To: Trade Promotes Democracy

[ ] History proves that regimes benefit from trade – the same will be true of Cuba.

Jorge, Professor of Political Economy at Florida International University, 2000

(Dr. Antonio, "The U.S. Embargo and the Failure of the Cuban Economy," Institute for Cuban & Cuban-American Studies Occasional Papers, Online: http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/iccaspapers/28)

It follows, from all of the above, that a lifting of the embargo at this time would only serve the purpose of facilitating to Castro desperately needed resources, mainly in the form of credit lines extended by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, and also by private banking and other financial institutions. This financial influx would serve to strengthen his 40-year stranglehold on the Cuban people. Furthermore, to those who believe that greater contacts between the United States and Cuba would further the cause of democratization, it should be pointed out that such hopes definitely have not been validated by the experience of Marxist societies from the inception of the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union, which followed the stage of War Communism, up to the last efforts at reforming socialism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. In these countries, trade, foreign investment, and loans led hermetic lives of their own, oblivious to and unaffected by the rest of society. There is no historical precedent for drawing hope from the Cuban experience. As a matter of fact, it could be realistically argued that the opposite has happened. As the Cuban regime succeeds in solidifying itself, as a result of the legitimacy conferred upon it by other nations and by an augmented flow of resources, its repressive proclivities have increased in parallel fashion. Trade and investment with totalitarian states have not weakened or eroded those states; rather, the contrary has always been the case. Castro’s regime is certainly no exception to the rule and, in fact, categorically confirms it. Only pressure has led Castro temporarily to implement some timid reforms that he subsequently has either partly rescinded or revoked altogether. Cuba has established for all to see a system of apartheid — which is openly and vigorously enforced — between foreigners and Cuban nationals.
Tourism Turn

Lifting the embargo leads to medical tourism which would overstretch their healthcare system.

Garrett, Senior Fellow for Global Health at the Council on Foreign Relations, 2010
(Laurie, "Castrocare in Crisis," Foreign Affairs, 89:4, July/August, EBSCOhost)

Cuba’s economic situation has been dire since 1989, when the country lost its Soviet benefactors and its economy experienced a 35 percent contraction. Today, Cuba’s major industries—tourism, nickel mining, tobacco and rum production, and health care—are fragile. Cubans blame the long-standing U.S. trade embargo for some of these strains and are wildly optimistic about the transformations that will come once the embargo is lifted. Overlooked in these dreamy discussions of lifestyle improvements, however, is that Cuba’s health-care industry will likely be radically affected by any serious easing in trade and travel restrictions between the United States and Cuba. If policymakers on both sides of the Florida Straits do not take great care, the tiny Caribbean nation could swiftly be robbed of its greatest triumph. First, its public health network could be devastated by an exodus of thousands of well-trained Cuban physicians and nurses. Second, for-profit U.S. companies could transform the remaining health-care system into a prime destination for medical tourism from abroad. The very strategies that the Cuban government has employed to develop its system into a major success story have rendered it ripe for the plucking by the U.S. medical industry and by foreigners eager for affordable, elective surgeries in a sunny climate. In short, although the U.S. embargo strains Cuba’s health-care system and its overall economy, it may be the better of two bad options.